

Uncertainty hangs over Helmut Kohl's re-election

by Elisabeth Hellenbroich

Four weeks before the German parliamentary elections on Oct. 16, the outcome of this election in the most important continental European power remains uncertain. It is by no means assured that the ruling Christian Democrat-Liberal (CDU/CSU-FDP) coalition will get enough votes for a fourth legislative term.

Given Kohl's foreign policy orientation, from the standpoint of Germany's foreign partners (with the exception of a disgruntled Great Britain) everything speaks for a continuation of German politics under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. This orientation includes his renewed transatlantic alliance with U.S. President Clinton, and the commitment by both politicians to cooperate in the development of eastern Europe, which is in line with Kohl's close cooperation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. It also includes Kohl's strong emphasis that a strong Europe can only be built on the basis of an ever stronger German-French alliance.

Yet the reason for the uncertainty lies in the following factors:

1) Kohl's Achilles' heel lies in the international financial situation. Despite his rhetoric that the big "recovery is around the corner," real income is going to drop in Germany by another 5% while the catastrophic unemployment—with 4 million officially registered and 4 million unofficially jobless—is going to remain and will be the determining factor in the formulation of German domestic policy options. There is no "upswing" on the horizon. Instead, major German companies will go into another round of layoffs as has been already announced by the automobile firm Daimler Benz, among others. At the recent hastily called together European Union finance ministers conference in Lindau on Sept. 10-

11, none other than German Finance Minister Theo Waigel warned of too much optimism that the recession would be over. It was Waigel who developed as the vision for the future, the need for more budget control and even harsher austerity. Any major bankruptcy in Germany or a wave of turmoil on the international financial markets between now and Oct. 16, would shatter the facade of Kohl's "stability" image.

2) Kohl's chances of reelection as chancellor could also be undermined by an electoral stalemate. The liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP), Kohl's coalition partner, has been thrown out of six state parliaments during the course of one year's elections: September 1993, Hamburg; March 1994, Lower Saxony; June 1994, Saxony-Anhalt, and September 1994, Brandenburg and Saxony (in the former East Germany), where the FDP got the biggest defeat ever, and shrank respectively, to a mere 1.7 and 1.2% of the vote. It was also eliminated from the European Parliament in the June 1994 European Parliamentary election, a portent of things to come even though it has no direct effect on German politics. Thus, it is expected that in the national balloting the FDP might not make it into the national parliament and will shrink to an insignificant factor.

On the other hand, the PDS, the successor of the former communist puppet party of East Germany, the so-called Socialist Unity Party (SED), seems likely to win three direct mandates in the three East Berlin districts: Berlin Mitte-Penzlauer Berg (Stefan Heym), Berlin Hellersdorf/Marzahn (Gregor Gysi), and Berlin Friedrichshain/Lichtenberg (Christa Luft). This would mean that the PDS would enter the Bundestag with 27 parliamentarians, and we could see the following

scenarios emerging:

Growth of east German communists

If the FDP is out of the picture and the CDU-CSU alliance fails to win a majority, Rudolf Scharping from the Social Democracy (SPD) would try to form a coalition government with the Greenies-League 90, which in all probability he could only form if the PDS went along. Thus we could see on a national scale a repetition of the Magdeburg model (in Saxony Anhalt) where after the June federal elections, an SPD-Greenie minority government constituted itself and was able to rule only with the explicit tolerance of the PDS. This "red-green-red" de facto government came into being, even though numerically, the SPD got fewer votes in that state than the CDU.

How is it possible that the former SED communist party, which did not change its program but only its label, can get so many votes four years after the collapse of communism in East Germany—a whopping 20-32%, in particular in East Berlin? One factor is the fact that this party continues to be kept alive by slush funds which were simply transferred out of East Germany during the transition period with the help of the empire of communist mafioso Schalck-Golodkowski, the KGB, and the transitional government head, Günther Modrow. This scandal is still under investigation.

A second factor is that the biggest voter potential for the PDS does not come from blue-collar workers, but from academic layers and administrative employees who lost their privileges when communism fell. With 120,000 members—it is the party with the biggest active membership in East Germany—the PDS organizes militantly among the disgruntled and disillusioned and represents itself as the "protest party."

