

Merkel blasted in German Parliament

Angela Merkel has clearly more to fear than the recently formed 'Alternative for Germany' party which polls indicated could be supported by about a quarter of German voters. On 27 June the SPD candidate for the German Chancellorship in the September 2013 Federal election, Peer Steinbrück, launched a heated attack on her in the Bundestag.

Ridiculing a speech in which she promised to tackle the problem of the extremely high unemployment in the Eurozone countries, Steinbrück described her commitment of 6 billion Euro as a drop in the ocean compared with a real requirement of at least 20 billion over the next two years.

He also derided her domestic financial policies and accused her of having created debts of 100 billion Euro within Germany itself. To laughter and roars of approval he continued: "The youth unemployment and general unemployment about which you are talking, Frau Bundeskanzler, is a direct result of the completely one-sided policies that you have instigated in Europe. [...] The point is simply this: You do not know how to deal with money. If you ruled in the desert, sand would be in short supply."

At one point Steinbrück shouted: "You are living off the gains that we have made"; at another he interjected: "All you have done is to offer us empty bags. When you look into them there is nothing but pure air." The German press widely described the angry exchanges as a verbal duel won by Steinbrück. "Advantage Steinbrück", wrote Stern. The video (in German) can be viewed online:

<http://www.stern.de/politik/deutschland/schlagabtausch-steinbrueck-dominiert-rededuell-mit-merkel-2030893.html>

Translation by Professor Arthur Noble