

British 'Gaullism,' Or, How To Subvert European Technological Development

Unaccustomed grunts and groans have recently been heard emanating from an apparently new tribe in the British Isles. Dubbed "Gaullists" by Anglophile press outlets like the *Washington Post*, their vocabulary includes the phrases "high-technology growth," "rapid industrial expansion" and the like — an apparent resurrection of the economic policies strongly pursued by French Prime Minister de Gaulle and German Chancellor Adenauer in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Spokesmen for the group, most notably former British Prime Minister Ted Heath and current European Community (EEC) Commissioner Roy Jenkins, have been calling for a resurgence of economic activity in Europe through massive pan-European collaboration in industrial investment, and high-technology projects in aerospace, computers, and nuclear power as a way for insuring continued European independence from American domination.

Were General de Gaulle still alive, he would bare this attempt to muddy his name by the agents of "perfidious Albion." Far from being an exposition of prodevelopment thinking in Britain, this foul policy is a clearly thought-out strategy to prevent potential continental European-U.S. industrial and political collaboration, and set up Europe as a British-dominated power buffer set against any hopes of peaceful U.S.-Soviet economic relations. The fact that the British, with the aid of their agents of influence Schlesinger, Blumenthal, Miller and others are actively engaged in destroying the United States' technological and economic superiority only makes clearer the intent behind this so-called "Gaullist" shift.

The "Divide-and-Conquer" Game

With its own industrial potential beaten into the ground, and having failed to amass anything more than extractive industries to strip its colonies bare, Britain now stands defenseless against any major technological push in the United States and Soviet Union. Not surprisingly, therefore, one of the primary goals of British policy is to force a halt to the current SALT negotiations between the two superpowers. Insisting on a complete halt in "technological expansion," allegedly to curb the development of new weaponry, the British have made little secret of their real motives: halt U.S. and Soviet growth to the point where Her Majesty's Government can hobble alongside the U.S. and USSR as a still-viable "great power."

The Soviet leadership has correctly attacked recent statements by British Prime Minister James Callaghan in favor of the deployment of the cruise missile and neutron bomb in Europe as nothing more than an at-

tempt to plunge the SALT talks into total disarray. However, the "Gaullist" approach, as advocated by Britain's self-styled "Europeans," is just a more devious way of delivering the same end.

Writing in the January 1977 issue of *International Affairs*, the journal of the British intelligence think tank, IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies), IISS research assistant Richard Burt, boldly exposed the British game plan. He wrote:

Over the next decade, the superpower relationship at SALT could be gradually undermined by European military initiatives. Both in terms of finance and expertise, Western Europe is better placed to exploit developments in weapons than in early periods of technological change. Acting unilaterally or together, "middle level" powers such as Britain, France, and West Germany possess the means to acquire a new generation of more accurate and secure strategic weapons. At the minimum, nuclear armed cruise missiles might provide a cost-effective approach to maintaining the viability of existing European "minimum deterrent" forces in the 1980s and beyond. . . . But even in circumstances where Europe chooses not to explore strategic alternatives, *the exploitation of technology for theatre role would create new uncertainties for the Soviet Union.* . . . (emphasis added)

Britain and the EEC

Generally, the British have not been known for their interest in developing European industry. British attempts to introduce the Morgenthau plan turning industrial Germany into pasture land at the end of World War II are well known, as is the fact that British support for the Marshall Plan was given only because it eased Britain's financial burden as an occupying power at a time when the British population was facing even stricter rationing and austerity than during the war.

Not as well known is the fact that the European Coal and Steel Community — the pact signed by West Germany and France in the early 1950s as the beginning of industrial reconstruction — was possible only because of strong U.S. support in the face of open British attempts at sabotage. The pact, labeled "not economic but eminently political" in nature by its author, Robert Schuman, immediately sent the British into a tizzy. Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin branded it an "American-French conspiracy" against the British, and one British commentator noted that in the deal, "Not only was Britain's paramountcy in Western Europe being challenged by France, but in actively assisting the reconstruction of Germany and hoping for Franco-

German reconciliation, the very last thing the British Government was trying to do was to make a Franco-German rapprochement the nucleus for a continental unity." (1)

Despite continued British delusions of grandeur that somehow they still ruled the waves, albeit sharing them with the United States, by the end of the 1950s a remarkable fact was sinking into the pragmatic British skull: Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union were expanding at growth rates double and triple those of "Great" Britain, while British industry sank deeper and deeper into the mire of the City of London's debt heap, unable to raise the capital or find the markets needed to generate economic expansion.

Britain's insistence in the postwar period on leading the "Empire," instead of adopting a constructive role in rehabilitating Europe, had worn tempers thin in Washington, especially during the term of office of the Eisenhower Administration. Britain's ignominious defeat over Suez in 1956 only strengthened U.S. efforts to foster a strong Franco-German axis in Europe as a counter to British insanity.

Faced with this growing continental alliance, British Prime Minister Macmillan developed the idea of FTA, the Free Trade Association, essentially a European extension of Britain's colonial Commonwealth, which would extend preferential tariffs to British goods while bringing Europe under the British wing. When, with U.S. support, de Gaulle and Adenauer opted for the creation of the EEC as a way of countering Britain's grand scheme, Macmillan sent a raving memo to one of his cabinet ministers warning, "We must not be bullied . . . We could if we were driven to it, fight their movement . . . What the above amounts to is this: that we must take positive action in this field, to ensure that the wider free trade area is more attractive than the narrower Common Market of the Six. We must take the lead, either in widening their project or, if they will not cooperate with us, in opposing it."