A look at the program and leadership confirms that the PDS is the continuation of the old East German communist SED. Most of the leading members of the PDS have been members of the old SED since 1967 (including party leader Gregor Gysi), and a look at the PDS program leaves no doubt about the ideology: "Mankind is grateful for the world historical socialist October Revolution which occurred in 1917 and which paved the way for a favorable development of the 20th century. . . ."

"The antifascist-democratic changes in East Germany and the efforts to build a social society were the opposite of the efforts to save capitalism in West Germany. . . ."

"Despite many differences in opinion we commonly share the opinion that the dominance of private ownership of capital must be overcome."

Officially, Social Democratic chancellor candidate Rudolf Scharping claims that he under no circumstances would ever think about such an eventual option—a minority SPD-Greenie government supported from the outside by the PDS communists—but power, once within reach, speaks a different language, and thus the disaster witnessed in Magdeburg

could repeat itself on a national scale. Naturally, there are still other variants, such as a Grand Coalition between the CDU/CSU and SPD which the older SPD generation and Kohl would opt for, if no majority coalition government could be formed. This solution was mooted many months ago as an option in times of extreme economic turbulence and national emergency.

Who or what is Rudolf Scharping?

Several weeks before the October election, Scharping tried to present himself as part of a hastily put together Social Democratic leadership triumvirate consisting of himself, his arch-rival Gerhard Schröder (currently governor of Lower Saxony), and Oskar Lafontaine from the Saarland. This indicates that Scharping by himself was ruining the image of the SPD. With this tactical turn, as well as the announcement of his shadow cabinet, Scharping wants to evoke the image of the postwar SPD leadership trio, Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt, and Herbert Wehner. In a future Scharping cabinet, Gerhard Schröder would be responsible for economy, infrastructure, and energy; Lafontaine would become finance minister; Hans Ulrich Klose, former Hamburg mayor, would take over defense; Monika Griefahn, the ex-chief of Greenpeace of Germany and present SPD environment and agricultural minister in Lower Saxony, would become energy minister; and Dr. Peter Glotz would be named science and research minister. Günther Verheugen (the party secretary who switched from the FDP into the SPD in 1982) would become foreign and development minister.

Other members of the shadow cabinet include: Wolfgang Thierse, SPD vice-chairman from east Berlin—minister for the reconstruction of eastern Germany; Anke Fuchs—minister for family and seniors; Rudolf Dreier—labor minister (at present chief of the Labor Society for Employment Issues); Ulrich Maurer—minister of the interior, now in the Baden-Württemberg SPD-CDU ruling coalition; Ilse Brusi—housing minister; and Dr. Herta Däubler Gmelin—justice minister.

As to his electoral platform, Scharping's standard line is that he will fight against unemployment and for more social justice and that, as he reiterated at the inauguration of the newly founded German-American academy in Berlin, he remains a loyal partner in the Atlantic Alliance. These have been traditional parts of the Social Democratic credo for decades. But the core of Scharping's "shift" lies in what he calls an "Ecological New Deal." Scharping wants an ecological restructuring of the economy, meaning lowered labor costs and more taxes for environment, energy, and nature, as well as a total halt of nuclear energy. On Sept. 1, the SPD Basic Standards Committee presented its paper: "Give Progress a New Direction—Solidarity and Sustainable Development." The paper's demand is to halt the excessive use of resources, in favor of a new "resource management" approach. We need to completely get out of atomic energy,

and replace this energy source with solar, wind, and biomass energy, the paper demanded. Scharping and his team want a new definition of technology which does not behave in nature "like an occupying army in a hostile land." By the "Eco New Deal," the SPD means a new ecological taxation where the citizen would have to pay an additional 5% ecology tax. In other words, a draconian austerity would be prescribed for Germany's industry, where those branches which invest in environment-oriented industry would enjoy tax benefits at the expense of traditional industrial enterprises. In his recent book, whose translated title is *What Needs to Be Done Now*, Scharping proudly refers to the 1972 Club of Rome *Limits to Growth* report as being the key guide in his philosophy. In agreement with U.S. Vice President Albert Gore (whose book he praises), Scharping can only envision the future of mankind along the path of "sustainable development" and a functioning global environmental management. Scharping speaks about "recycling markets" as the future markets, the boom of "environmental" industries, alleging that in Germany in 1990 they had a turnover of 325 billion deutschemarks and 680,000 jobs were created. What Scharping and his future energy minister Monika Griefahn seem to seek, is the complete dismantling of the German nuclear industry. That would sound a death knell to the hard core of German industry—a slower, softer version of the murderous Morgenthau Plan, which aimed at turning Germany back to the pastoral age in the postwar period and which fortunately was not implemented.

