

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 Chéminade, 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

based in Brussels would have virtually unlimited powers. He warned, “subtle theoreticians of the Maastrichtian construction” were trying to sell it on the basis that it would mean moving closer to “the American model.” But what does this mean, he questioned, when this model has meant the hegemony of lawyers, whose accumulated salaries now amount to approximately \$100 billion per year in the U.S.?

Mocking Socialist President Mitterrand’s frantic efforts to save Maastricht by appealing for support from the French “right” opposition parties, Chevènement declared: “Have no doubt about it, a ‘no’ victory would shake the entire establishment, the right and the left.” This could radically change “the political landscape” in France, and catalyze a “republican rebuilding” of the country. This would bring a breath of fresh air, since French politics now is characterized by “the rule of the lie and the manipulation. . . . The Americanization of political life is almost complete. The national interest is forgotten.” But now that the Danish electorate has rejected Maastricht, “the will of citizens to master their lives can no longer be contained.”

The new Movement of Citizens must rapidly evolve into a national republican mass movement and, eventually, a new political party, committed to “the formation of human beings and of civic consciousness, an appeal to the intelligence of the citizens and to the spirit of seeking. . . . New citizenship, republic. A European Europe and rejection of the new world order obviously go together.”

He asked the participants to go back home and form local branches, while a special bulletin would be created to become the “liaison between the committees of citizens.” The Movement of Citizens must “re-invent democracy in a society which has lost the habit of it.”

Against the ‘Europe of the oligarchies’

Chevènement outlined three more reasons for mobilizing against the Maastricht Treaty beyond the republican argument: from the standpoint of a socialist, of a Frenchman, and of a European.

Poking at President Mitterrand, he attacked the idea that a committed socialist could be in favor of Maastricht, since the treaty “aligns us with liberalism, at a moment where liberalism is at a dead end.” He said that the “myopic ideology of the market” was creating “disorder” in the world, after the collapse of the communist systems. Maastricht, he warned, would create an “economic morass and unemployment. How can a socialist today support 3.5-4 million unemployed in the year 2000. . . . Unemployment feeds delinquency, drugs, and the turn toward the extreme right.” Under Maastricht, all will be ruled by “the market and money,” causing a mutilation of “national public policies.” The whole Maastricht program, he warned, represents “a retreat without any strategic reason whatsoever in front of the financial oligarchy.”

Later on, in enunciating his reasons, as a European, for

opposing the treaty, he warned that “Europe must not be the Europe of the oligarchies and installed privileges. It has need of inspiration and audacity.”

Speaking as a French patriot, Chevènement insisted that France’s global role is not to be the gendarme of the American superpower, but is rather to work to develop the South. “Maastricht, by aligning us with NATO, would not be an advance of internationalism. For true internationalism defines itself today in relation to the South. What purpose did the Western European Union serve during the Gulf war? It served as the crutch for NATO! France has a true world vocation. . . . Its independence is necessary to its diplomacy, and first of all vis-à-vis the Third World. . . . French national interest has always felt itself to be accountable for the interest of humanity as a whole.”

‘European initiative for growth and development’

Both in his Belfort address and in a Sept. 8 interview with the French daily *Libération*, Chevènement skewered the idea being pushed by the “yes” advocates, that Maastricht is needed to “contain” the Germans. In his *Libération* interview, Chevènement called such arguments “perverse,” and blasted those in the French establishment who are pushing an “either Maastricht or Auschwitz” hysteria.

He stressed, that it is absurd to think that Maastricht would somehow rein in Germany, when most Germans oppose Maastricht! What must be done, is to bring together anti-Maastricht forces in France and Germany, around a Franco-German “initiative for growth and development” in Europe and in cooperation with the countries of the Arab world and the Mediterranean.

“Finally, it would be necessary to rethink, together, North-South relations, to renew, vis-à-vis Africa and the Arab world, the very content of development. On this key subject, Maastricht says almost nothing, and an attentive reader of this text must fear the worst: that under the pretext of erecting the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance, one is creating a branch of the Empire of the North, directed against the South.”

Chevènement’s arguments are weakened by the fact that he is still acting and thinking within the context of the French political atmosphere, in which the perception of the “German threat” is used as a political card by all and sundry factions. One of his stock arguments is that France was dragged by Germany into recognizing Croatia and Slovenia and the fact of the breakup of Yugoslavia, rather than having acted to preserve the unified Yugoslav state. Here, his reason also reflects a blind-spot about history. The roots of Maastricht are located in the post-World War I Versailles Treaty and in the earlier British “geopolitical” machinations which led to the war. The absence of any criticisms of the British, both in his Belfort address and in his *Libération* interview, are indicative of this problem.