

Europe Is Learning, LaRouche Was Right About Bush

by Mark Burdman

In ministries and policy institutes across continental Europe, there is a growing sense of “dismay and despair,” at the incompetence, incalculability, and provocative nature of the Bush Administration in Washington. These sentiments are strongest amongst those leading politicians and strategists who had convinced themselves, when Dubya Bush came to power in January, that they had some kind of “inside track,” or influence, with the new Bush team. This is typified by the very unusual public dissociation from Bush Administration economic policies, by both France’s Gaullist President Jacques Chirac, and its Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, in late March and early April.

The sentiments are also very strong among individuals, both in continental Europe and Great Britain, who have, for decades, considered themselves to be “Atlanticists,” strongly committed to U.S.-European relations and NATO. They had wrongly assumed that those in the American policy establishment who share their Atlanticist persuasion, would be able to “manage” the situation, and rein in the wilder types in the administration, typified by State Department Under-Secretary Richard Armitage. Some of these Europeans and Britons are warning, soberly, that the NATO alliance itself will soon “disintegrate,” if current trends from Washington continue.

What worries the most informed Europeans is that beyond all the problems this “Southern Strategy” administration brought into office, the situation is being driven by a mood of desperation felt by an administration facing a constantly worsening economic and financial situation. Refusing out of hand the necessary measures of re-regulation to turn around the economic crisis, the administration is instead flailing about, setting up new strategic confrontations, at the rate of at least one per week.

The woeful mishandling of relations with China is only the latest, in a series of debacles, including U.S. relations with Russia, the Middle East, and the Balkans. The lead April 5 commentary in the *International Herald Tribune*, by Paris-based American writer William Pfaff, entitled, “China Is Not an Enemy and Shouldn’t Be Provoked,” shows that the European concerns are shared by saner elements in the U.S. foreign policy establishment.

The LaRouche Alternative

Among officials and diplomats in Europe who are familiar with Lyndon LaRouche’s track record of both forecasting and policy, some now privately tell this news service they wish that LaRouche, not Bush, were President in this crisis. They regret they had not taken more seriously LaRouche’s candidacy, his New Bretton Woods emergency economic initiative, and his warnings on both the global economy and the miserable quality of the two “leading candidates,” Bush and Al Gore.

It is widely known that LaRouche’s economic policy can reverse the slide toward a vast world depression, once leaders are willing to admit the reality of that depression—the prospect which is unhinging the Bush Administration. The Bush crowd stands for the *directly opposed policies*. Bush and his advisers, many of them veterans of the American Enterprise Institute think-tank in Washington, are fanatical “free marketeers.” They are committed to ever more destructive deregulation and privatization, in large part the basis for their own personal wealth and that of their leading financial backers. The policy of total deregulation/privatization has become one of the issues increasingly separating continental Europe from the Anglo-Americans.



One of many ongoing German demonstrations against privatization and deregulation of energy, water, public health services. In late March, the French and German governments broke with U.S.-British extreme deregulation policies.

‘Decoupling’ and the California Effect

In late March, the French weekly *Journal du Dimanche* warned that “the decoupling is on,” and revealed that French President Jacques Chirac is apoplectic at George W. Bush, not only over Bush’s unilateral abrogation of the 1997 Kyoto Climate Change treaty, but over the practice, rampant in the United States in recent years, of sentencing minors to death and executing the mentally handicapped. The paper affirmed that Chirac is also very worried about the U.S. National Missile Defense (NMD) policy, which, advisers say, he views as “dangerous, immoral, and absurd.” Chirac’s March 22 speech on these issues, in Geneva, never mentioned Bush’s name, but his advisers let it be known that his comments were aimed at George W., who, as Governor of Texas, had presided over the most ruthless death penalty regime in the entire United States.

Chirac’s anger is magnified, by the fact that only some weeks back, he had thought he would be the European leader with the most inside influence on the new administration. Through his connections to Sir George Bush, he was the first European leader to be granted a private interview with Dubya, and Chirac had then written an article, published in numerous American journals, praising George W. to the skies. Now, he feels betrayed.

On April 4, matters escalated, when French Prime Minister Jospin gave an interview to 15 regional French daily newspapers. Jospin is a Socialist, who governs in uneasy “co-habitation” with Chirac’s opposition “neo-Gaullist” RPR party. This often means policy conflicts, but, on the issue of relations with the U.S., they obviously concur. Jospin blasted the “unilateralist” policies of the new administration, and accused it of “apparently not taking into account, at this stage, the rules that make the international community function.” BBC’s

Paris correspondent commented on April 4, that Jospin’s comments reflected a view widespread in Europe.

Earlier, on March 20, Jospin had made a speech in Brussels, insisting that Europe must reject the policies of “liberalization” and “privatization” promoted in the U.S. and Great Britain. He cited the “problems” in California, with the ever-worsening energy situation, as one good reason why Europe should not follow Bush-style policies. He absolutely rejected British-promoted European Commission plans, for the European Union to fully “liberalize” the continent’s energy grid, by 2005.

Jospin’s statements, on the eve of the March 23-24 EU heads-of-state summit in Stockholm, threw Britain’s Blair government into a rage, with the British media filled with attacks on “French protectionism.” However, the French received backing from Germany at the summit, and the European-wide energy “liberalization” schemes, modelled on U.S. and British policies, were rejected. There have been a rash of statements from German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, and other German influentials, critical of the policies that have brought about the California fiasco.