Thwarted in this strategy, in large part by U.S. support for the Six, the British attempted various aspects of the "If-you-can't-beat-'em-join-'em" approach throughout the early 1960s. Britain's initial bid to join the EEC under the Macmillan Conservative government (three years after its Free Trade Area strategy collapsed) was crushed by de Gaulle. The formal signing of the Adenauer-de Gaulle pact in 1963, in addition to de Gaulle's commitment to building a "force de frappe" for France (the third western country other than the U.S. and Britain to do so) came as a stunning shock to the British, and forced a complete reevaluation of policy.

Line Against the U.S. "Multis"

At the core of their rethinking was the need to coopt the de Gaulle threat, and to pull Europe simultaneously away from American technological innovation that was building continental Europe's economy; and into the British orbit. So began the great myth of American multinational domination throughout European and later U.S. "liberal" circles — a policy deliberately and maliciously spread by British spokesmen and their foreign allies as a way of playing on (in particular) French Gaullists' known suspicion of any foreign influence in Europe.

This policy was most clearly espoused by Prime Minister Harold Wilson in his 1967 speech offering Britain's second application to join the EEC. Wilson warned that the spectre of a technological gap between Europe and the U.S. was "continuously widening . . . there is no future for Europe, or for Britain, if we allow American business and American industry so to dominate the strategic growth industries . . . that they, and not we, are able to determine the pace and direction of Europe's industrial advance . . . this is the road not to partnership but to an industrial helotry, which . . . will mean a declining influence in world affairs, for all of us in Europe."

At the forefront in developing this strategic turn was the historic policy-making center of British imperialism, the notorious Round Table group, whose publication, *The Round Table*, took every available opportunity to explain the British view. Writing in the journal's April 1968 issue, S.C. Leslie, honorary advisor to the British Ministry of Technology (then headed by Tony Benn, now Energy Minister, whose close ties with Friends of the Earth have gone a long way towards blocking British nuclear energy development) laid out the British plan to subvert Europe:

American technology comprises by far the most massive aggregation of advanced technology, managerial know-how, and capital. The Community lags behind and on all the evidence the gap continues to widen . . . Britain, having been refused entry once and fearing another ban, developed an alternative strategy. Her own comparatively large resources of scientific manpower, much of it organized in the biggest "centers of excellence" in Europe, together with the scientifically based industries which these resources fostered, were offered as a partial make-weight to America's technological and economic power, and a contribution to the upgrading of industry in the Community. . . . In fact, in the Europe of Jean Monnet (2), if the British government had not conceived the idea (of a European Technological Community — PG) as part of its strategy for entry, the Brussels authorities would have had to do so as a needed instrument of advance. . . . They would have been able to ensure the coordination of the official R and D activities of the constituent governments because these national operations could have been related to one coherent military strategy and to an industrial structure reading to face development without national bias.

In even more explicit terms, Leslie suggested that the greatest step Europe could make would be a "reversal among the present Six of the existing commercial reference for equipment locally made . . . and a new readiness to choose British because it is European, and to encourage the growth of British subsidiaries. . . ."

Atlanticism and Europeanism

To calm any fears of staunch British agents in the U.S. and elsewhere that Britain was adopting a bona fide Gaullist line, the Round Table assured its readers in a January 1967 editorial that Britain's prime allegiances would remain the Atlantic community and the Com-

monwealth: "Whether or not Britain joins the EEC, she is unlikely to become the champion of regionalism. The unity of the Atlantic world will remain fundamental and Britain will have strong interest in not facing damaging discrimination on the 60 percent or more of her exports which go outside any likely enlarged EEC."

Behind this phony protechnology strategy was a full array of politicians, industrialists, and financiers who saw integration as a backdoor scheme for rationalization and "deadwood-pruning" — also known as "asset-stripping" — in European industry. Charles Villiers, now the chairman of the British Steel Corporation and directing the most massive rationalization Scheme ever at BSC, made a speech in Berlin in 1969 calling for "a new, international Industrial Reorganization Corporation," the British body he then headed. This, he said, would consist of "successful businessmen, dedicated to the European idea," who would promote, assist, and accelerate "the restructuring of industry between European countries."

In Britain, this idea got very strong backing from the European Movement, a group funded by Lazard and Rothschild-connected finance houses and industry,

whose main purpose was to coordinate pro-EEC propaganda through their powerful press outlets and through organized national meetings and debates. Among its more prominent members were Edward Heath from the Tory party (who as Prime Minister finally brought Britain into the EEC in 1971) and Roy Jenkins, then a Labour Government Minister. In fact, in a paper prepared for the Movement in 1968, then EEC Commissioner Guido Colonna di Paliano — a leading member of the elite British-policy grouping, the Trilateral Commission — recommended that "the Community should adopt a common industrial policy designed *Inter alia* to facilitate mergers between European firms . . . Mergers are especially necessary in the sectors where technology plays a major role."

—*Pamela Goldman*

Footnotes

(1) Manderson-Jones, R.B., *The Special Relationship*, London School of Economics. London: 1972.

(2) Jean Monnet, a native Frenchman whose career was fostered by leading British financial and political circles, is considered the father of the European community concept.

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