

GERMANY'S NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA ELECTIONS

'No Confidence' Vote Slams Chancellor Merkel's Party

by Rainer Apel

Wiesbaden, May 10—Yesterday's election for state parliament in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) dealt a devastating blow to Chancellor Angela Merkel's Federal coalition government, as well as to her Christian Democratic party (CDU). The vote shows that German voters are just as disgusted with incumbent legislators as are their U.S. counterparts, and that the rapidly deepening economic crisis in Europe has sparked a mass-strike process of political resistance in Germany, as it has in Greece and other nations.

The CDU had ruled NRW in a coalition with the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the same "black-yellow" coalition that currently exists on the national level. But as of 9:00 p.m., vote tallies showed the CDU with 34.3%, its main rival, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) with a nearly identical 34.4%, the Greens with 12.3%, the FDP with 6.7%, and the Left party (the Linke) with 5.5%. Altogether the ruling coalition suffered a net loss of 10.5% since the last election. The results for the LaRouche party in Germany, the BüSo, were a significant improvement, but did not reflect its potential influence in the debate.

NRW's elections are important far beyond that state, which is Germany's biggest, with 13.5 million voters—20% of the national electorate. Several times in recent years, elections there paved the way for a change of power on the national level: In 1997, the formation of a "red-green" government of Social Democrats and Greens in NRW was the prelude to the formation of the same type of coalition after the national elections in 1998,



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The lead candidate of the BüSo party in the NRW elections, Katarzyna "Kascha" Kruczkowski, organizes in Cologne, April 24. The party fielded 34 candidates, and was the only party that offered voters solutions to the crisis.

bringing the Greens into a national government for the first time. In 2005, the Social Democrats were voted out in NRW, being replaced by a CDU-led coalition, and only a few months later, the Christian Democrats formed a "Grand Coalition" with the SPD on the national level.



The BüSo's website features a video prepared for the NRW elections. Titled "North Rhine-Westphalia: From Duisburg to Mars," it conveys the optimism of the party's campaign, stressing high-tech development and Classical culture. On the video, candidate Kascha Kruczkowski, shown against a backdrop of the state's industrial heartland, discusses what makes the BüSo unique and so vitally important for Germany today. Also shown: the BüSo campaigning in Cologne on April 21. The sign reads, "From NRW to Mars: Throw the Green Zeitgeist onto the Compost Heap."

Coalition Maneuvers Don't Mean Much

Today, with the defeat of the party of the highly unpopular incumbent Gov. Jürgen Rüttgers (CDU), the CDU will either be replaced by a coalition led by the SPD (SPD-Greens, SPD-Greens and either the Free Democrats, or the Linke), or stay in the government in a Grand Coalition with the SPD. Rüttgers had been trying to prepare the ground for a coalition with the Greens, but crucial constituencies of the traditionally more conservative, pro-industry CDU wanted none of it.

The NRW vote also means that Merkel's coalition will no longer have a majority in the national parliament. That state has six votes in the upper house of parliament, the Bundesrat, and now the CDU has lost its majority there. The Bundesrat has veto power over most legislation passed by the other house, the Bundestag.

The various scenarios for new power constellations have one major flaw which has not gone unnoticed, naturally, by many voters, namely that the anti-industrial Greens have been given a pivotal role which, were they to enter a new NRW state government, would be a disaster for the region that has been the industrial power-



<http://bueso.de>



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house of Germany. This state has had that status for 150 years, and still does today, in spite of all the deindustrialization that globalization and lunatic ecologism have caused.

The only way for NRW to sustain its population in the midst of this onrushing global economic depression, is through a program of global real economic development which provides the precondition for reindustrialization of Germany's productive potential. Since all the establishment parties are flirting with the Greens, reindustrialization is ruled out in these coalition maneuvers.

