

## Beyond Maastricht: the real challenges

by Jacques Cheminade

*This article was adapted from the French newspaper, Nouvelle Solidarité. Cheminade is the leader of Lyndon LaRouche's collaborators in France.*

The worst thing in the Maastricht debate is making anyone believe that this treaty responds in any way to the challenges of our day. To the drama of the world economy, to the rising unemployment, to the tragedies of eastern Europe and the Third World, to what is happening in Yugoslavia and Somalia, Maastricht has no answer. Instead of preparing Europe to be what it should be, it adapts Europe to a world deflationary policy, based on lowering investment, jobs, and living standards.

We are told that the choice is between world free market liberalism, subjected to American law, and a Europe defined by Maastricht, i.e. to a regional free market economy for the Twelve. This is sophistry—lies. First of all, those who defend Maastricht in the name of this “independence” are the same ones who submit or who have submitted to the American law of the market and military force! In no way is Maastricht a defense of Europe against an American order.

Maastricht Europe is in the image of the Anglo-American order, with a central bank managing a systematic policy of financial contraction and austerity, over the heads of governments. President Mitterrand has lied about this, at least by omission, by saying that the central bank would no longer make the decisions, but the European Council. The truth is that the central bank, in administering monetary policy, which has become the main instrument of regulation of economic policy under the ruling liberal order, will exert almost absolute power. In his more candid moments, Philippe Lagayette, the deputy governor of the Bank of France, was more forthright than Mitterrand.

Let us add that in this European Council, single countries will no longer be allowed to oppose a majority decision when it comes to imposing the only fixed objective in the treaty: price stability. Mr. Lagayette says, “But national policies will be coordinated. We will determine each year the orientations of economic policy for Europe, at the heads of state and government level. The Council of Finance Ministers will

exert surveillance over the carrying out of these orientations in each country. Since it has to do with budget deficits, a particular procedure is provided. It can become restrictive for the members which post an excessive budget deficit. If a country reaches the Community limits, the Council of Ministers will first make recommendations, then it will be able to decide on sanctions.” That is to say that the “competitive deflation” of French Prime Minister Bérégovoy, which has given France a collapse in jobs, investment, and living standards, will be the norm. And that no one will be able to escape from this norm. Because a supranational control will be tidily exerted with the vote of a simple majority of the Council of Ministers. Mr. Mitterrand's grimaces and contortions do not change this!

Finally, we are told that Maastricht is the only way to bring the Mediterranean nations—Italy, Spain, Greece—into Europe. This is a lie. Mr. Boissonnat, a Maastricht partisan like Mr. Lagayette, is franker than Mitterrand. He clearly tells us: “And to speak bluntly, it is unthinkable that [Maastricht Europe] can exist before the end of the century among the Twelve. It would only be possible among five or six countries, where the economies are already sufficiently convergent.”

That means, clearly, following the Maastricht logic, excluding southern Europe and throwing away eastern Europe. With Maastricht, France would be the center of a little Europe under financial austerity, and not of a great Europe of growth, development, and modernization.

The great evil of Maastricht is not what it does or claims to do, but what it omits and keeps from being done. Maastricht is like a quicksand into which Europe is sinking.

### Anti-German fears

Some say that the “no” vote camp proposes nothing positive either, but is allegedly motivated by the “fear of seeing their personality and their sovereignty dissolved into a whole where the German economy would bear the decisive weight.”

This argument is not untrue when it comes to Philippe de Villiers, who says that France must not become a new *Land* (state) of Germany, while he has never had the slightest reluctance to kowtow to the policy of Washington and London. Chevènement and Philippe Séguin, for their part, have stigmatized the disappearance of Yugoslavia and imputed the breakup of that country to Germany's lust for power. Not one of these nearsighted Maastricht opponents conceives of the type of initiative to be taken, because they have all made their careers inside a *Nomenklatura*, a system, which keeps them from forming their judgment at the level of the challenges of our era.