Working hard to be a chameleon

Now let us take a look at Rudolf Scharping, the man who throughout his life so passionately fought against nuclear energy and the stationing of cruise missiles, and yet remains so nondescript. Scharping is described by most as "diligent," "reliable," a good administrator. In the words of the former Rhineland Palatinate governor Otto Wilhelm: "He is a . . . trained politician . . . a chameleon personality. Absolutely determined when it comes to getting his aims realized. He does his business with the 'thoroughness' of an accountant and he is very unscrupulous. What helped him was always the weakness of the SPD faction." Kohl once said that Scharping is the type of SPD politician who made his career in the SPD "on the drawing boards." Others said Scharping made his career with the seat of his pants and plenty of stick-to-it-iveness.

Born in 1947 into a family of seven children, to a father who was a furniture dealer in the Westerwald village Niederelbert (Rhineland Palatinate), Rudolf entered the Social Democracy in 1966 after qualifying to enter the university. In the same year, he began his studies at the University of Bonn with a major in jurisprudence, sociology, and political science. After 13 semesters he wrote his master's thesis on the somewhat strange subject "Problems of a Regional Election Campaign, Exemplified in the 1969 SPD Parlia-

The greening of an industrial society

On Sept. 15, something rather unusual happened for a Germany that is right in the middle of the last phase of the national election campaign: A prominent audience of 500 businessmen at the opening event of the 39th "Nordbau" in Neumuenster (near Hamburg), the largest traditional exhibition of construction firms in northern Germany, listened to a keynote speaker who did not come from any of the big parties of the nation's political establishment. Rather, they listened to none other than the chairwoman of the **Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BBS)** party, Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

Her uncompromised endorsement of big new industrial and infrastructure projects as a key science driver and source of jobs certainly was "politically incorrect" for an elite like the German one that has long since subscribed to the doubtful virtues of "ecologism," but the speech received broad applause from among the audience. The fact that she had been chosen to be the keynote speaker reflected various factors, but mostly that citizens who have either an interest in production or are entrepreneurs themselves, are fed up with all that "greenie" talk that is becoming increasingly dominant in the media and in public statements of politicians across the established party landscape.

The BBS is, at this moment, the only party in this German national election campaign that is not "ecologized" but holds on to the values of industrial society as we have known it for the past 100 years or so. All the other parties represent variations of the same "green" ideology and pose no real alternatives to the voters.

The relatively best among the established parties is the **Christian Social Union (CSU)**, the Bavarian state branch of the Christian Democrats (CDU) of Chancellor Helmut

mentary Election Campaign in the Electoral District of Bad Kreuznach." His professor was Karl Dietrich Bracher, who became known in postwar Germany for his studies of National Socialism and the unstable Weimar Republic which had preceded the Nazi regime. Obviously the master's degree was a mere formality: Scharping always felt more at home in climbing up the ladder as an apparatchik of the SPD. Scharping gathered his "thesis research" by making his first run for office as an SPD candidate in the 1969 election in the Bad Kreuznach district. He married in 1971 and has three daughters.

It was former treasurer of the SPD Wilhelm Dröschner—

Kohl. The CSU, which throughout the postwar period has run Bavaria with absolute majorities, has also been penetrated by “greenie” views but keeps backing state-funding of high-tech sectors such as aerospace, space technology, microelectronics, and a state role in arranging banking loans to corporate investors.

