

When Will Atomic Power Return To Germany?

by Rainer Apel

At the meeting of the G-8 Energy Ministers in Moscow on March 16, Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has repeatedly urged his own nation to make special efforts to increase the percentage of Russia's power that is generated by nuclear plants, presently at 16%, to 20%, had ironic "praise" for the Germans: "Even in Germany, where our colleagues had announced that they were going to phase out the country's nuclear energy program, nuclear power plants currently produce around 28% of Germany's electricity—not a bad figure at all."

But, it is a bad figure: Had the German elites not opted out of nuclear technology development, Germany, like France, could have almost 80% of its power supply generated by nuclear plants. Other nations of Europe, such as Austria and Poland, have also opted out of nuclear power generation, but the green ideology with its hysterical anti-technology bias, has had its most devastating effects in Germany. This is not only bad for the Germans; it is bad for all Europeans, because Germany, Europe's leading industrial producer, needs an enormous volume of power to maintain its industrial output.

Germany is importing electricity—most of it from France, but some also from the Czech Republic and Ukraine, all of which generate a substantial, and growing portion of their electricity from nuclear plants. In terms of power generation, the German elites have brainwashed themselves into the illusion that by the year 2050, most of the power supply will be based on "alternate" energy sources, such as wind, solar, and geothermic. At present, there is no political force in Germany outside the LaRouche movement that openly calls for new nuclear power plants. The political elites are sticking to their 2000 agreement with the then-governing Social Democratic (SPD)-Green coalition, on the total exit from nuclear by 2021. They have stuck to this agreement, although since November 2005, the Greens no longer are in the government. Germany is now governed by a Grand Coalition of Christian Democrats (CDU-CSU) and the SPD.

German Economics Minister Michael Glos (CSU) said, during a visit to Japan on March 22, that it was his "personal opinion" that his country should return to nuclear power. "I think there have been changes in public opinion," he said. "The use of safe nuclear plants is the path that we should take, within the context of the G-8 and the European Union." Some in Glos's party, the Bavarian state section of the Christian

Democrats, want to present a "pro-nuclear position paper" at the April 3 "national energy summit."

But the CDU-CSU alliance of Chancellor Angela Merkel is being blackmailed by its coalition partner, the firmly anti-nuclear SPD. The SPD has insisted that any debate on nuclear technology at the energy summit be excluded from the agenda. Merkel's own party is green enough to make it acquiesce, because the green paradigm shift in the 1970s and 1980s has also deeply penetrated the CDU. It was a CDU-led government, under Chancellor Helmut Kohl, which in 1991 announced the shutdown of the fast breeder project.

Green Takeover of the SPD

The main problem, though, after the ousting of the Greens from the government, is the SPD, where the green brainwashing has been the deepest. Indicative is what happened at the SPD's own "energy conference," in Berlin on March 6. There, national party chairman Matthias Platzeck said that "progress must stop going at a snail's pace," and called nuclear power and oil the "energy sources of the past" which have to be replaced by "sources of the future." That is why the SPD would never again say "yes" to the atom, he added.

The SPD's Minister of Environmental Affairs in the Grand Coalition government, Siegmund Gabriel, said in his speech at the conference, that "we must regain freedom, and that means to be free from the atom and oil." The energy future of the SPD: wind, solar, energy conservation, efficient use of both hard coal and lower-quality soft brown coal, and natural gas.

The aforesaid is evidence of the fact that the SPD has replaced British Prime Minister Tony Blair's "Third Way" with "no way." This may be because of the late February meeting between Platzeck and Blair, in London, and the March 3-4 Policy Network conference in Venice. The Policy Network is chaired by Peter Mandelson of Britain's New Labour. Anthony Giddens, another Third Way spin doctor, plays a key role in the Network. At the end of March, a follow-on conference is scheduled in Berlin.

Platzeck's longtime advisor, Tobias Dürr, attended the meeting in Venice; another former Platzeck advisor, Sebastian Heil, is now general party manager of the SPD. Dürr is publisher of the *Berliner Republik*, journal of the so-called "SPD party left" or "Networkers," as they call themselves. These are the people who made the inner-party coup against party chairman Franz Müntefering at the end of last year, and who then took control of most of the newly elected SPD executive. With this group in control of the SPD leadership, the Social Democrats are not going to drop their anti-nuclear crusade.

But maybe, the dark clouds that are gathering around Tony Blair, over the illegal party funding affair that has broken into the open, will relieve the SPD from the tight London grip, and create breathing space for the Social Democratic minority that wants to develop nuclear technology again.