

Pro-American Germans Oppose Iraq War

by Rainer Apel

Following the two mass protests in Germany against an Iraq war—the Munich peace march of 35,000 on Feb. 8 and the nationwide day of protest of 500,000 in Berlin and 250,000 in many other cities on Feb. 15—there has been a shift in the public debate away from the simplistic view that “Bush wants Iraqi oil,” to a more profound look at the unsavory marriage between monetarist economics, global geopolitics, and war designs that motivates the war party. The LaRouche movement in Germany has played an important role in bringing about this shift, through massive leafletting at the demonstrations, focussing public attention on the organized crime-linked “chicken-hawk” factions in Washington and Israel, and on Lyndon and Helga LaRouche’s policies for a solution to the global strategic and economic crisis.

When Angela Merkel, the chairman of Germany’s opposition Christian Democratic Union (CDU), who supports the war drive, appeared at Georgetown University in Washington on Feb. 25, she was met with LaRouche Youth Movement organizers with a banner that read, “Angela Go Home! Americans and Europeans Want Development and Not War! LaRouche in 2004.” A German youth visiting Washington from Berlin intervened after her speech, informing her that Vice President Dick Cheney’s chief of staff, Lewis Libby, was the lawyer for Russian mafia front-man Marc Rich, and that the Cheney-Wolfowitz crowd had been pushing a doctrine of pre-emptive nuclear war for more than a decade. Merkel tried to dismiss the challenge with the dubious statement that “one needs to deal with politicians in power”; but the many German journalists on the scene were fascinated, filming and interviewing the LaRouche organizers. A news clip on the intervention was broadcast, at least, on northern Germany’s N-TV on Feb. 26; this, in a country where the media blackout of LaRouche has been almost total.

Departing from the chicken-hawk line that opposition to the war equals “anti-Americanism,” there is increasing mention now in the German media of the fact of enormous resistance to the war in the United States itself.

For example Walter Mixa, chief Catholic military chaplain of the German Armed Forces—who definitely is not anti-American and has many American friends—reported after a tour of the United States in mid-February, that he had met a lot of skepticism about the war, notably among military people he had talked to at military bases like that at El Paso, Texas. The views of a senior retired officer of the German Army, quoted by the Paris-based *International Herald Tribune* (without



At Georgetown University in Washington, German camera crews film LaRouche organizers rebuffing Christian Democrat leader Angela Merkel, who came to Washington hoping to curry favor and overturn German opposition to an Iraq war. German television news showed a LaRouche youth organizer from Berlin confronting Merkel.

giving his name) on Feb. 20, can be taken as typical of many German professional soldiers who have, throughout their careers, been on the side of the United States. “You Americans have been telling us for 60 years that we must never go to war,” he said. “Now you attack us because Germany doesn’t want to go to war.”

It is worth noting that protesters at the mass demonstrations in Germany included many people who would, under other circumstances, never have even come close to the usual left-wing peaceniks they were marching together with this time.

Social Democratic Chancellor Gerhard Schröder is backed in his anti-war stance by many Germans who would at “normal” times never have voted for his Social Democratic Party. Thus, while the CDU’s Merkel wrote in a pro-Bush commentary for the Feb. 20 issue of the *Washington Post*, that Schröder “does not speak for all Germans,” it is certainly the case that Schröder speaks for many more Germans than Merkel does.

What Schröder said in his special address to the Bundestag (parliament) on Feb. 13, reflected what a vast majority of Germans think. He said: “The prime task of international policy is the prevention of war. That is our orientation mark. No realpolitik nor any security doctrine must lead us into clandestinely getting used to view war as kind of a normal means of policy. And even as the last resort of conflict solution, the use of military force is confined to strict limitations. The exception is, notably, self-defense against an imminent armed attack, or Security Council-mandated defense against an imminent, grave threat to international peace. In this sense, in a process lasting several centuries, international law has been formulated. The Charter of the United Nations is based on this principle of a ban on violence.”

Schröder added that there is nothing anti-American in that, as the foundation for this development of international law and policy has been laid by the United States itself, under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, almost 60 years ago. "The core of this process is the principle to put the strength of law in the place of the right of the stronger," Schröder emphasized. The majority of renowned German experts on international law agree with that, as numerous interviews over recent weeks have shown.

Prof. Udo Steinbach, director of the renowned German Oriental Institute, made two notable presentations at an event of the Atlantic Academy of Rhineland-Palatinate in Ingelheim on Feb. 17. He pointed out that the anti-colonialist policy of FDR in the Mideast and Persian Gulf regions prior and during World War II has increasingly been driven back by other currents in U.S. policymaking, especially since the current U.S. President took office in January 2001. The issue of Iraq became much more than just some matter of an "unfinished 1991 agenda" that George W. Bush had inherited from his Presidential father, Steinbach said. Scenarios that had been worked out before, for geopolitical control of the entire extended region from eastern Africa to the western borders of China, via the Mideast, Persian Gulf, South and Central Asia, became the official U.S. agenda after the younger Bush took office. Iraq is just a convenient target in this context, Steinbach said. The real strategic game is for control of that entire part of the world; and there, Iran, which has a much larger economic, population, and military potential, is much more of an "enemy" for the neo-imperialist geopoliticians such as Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Defense Policy Board Chairman Richard Perle, and Zbigniew Brzezinski. Steinbach added that certain empire-minded circles inside the British establishment that have found a mouthpiece in Prime Minister Tony Blair, have joined the Wolfowitzers in their military mobilization, in the pursuit of nostalgic dreams about returning, in the Persian Gulf, to strategic positions which they were forced to quit in the late 1960s.

Over the last two weeks of February, this theme of broader Anglo-American geopolitical scenarios has been taken up in numerous radio and other media interviews by leading German politicians. For example Ludger Volmer, former assistant foreign minister, made the point in several interviews that objective number one in the present anti-war campaign is, naturally, to stop the war against Iraq; but objective number two is to drive back the geopolitical designs that go far beyond Iraq.

Such statements are an indication that the U.S. Presidential campaign for 2004 has begun also in Germany, now. And, as many Germans under "normal" circumstances would never have supported Chancellor Schröder, are doing so now, many Germans will also become highly interested in Lyndon H. LaRouche, as the only real alternative to the Bush team. The news coverage of the LaRouche Youth Movement is an unmistakable sign in this direction.