By comparison, the CSU’s bigger sister party, the **Christian Democratic Union (CDU)**, is far more free market-oriented and is endorsing the withdrawal of the state from the big industry, from industrial and space research, and from the public transport sector. The CDU has reserved a larger portion of its program for “green” positions and is pushing “ecology technologies” as the alleged core of German industry in the 21st century.

The CDU, and even more so the CSU, also endorse nuclear power and other modern technologies like the Transrapid maglev train system, but it is very slow in the realization of these issues, while ecologism is becoming prevalent in most of the party’s campaigning. As the major partner in all German government coalitions since late 1982, the Christian Democrats’ infection with ecologist and free market views is one of the main reasons for the nation’s continued economic ailments—one of them being the fact that neither the CDU nor the CSU have any program to overcome the staggering jobless rate of 7 million Germans. Nor would they want any broad discussion on concepts that collide with principles of the free market or ecologism: They often are and have, very often, very nasty responses to initiatives by the BBS party and other LaRouche-linked organizations for the creation of, for example, a new national banking system to protect the nation against speculation, the creation of a tax on derivatives, and guarantee of a constant flow of capital into real production.

The **Social Democracy (SPD)**, the second-biggest party in the political landscape of Germany, which was the first to adopt ecologism 20 years ago, is now campaigning with a program that even goes far beyond the radicalism

of such ecologist groups as Greenpeace.

Chaired by “environmental expert” Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, a man who a few weeks ago confessed that he would prefer to be an orangutan (!) rather than a human being (if he had the choice), the SPD’s party ideology department passed a platform that calls for a total exit from nuclear technology and from “unecological” aspects of space research, and also proclaims the total transformation of the German industrial society into an “ecology-centered” society. Promising “1 million ecology jobs” to the Germans, the SPD remains silent on the several other million jobs its program will kill in industry.

Consequently, the SPD looks to the **Greens** as a favored coalition partner. The paradox is that the Green party is now being outflanked by the ecologized SPD to an extent that it isn’t certain that they will receive enough “green” voters to re-enter the parliament in the Oct. 16 elections. The same fate may be suffered by the liberal **Free Democratic Party (FDP)**, Chancellor Kohl’s minor coalition partner in Bonn since 1982, which has failed to cross the mandatory 5% hurdle for seats in the parliament in all elections of the past two years. The FDP has also become superfluous, because the CDU has adopted so many liberalist views in the past 12 years that there is no longer any need for an independent liberal party in the German political party system.

There remains—as a “red” horse—the **Party of Democratic Socialism**, or PDS, the party of the former communists in eastern Germany, who have cleansed the most blatant aspects of Stalinism from their program to replace them with radical ecologist verbiage. The PDS, which hopes to absorb votes from the Greens, is very close to clearing the 5% hurdle in national voter percentages and may even win parliamentary seats in eastern precincts directly. The PDS helped an SPD-Green minority government into power in the eastern state of Saxony-Anhalt on June 12, and is willing to do the same on a national level after Oct. 16.—*Rainer Apel*

a close friend of Herbert Wehner, the left-leaning member of the postwar SPD leadership triumvirate of Brandt-Schmidt-Wehner—who helped Scharping up the party ladder. With his help, Scharping became an aide to SPD federal parliamentarian Dieter Sperling, who was later coordinator of the German-Soviet Friendship Association. In 1975, Scharping became a city council member in Lahnstein, then state leader of the SPD youth organization, the Jusos. That same year, he was elected to the Juso executive, where he took charge of student work, and this is when his name first shows up in the archives of the SPD. In 1979, he became parliamentary secretary of the SPD in Mainz, and in 1985 state chairman

of the SPD in Mainz. The latter position came to him by default, after its occupant, Klaus von Dohnany, had to leave the job in 1981 in order to take over the office of Mayor Klose. Then, in 1991, Scharping became the governor of Rhineland Palatinate. What is remarkable about Scharping is how unremarkable he is. He never wrote anything significant, he never excelled in his speeches, he never deeply impressed anybody with ideas, he never was a member of parliament in Bonn—but he was always there, diligent and thorough, like an accountant ready to become the receiver, when scandals erupted and when posts became vacant.

