

France's Védérine Slams Anglo-American Policy

by Christine Bierre

French Foreign Affairs Minister Hubert Védérine, in a speech to the eighth conference of French ambassadors held in France on Aug. 29, delivered the most clear-cut public attack to date by any European leader, against the current policies of the Anglo-American financial oligarchy. He took off the diplomatic gloves to single out the particularly violent form of geopolitics of the lunatic Zbigniew Brzezinski. He also denounced the policy of globalization, which is plunging nations into bankruptcy, and emphasized the importance of Franklin Roosevelt's Bretton Woods system, in view of current "global problems."

Contrary to most European politicians, who are still trying to choose between U.S. Presidential candidates Al Gore and George W. Bush, Védérine has no illusions concerning either one of those contenders. "Can the results of the Presidential and Congressional elections modify in depth the course of foreign policy in the United States?" he asked. "I do not think so. There is a very strong consensus in the United States that leadership in the world must be theirs. . . . The two large parties share in that consensus," even though there are differences of style and tactics.

"My hypothesis is that there will be a continuation, a reinforcement of the power of the United States" in the years ahead, he said, warning of the "rise of a neo-unilateralism" which could lead to the United States calling "into question the very idea that it should negotiate with others—adversaries or allies. For a country in such a position, the notion of partnership is the most difficult to admit and practice."

France Must Maintain 'It's Own Attitude'

As an example of this unilateralism, he advised the ambassadors to read "a most edifying article written recently by Zbigniew Brzezinski" ("Living with a New Europe," in the *National Interest*, Summer 2000—see article in this issue).

Faced with such prospects from the United States, Védérine

reaffirmed that under all circumstances, France must maintain "its own attitude." "We must know how to say yes or no, cooperate or resist, according to the case at hand, without ending the dialogue. 'Yes,' when the United States engages in seeking real solutions to a crisis; 'no,' when unilateralism inspires decisions which are not in conformity with our economic or strategic interests, nor favorable to our political ambitions for Europe, nor propitious to a multilateral approach to global challenges. Whether others like it or not, France should not renounce its own vision of the reorganization of the world."

Védérine angrily denounced U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's performance at the June 25-27 conference in Warsaw on the theme "Towards a Community of Democracies." Albright called for using "democracy" as a club with which to beat up any nation that rejects the policies of the Anglo-American oligarchy. Védérine at the time refused to sign the final communiqué, causing an international uproar. In his speech to the ambassadors, Védérine elaborated: "These were the reasons why, at the Warsaw conference, I had to refuse to subscribe to an attempt to use the world's aspirations to democracy to create a sort of new 'caucus' within the UN which would have received its instructions from the State Department. . . . I regretted spoiling this Polish conference because of my friendship toward [the host, outgoing Polish Foreign Minister] Bronislaw Geremek, but the Poles should never have lent themselves to this dubious and useless operation."

Defense of the Nation-State

Védérine had started his speech with a denunciation of the Anglo-Americans' economic globalization, and proceeded to show that wherever in the world, there are nations demanding a return to financial and monetary regulation, the United States is doing everything to block that process. "States are weakened" by globalization, he said, describing how the globalizers do everything to "circumvent the states, to reduce their control, even when they are democratic states under the rule of law." He attacked the way in which large multinational companies and mutual funds, "both mainly American, . . . model and fashion the state of the world every day, without any afterthought, . . . calculating that their legal authority is equal to that of governments."

Because of all those factors, he said, the "multilateral and intergovernmental regulatory bodies of the UN/Bretton Woods types . . . are at a standstill. Yet they are more necessary than ever, because of global problems."

Védérine defended the primacy of political authority over financial markets, and stressed that the further globalization progresses, "the stronger the aspirations to regulation become; in Europe, most of the public, almost all political parties, are demanding more regulation, almost all the governments are working on it. . . . The majority of the develop-



Hubert Védérine

ing countries demand it. . . . The United States, however, maintains a certain ambivalence on this question, which can hardly surprise us.”

