

At the time, the Constitutional Council was headed by someone who has since become notorious as a crook: Roland Dumas; its General Secretary was Olivier Schrameck, now Prime Minister Lionel Jospin's Cabinet director; and Cheminade's account was checked by Louis Gautier, now in charge of defense affairs in Prime Minister Jospin's Cabinet.

The stink of the whole affair gave only two choices to the European Court: Either declare its jurisdiction and break with the Venetian dirty tricks, affirming that Cheminade's human rights had been repeatedly violated, or announce that the suit has no standing before the court, because accepting it would have amounted to political interference with the sovereignty of France. The court chose the second solution, and concluded its deliberations after only a few minutes, without even calling Cheminade or his lawyer to testify. The lawyer was informed of the decision through a simple letter, which beyond the decision, stated that no appeal was possible.

The European court of "human rights" decision is not only a flagrant injustice, but a clear stand against what Cheminade represents politically: a man who stood up for a new Marshall Plan, the European Land-Bridge, and a commitment for close cooperation with Lyndon LaRouche for a New Bretton Woods global financial system. The failure of the French institutions and the European court is not only the shame which history will deliver upon it, but in the short term, within the context of the present financial collapse, the tragedy is their incapacity to take far-reaching initiatives.

The only thing "original" in the treatment applied against Cheminade is its Venetian flavor: Cheminade was neither sentenced to jail, nor taken away in handcuffs, but persecuted, step by step, and personally ruined to present him as an example of "political failure" and not a case of human rights violation.

Cheminade prepares a counter-attack

The only way to shift the tide in his case, say Cheminade and his friends in France, is to organize harder and thereby force his enemies to further unmask themselves.

The way to do it, is to expose the stupidity of Europe's "four men club" court and their legal positivism, and relentlessly play up the LaRouche-Cheminade alliance internationally. Cheminade has circulated a strategic note to various authorities in France, denouncing their stubbornness in defending the bankrupt International Monetary Fund global financial system, and not collaborating instead with LaRouche and his associates.

On the court case itself, French and European authorities abroad, and all juridical circles, must be confronted with what such an outrageously unjust decision means. A statement for mass circulation internationally is being prepared on the case. Cheminade declared that he is also preparing other actions, but is currently withholding details; rather, he plans to use the same method he used during his Presidential campaign—to again take the French-speaking Venetian gnomes by surprise.

New Zealand to give legal rights to apes

by Mark Burdman

At his "Reinventing Government" conference in Washington in late January, U.S. Vice President Al Gore presented New Zealand as his model country, that he wants other countries to imitate.¹ It is therefore fitting, that New Zealand is now following the cue of Gore, who, in a July 14, 1993 address to the United Nations, attacked what he called "human exemptialists" who claim that human beings are less subject to ecology than animals. New Zealand is now slated to become the first country in the world to grant legal rights, similar to those for human beings, to great apes.

Thirty-eight New Zealand scientists, lawyers, and philosophers have succeeded in attaching an amendment to an Animal Welfare Bill, the which is due to be voted on in the next weeks. The amendment would grant great apes—gorillas, chimpanzees, orang-utans, and bonobos—such as the right to life, to not suffer cruel or degrading treatment, and to not take part in all but the most benign experiments, as well as granting them "freedom from imprisonment without due legal process." The latter would, in effect, bar zoos from keeping them, and would evidently imply teams of lawyers being created to argue for apes in court. Promoters of the amendment in New Zealand argue that apes share 98.4% of their DNA with humans, are self-aware, have distinct personalities, form emotional bonds, have intelligence, and have basic linguistic abilities.

The New Zealand move, is the latest initiative by something called the "Great Ape Project," which was founded in the early 1990s by co-thinkers of Britain's own leading would-be great ape (no insult to great apes intended), Prince Philip. As argued by such Great Ape Project activists as Peter Singer, the "animal liberation" propagandist of Australia, and Richard Dawkins, the Darwinian fanatic of Oxford University, the ultimate aim of the project is to break down any notion of a "species barrier" or "species discontinuity," between humans and animals. Singer is agitating for a gradual broadening of the "sphere of moral concern" to include, first, the great apes, and then other species. He has compared the Great Ape Project to campaigns for full rights for women and homosexuals, and has argued that the life of a chimpanzee has more value than that of what he calls a "gravely defective

1. See Michele Steinberg and William Jones, "Gore Pushes Bureaucracies for a Fascist World Order," *EIR*, Feb. 5, 1999.

human.” In line with this, Singer has been quoted as defending euthanasia in a chilling fashion: “The Nazis committed horrendous crimes, but this does not mean everything the Nazis did was horrendous. We cannot condemn euthanasia just because the Nazis did it, any more than we can condemn the building of new roads for this reason.”²