Sniffing the winds of opportunity (the big international

foundations were lavishly funding environmentalism and zero-growth ideology by now), Scharping was one of the very first who coordinated demonstrations and protests against the Mühlheim Kärlich atomic plant in Rhineland-Palatinate. The plant got shut down as a result. Scharping was among the first who actively protested against the “Rhineland Palatinate Aircraft Carrier,” and against the stationing of chemical weapons and cruise missiles by the United States on German soil. When the first cruise missiles were stationed in Hunsrück, he called for demonstrations.

Meanwhile, he began to junket abroad, both into the communist East and to the United States. In 1987, he traveled with an SPD state parliamentary group into the German Democratic Republic, where he met SED communist top leaders Erich Honecker and Hermann Axen, and where he gave a press conference about how, in the future, both the SPD and SED could work to prevent chemical weapons. The same subject he discussed a year later in Moscow with Vadim Zagladin, first deputy of the international section of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee.

Meanwhile, in 1984 he made his first visit to the United States, at the invitation of U.S. Ambassador Arthur Burns. He again got invited in 1986 by the AFL-CIO, the Foreign Service Institute, the Institute for Defense Analysis, and Stanford University. In November 1989, he called for the cancellation of the NATO Troop Statute.

A typical SPD ‘yuppie’

Aside from being an anti-nuclear fanatic, Scharping is the typical expression of the SPD “yuppie” generation. These people talk about the need for a paradigm shift—a mixture of media culture and media literacy, and localist romanticism. Scharping once said in an interview, “While in former times people would judge a politician according to his backbone today they judge him by the tie he wears.” He likes to portray himself as a man of deeds and not words.

A party whose leaders have no cultural tradition, which always goes with the “mainstream populist thought” in taste, will only enlarge the terrible spiritual vacuum that has afflicted the minds of the young generation. The mere rhetoric that a new beginning, a “new deal,” is needed, without any real vision of what Germany’s role should be in the future, and with the lack of creative ideas, could turn out to be a very dangerous mix, paving the way for those who wish to exploit the fact that most youth in eastern and western Germany are worried about having no jobs.

In contrast, the Civil Rights Movement-Solidarity slate led by Helga Zepp-LaRouche is making a programmatic intervention into the election, which points to the real strategic problems which Germany will have to face in the future: the disintegration of the financial markets, a reform of the national bank, and a Eurasian reconstruction plan with the emphasis on infrastructure, as well as the fight to defend Classical culture.

Interview: Adel Hussein

Cairo a ‘bad surprise for U.S., Egypt’

Adel Hussein is secretary general of the opposition Labor Party in Egypt, and publisher of the opposition newspaper As Sha’ab. In a discussion with Muriel Mirak-Weissbach in Amman, Jordan on Sept. 17, he gave the following evaluation of the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development which took place in Cairo on Sept. 5-13:

Hussein: Surely what happened was a really bad surprise for the American administration and also for the Egyptian administration. They thought that it would be an easy job, and that they could use the influence of the Egyptian government and the status it enjoys among Arab nations, to impose the U.N. document as it is and have all the developing countries, and the Islamic countries in particular, swallow this document.

What happened, as you know, was the opposite, and, accordingly, as I said, it was a bad surprise for the American administration and the Egyptian government, and also their allies. I can say that this happened thanks to the initiatives of the Vatican and also the very positive role of the Schiller Institute; this effort initiated the opposition in our countries and it enlightened us to a great extent about what is really planned, and supported us with serious information. Accordingly, the counter-campaign started.

If we look at Egypt, in particular, I refer to the influence of Egypt and its role among Arab and Islamic nations. When I say that, I mean the cultural influence and weight of Egypt traditionally in this area. In this regard, we should refer particularly to Al Azhar, which is the famous Islamic institute. Although the role of Al Azhar has undergone erosion as a result of different political considerations, and consequently the traditional weight of Al Azhar among Islamic nations is less than what it used to be, still it is influential. Inside Egypt, surely Al Azhar has a special weight and influence.

What happened, according to what we published and what we initiated—and I think we are quite satisfied and proud of the role of our party, the Labor Party, and our paper, *As Sha’ab*—it happens that it was we who initiated the campaign and explained the different concepts and dangers