LaRouche Movement's Intervention

Therefore, the intervention of the BüSo (Civil Rights Solidarity Movement) with its pro-industrial program, is unique and crucial. The BüSo program, which is presented on a DVD under the title, "From Duisburg to Mars" (<http://bueso.de/>) tells the history of NRW in three parts: 1) industrialization in the second half of the 19th Century, and the state's development into the powerhouse of Germany as a whole; 2) industrial demolition after the two world wars, followed by rebuilding of industry in the postwar reconstruction era of the 1950s, and then deindustrialization by monetarist cost-cutters, globalizers, and ecologist radicals; and 3) the need for reindustrialization now, focussed on the development of 21st-Century frontier technologies like maglev railroad systems, space vehicles, as well as mining systems for tapping the mineral resources of the Moon and later Mars, and, naturally, systems for allowing humans to live permanently on the Moon and on other planets.

These frontier technologies also include high-temperature (pebble-bed) nuclear reactors and thermonuclear fusion reactors.

The BüSo is the only political party to address these issues, whereas the establishment parties have preferred to engage in a mud-slinging campaign against their rivals, evading any reference to the economic depression and its effects on the export-oriented industrial sectors of NRW, and, naturally, avoiding any suggestion for a real economic recovery program. All that the voters have been offered by the establishment parties, have been variants of a “green industrial revolution,” which supposedly would create new and well-paid jobs. By contrast, the program of the BüSo and its 34, mostly young, candidates have caught the attention of more and more voters.

The ‘First Kesha, Now Kascha!’ Campaign

The impact of the BüSo campaign was enhanced by the energetic presence of Kesha Rogers, the LaRouche Democrat who won the Democratic Party primary in the 22nd Congressional District in Texas two months ago, and who took part in the last two weeks of campaigning in NRW. Five public events with Rogers in the cities of Bielefeld, Dortmund, Bochum, Cologne, and Aachen were well attended, and showed voters the meaning of the BüSo campaign slogan—“First Kesha, now Kascha!” Rogers won her primary under the slogan “Save NASA, Impeach Obama,” and that aggressive approach can make Kascha Kruckowski, the leader of the BüSo slate in NRW, a leading political factor in the state.

Voters attending the five BüSo campaign events with “Kesha and Kascha” also experienced something unique, when Rogers and three members of the LaRouche Youth Movement sang the beautiful Negro spiritual “Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?” The BüSo’s commitment to a revival of a culture of Classical music that elevates the human mind, stands in striking contrast to the noisy, mind-blowing rock music, which the establishment parties usually play at their events. The BüSo is out to revive the work of the great minds of Classical culture—Nicho-



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LaRouche Democrat Kesha Rogers, candidate for Congress in Texas, spent two weeks in NRW, bringing the lessons of her primary victory to the BüSo and its supporters. Here she is shown in Cologne on April 24.

las Cusa and Gottfried Leibniz in philosophy, Friedrich Schiller in poetry and drama, and Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart in music. When national BüSo chairwoman Helga Zepp-LaRouche keynoted the campaign events, she put a strong focus on this cultural dimension. No other politician in Germany is capable of doing that, at present.

The BüSo campaign’s principal effort was to address the global financial-economic crash, and to get voters to look at the national and regional situation from that vantage point. The campaign occurred in the context, of course, of the acute crisis, into which the European Currency Zone has been driven by the failure of the political elites of Germany (and of Europe as a whole) to respond in a sane way to the so-called “Greek crisis,” which is really a crisis of the British-centered monetarist financial system.

Voters have watched their elected politicians, especially those of the CDU, throw billions of euros of taxpayers’ money into the Greek abyss created by speculators, while calling on citizens to tighten their belts, and burying all plans for “costly” repair of infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads, water, and power supply. Voters in NRW were extremely angry, and scenes of citizens yelling at CDU politicians at campaign booths were reported in large numbers in the past two or three weeks.

By contrast, when voters flocked around BüSo campaign booths, they were engaged in constructive discussions with the party’s candidates and campaign activists, showing interest in the program for recovery. Even before the polling places opened May 9, one result of the election campaign was already clear: Whatever the outcome would be in terms of votes cast for one or the other party, the campaign of the BüSo had become the talk of the town in many large and small cities in the state. And that shows that there is a real potential for turning around the political and economic situation of Germany, even in the near future. That effect will resonate in the rest of the nation—and that is the main message sent out by these elections.