‘This Will Mean the End of NATO’

One further critical development in France, was the March 28 interview of French Chief of the Defense Staff, Gen. Jean-Pierre Kelche, with the London *Daily Telegraph*. In that interview, published as the lead item, Kelche insisted that Europe’s “rapid reaction force” would be operational by the end of this year, and would operate independently of both Washington and the NATO high-command. He also bluntly ridiculed the American NMD project. Well-informed Paris sources report that the Kelche interview was, without doubt, authorized by both Chirac and Jospin. The Bush-linked London *Telegraph*

was so outraged by his comments, that the paper's lead editorial, the next day, accused France of being "Europe's rogue state"!

In Germany, there is much greater caution about criticizing Bush Administration policies in public, and there are illusions, in certain quarters, that some kind of "special relationship" can be worked out with the United States. However, these illusions are being rapidly dispelled, since the visit of Chancellor Schröder to Washington, during the week of March 26. The daily *Mainz Allgemeine Zeitung* was among the most blunt of German newspapers, to report on how Schröder was treated contemptuously and dismissively by both the White House and by leading figures in the U.S. Congress.

As for Britain, the most telling sign, was the complete flop, in mid-March, of Blair's meetings with Bush. As one highly informed European source told this correspondent: "The only thing they agreed on, was that they both use Colgate toothpaste. When I saw what happened between these two, the leaders of the so-called 'special relationship,' I knew American relations with Europe were in *real crisis*."

One of Britain's most influential "Atlanticists" told this correspondent that, while the British Foreign Office and other government agencies continue to support Washington, in public, on China and other matters, "in private, I can assure you, there is great concern" over the direction of Washington's policies. "If the transatlantic strains caused by the approach of this administration continue, we will see *the disintegration of the Atlantic Alliance*, and I am not exaggerating in the least."

This source agreed that one important driving force, in defining the mood in Washington, was "growing desperation" about the economy and the collapsing financial markets. He warned that "Washington has given a window of opportunity for all sorts of new views in Europe. If this continues, we will see other impulses take over in Europe, including bringing the Russians into a new framework of collective security, replacing the old NATO idea of collective defense. This will be a counterweight to the Atlantic Alliance, and will mean, very simply, the end of NATO."

Such views have been expressed publicly, by liberal *Guardian* commentator Hugo Young, in an April 1 commentary in the *Washington Post*. More noteworthy, is that some of the more extreme, even lunatic elements in the Anglo-American policy establishment, have begun to distance themselves from the Bush crowd, and to warn that the current administration is driving the situation over the edge. This was the case of Edward Luttwak, of Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies, writing in the *Los Angeles Times* and *International Herald Tribune* April 1-2, and Anatole Kaletsky, writing in the *London Times* April 5. Both exclaimed, that it is totally berserk, for an American government to provoke tensions with China, Russia, North Korea, and elsewhere, *all at the same time*.

From Russia to Kyoto

What has the Europeans most immediately alarmed, is the "Russian front." It is no accident, that right after the Bush Administration expelled 50 Russian diplomats from Washington, in the wake of the Hanssen spy case, Russian President Vladimir Putin participated, for the first time, at an EU summit, in Stockholm.

According to Russian sources, what is now "very important," as the next step in Russian-European relations, is the April 8-10 German-Russian "St. Petersburg Dialogue," and the accompanying private Schröder-Putin summit. It is noteworthy that, in the foreign policy component of his annual address to the Russian State Duma (lower house of Parliament), Putin stressed the importance of Russian relations with Europe, while not mentioning the United States once.

Informed sources in Paris affirm, that one critical aspect, in Putin's appearance at the EU summit, was to work out a common diplomatic approach in the Mideast and the Balkans, at a time when the Bush Administration has explicitly rejected the Clinton "peace process" in the region, and has thrown its full backing behind the war-mongering Ariel Sharon government in Israel.

The past days have seen some unprecedented statements from Europe, particularly from the Scandinavian countries. Danish Foreign Minister Mogens Lykkesøft has called for a top-down review of Europe's favored trade relations with Israel, because of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. When Lykkesøft came under strong Israeli attack, he received full backing from Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, as well as qualified support from the leaders of Denmark's Jewish community. Harsh criticism of Israel's policies has also come from the Norwegian government.

In the Balkans, there has been a systematic European distancing from Anglo-American backing for the Kosovo Liberation Army, and from Anglo-American insistence, that the Yugoslav and Serbian authorities deliver toppled strongman Slobodan Milosevic, to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

The Europeans are also angered by new Bush provocations against North Korea, and have taken the unprecedented move, of arranging for diplomatic initiatives toward the Korean Peninsula, usually regarded as "American turf."

As for the vastly publicized Kyoto issue, what the more sober elements in Europe object to, is not the repudiation of the treaty itself, which is unquestionably a monstrous and absurd construct, but the way in which Bush handled the matter. As one leading European observer commented on April 3: "All he had to say is, 'We now have an energy crisis: we need time to resolve it; this treaty as it now stands is unmanageable, and we will consult with our allies, in Europe and elsewhere, on what to do about it.' But instead of this, he just provoked everybody outside the U.S., in a completely amateurish way, creating yet another crisis, where none need have existed."