For sure, Germany is not above reproach. However, the cause of the crisis in which we have fallen lies in British and American economic policy, and it is against that which Europe must first of all define herself. Germany, from this standpoint, must not be checked and contained, but rather

encouraged to manifest her independence, with France, for a generous and just policy, both toward eastern Europe and toward the Third World. Anyone who does not start there and does not try to define this great Franco-German policy, on a continental level, will go astray.

### Alternative to Maastricht

The alternative to Maastricht is not to find scapegoats, but to build the Europe of *Populorum Progressio* and *Centesimus Annus*, to take up again the “cathedral” of de Gaulle and Adenauer, the Europe of social solidarity and economic progress, not the Maastricht parody—the Europe of the bankers, of deflation and usury. Rather, it is the productive economy of Colbert, List, and Louis Armand, the opposite of the destructive financial economics of Adam Smith and British monetarists, of von Hayek and Milton Friedman; it is the culture of mutual development and Christian respect for human dignity, not that of immediate profit and social exclusion; it is Europe against the International Monetary Fund order.

To make this Europe, we need a project. This is why we defend a plan for infrastructural development, from Lisbon to Vladivostok, with the Paris-Berlin-Vienna industrial Productive Triangle as its center and vector.

This plan implies most notably:

- construction of a high-speed rail connection Paris-Berlin-Vienna-Moscow;
- upgrading the safety of eastern European nuclear power plants and above all, building better and safer ones;
- creation of an agricultural infrastructure worthy of the name (harvesting equipment, storage barns, transport and distribution of produce);
- rejection of the “new” Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which is nothing but the American policy applied to Europe to the profit of the large food cartels;
- offering emergency food relief and production assistance to threatened countries of the South. We cannot tolerate any more Somalias.

*Money and credit are not things in themselves, cult objects, but tools to be devoted to economic growth and cultural development.*

This is the positive content of our “no.” We are aware that, without it, a “no” vote will lead inevitably to a retreat into ourselves, and impotence. But we are even more aware that the “yes” is a fraud, in claiming that Maastricht would magically guarantee the future prosperity of a great market of hundreds of millions of people, without giving it any perspective other than a deflationary monetary order and financial austerity.

Whatever the result of the referendum, on Sept. 21, we will in any case be on the front lines with our project, because everything remains to be done, to put Europe and the world back on the track of progress, of dignity, of growth and peace for mutual development.

## Chevènement fights ‘financial oligarchy’

by Mark Burdman

Whether the Sept. 20 French national referendum on Maastricht succeeds or fails, and despite the fact that French President Mitterrand certainly did not intend this when he announced the referendum, the debate over Maastricht has provoked the first open discussion in France for a long time on the fight between republican and oligarchical political principles.

Until recently, the open fight for republicanism had largely been restricted to the forces associated with Jacques Chéninade, leader of the political movement in France of the co-thinkers of Lyndon LaRouche (see preceding article). Now, from a different direction, that battle has been joined by former French Defense Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, who left his post in late 1990 because he opposed French participation in the George Bush-led “Desert Storm” against Iraq.

On Aug. 30, Chevènement addressed the first national convention of his new group, the Movement of Citizens, meeting in his home base of Belfort. Speaking to a gathering of Socialist Party parliamentarians and activists, left-leaning Gaullists, communists, and others, Chevènement declared war on the Maastricht Treaty, and a mobilization in France against the “financial oligarchy,” which wants the treaty to be ratified.

He defined the fight against Maastricht as a critical step in rebuilding a politics based on moral, republican principles. He praised the participants’ “moral and human courage” and called on them to resist the “show-biz and establishment” figures promoting the “yes” campaign. Warning that France suffers from a “veritable famine of democracy,” he called for a “common struggle” based on “republican” rather than *poujadiste* (traditional French radical-populist) approaches. “It is by the reflective commitment of each citizen that we will constitute the living assembly of republicans of principles, to which our country, rejecting the opportunism of the right and the left, deeply aspires.”

He warned that Maastricht would undermine representative, parliamentary systems in Europe, and increase the power of “technocratic” forms of rule, in a kind of “resuscitated Holy [Roman] Empire,” in which a centralized bureaucracy