‘To Help Russia Is Justified’

Védrine distanced himself greatly from the International Monetary Fund’s shock therapy policies, which have brought Russia to the brink of economic annihilation. “To help Russia is totally justified,” he stated, explaining why it is in France’s interest to have a “prosperous and stable neighbor.” But “to help Russia with our eyes closed was a mistake. To incite it to deregulate its economy without restraints, when no modern state was prepared to assume its role there, was a sign of either ideological blindness or evil calculation. France did not push this line, but it was the line universally defended by the West.” Védrine proposed measures aimed at better managing aid to Russia, and better adapting it to help that country erect a rule of law.

“The reception of my proposals was positive among foreign ministers and the heads of state and government,” he said, “but was subdued among finance ministers and the international financial institutions. The European Union largely took up our thesis, but the United States claims that it fears that any reference to the state could be used by President Putin to justify an authoritarian takeover, which a part of the Russian people would not reject.” Our policy toward Russia, he stated, combines aid with a frank dialogue concerning problems such as the need for a political solution for Chechnya.

Eastern Europe

Concerning the Balkans, Védrine raised the problem created by the Western sanctions policy against the Yugoslavia of President Slobodan Milosevic, and denounced the Anglo-American rejection of any alternative approach. “The fact that Milosevic remains in power is an almost caricatured illustration of my thesis regarding the counterproductivity of sanctions (with certain exceptions). More and more Europeans are convinced of this. Our alternative proposals, however, run up against the time-buying maneuvers of the British and the Dutch, inspired by American reticence.”

One would have to look back as far as the Foreign Ministry of Michel Jobert under President Georges Pompidou, in the 1970s, to find such coherent marching orders to French diplomats. Jobert didn’t hesitate to denounce then-State Secretary Henry Kissinger—which no doubt cost him his brilliant career in French politics. Indeed, Védrine was once a political associate of Jobert, in his early days in politics. It is the reemergence of this tradition which is causing fear among those Anglo-Americans, who, like Zbigniew Brzezinski, are terrified that France will organize resistance of the whole of western Europe, to globalization’s assault against the nation-state.

Water Is Necessary for Durable Mideast Peace

by Carl Osgood

In a statement issued on Aug. 6, *EIR* Contributing Editor Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. warned that “without large-scale desalination programs being put immediately into operation, there is no hope for durable peaceful relations among the populations” of the Middle East. LaRouche has been offering plans for such large-scale development of that region, such as the Oasis Plan, for more than 20 years, and these plans have been picked up in one form or another by relevant important circles, including former Israeli Prime Minister and now Minister for Regional Cooperation Shimon Peres, and, from Washington, D.C., the Center for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation, headed by former U.S. Rep. Wayne Owens (D-Utah). Peres and Owens’s group have both been lobbying hard for economic infrastructural development for the region as a whole, as a cornerstone for a durable peace.

Perhaps surprisingly, Peres’s formulation was endorsed by a leading member of the Israeli Likud Party, former two-time Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Zalman Shoval, in remarks at the National Press Club in Washington on Aug. 28. Shoval, whose comments came in response to a question from this reporter, said that there is an absolute shortage of water in the region. “I think Shimon Peres said, instead of trying to find a way to share the water, let’s create new water,” he said. Shoval claimed that, during the previous Likud-led government, every meeting that then-Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon had, whether it was with Arab negotiators or in Washington, started out with a discussion of the water issue. While importing water from Turkey or elsewhere may be an interim solution, “the only real solution,” Shoval said, “is desalination, which will need a major international effort.” He added that the regional effort has to include Jordan, the Syrians, and the Palestinians as well as Israel.

Even before *EIR* raised the water issue, Shoval had noted that, while Israelis want to be sure that the other side in peace negotiations regards peace in the same way they do, “the Palestinians will also want to feel that their lives will improve” as a result of the peace process.

The Next Arab-Israeli War?

Shoval’s remarks on the water issue were tinged, however, with pessimism and the usual Likud hard line toward