Going beyond Hitler, Prince Philip’s Great Ape Project activists are effectively demanding the end of the human species, since the very existence of the human species is dependent on the exercise of those powers of creativity which are unique to humans, and which no animal, great ape or otherwise, possesses. Prince Philip’s minions do not hide the fact that their ultimate aim is the extinction of the human species. In a 1993 article that was a contribution to a book-length compilation of essays by Great Ape Project activists, Prof. Dale Jamieson of the University of Colorado attacked the monotheistic faiths (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam) for “granting humans a special place in nature.” He wrote that humans are “one species among many, rather than one species over many; in the long run, humans are destined to go the way of other extinct species, and there is nothing that directly supports the idea that this would be a loss.”

It would be lawful for Gore’s New Zealand to be taking the lead in such an anti-human enterprise, given the anti-human devastation brought about in that country over the past years, by the policies Gore so admires.³

Is the next target the U.S.A.?

The New Zealand Parliament initiative is intended to have global, not local significance. David Penny, a theoretical biologist and lead author of the amendment, proclaims, “The idea is to set a precedent that other countries can follow.” Furthermore, the Great Apes are seeking to obtain a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Great Apes, perversely modelled on the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

According to Britain’s *New Scientist* magazine, a key target of the New Zealand “precedent” is the United States, where there are some 1,700 chimps kept for experimental use by scientists searching for an AIDS vaccine and investigating other diseases: “Moves are afoot in the U.S. to win legal rights for [chimps]—not by introducing a new bill, but by setting a precedent through a carefully chosen lawsuit on behalf of a chimpanzee. If chimps in New Zealand have legal rights, it might just persuade a judge in the U.S. to grant similar rights to their American cousins.”

‘The pursuit of bananas’

The New Zealand initiative, and the broader campaign of the Great Ape Project behind it, have drawn opposition

from some unlikely quarters. *New Scientist*, which often jumps on the board of New Age/ecological trends and which has run promotional articles for the Great Ape Project in the past, editorializes in its Feb. 13 edition that “despite all the social and physical similarities between humans and our simian cousins, the differences in the way our minds work are simply too great to sustain all but a shallow belief in moral and emotional equality among the great apes.” Chimps and other great apes lack the capacity for “abstract thought,” so they cannot be seen as “true ethical and moral agents in the world.”

Debunking what it calls the “fashionable” argument that “chimpanzees and humans must have staggeringly similar psychologies because they share 98.4% of their DNA,” the magazine advises: “Genomes are not cake recipes. . . . Take DNA as your measure of sentience and moral worth and the chemical connectedness of life ensures you soon end up extending honorary personhood to the rat and haddock.” *New Scientist* asks: “If a chimp kills another chimp in the wild, or a human, do we really want to hire a fleet of lawyers? And if we extended honorary personhood to all animals, would the gazelle be entitled to rights against the lion?”

The Great Ape Project is even panned by Frans de Waal, of the Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center in Atlanta, Georgia, a center known for certain other arcane projects involving apes. “If you argue for rights on the basis of continuity between us and the great apes, then you have to argue continuity between apes and monkeys,” affirms de Waal. This means that, eventually, even the laboratory rat would win rights. Furthermore, he argues, dogs can form deep emotional attachments, and cats seem to have distinct personalities, but one would hardly go so far as to argue their “continuity” with humans.

The London *Daily Telegraph* finds the Great Ape Project too much to stomach. On Feb. 11, it ran an editorial, entitled “Ape of Things to Come”—a parody on the H.G. Wells grotesque futuristic work, “The Shape of Things to Come”—attacking the Great Ape Project as a “grave mistake” and “legalistic humbug.” It stressed that “the ontological distinction between animals and humans is impossible to ignore, even by those who reject its Judeo-Christian origins. . . . All human beings are persons: they are capable of distinguishing good and evil. Animals cannot be persons in the moral sense. It follows that animals cannot be accorded human rights. . . . And who would enforce the right to life of an ape living in the wild?”

The same day’s London *Guardian* ran a cartoon depicting an ape gesticulating wildly, and screaming, “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of bananas!”

One British science correspondent who has been covering the Great Ape Project commented to *EIR*, “New Zealand should be Al Gore’s favorite country, it’s very green and has no people. . . . Al Gore is not one of my favorite people.”

2. For background and details on the Great Ape Project, see Mark Burdman, “‘Jury’ Votes Equal Rights for Apes,” *EIR*, Jan. 26, 1996.

3. See Allen Douglas, “Al Gore’s New Zealand Model: ‘Reinventing’ Corruption, Genocide,” *EIR*, Jan. 15, 1999.