

Editorial

A Real Peace of Westphalia

There have been some who have attempted to dismiss Lyndon LaRouche's concept, of a new Peace of Westphalia as a model for solving today's deliberately inflamed ethnic hatreds, as impractical and idealistic. They will be surprised and heartened to read *EIR*'s interview next week with Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, Maronite Catholic Patriarch in Lebanon, who gave the interview to *EIR* on March 18.

Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir granted the interview while he was on his mission to Washington, D.C. He had just met with President George W. Bush, and was about to leave for New York City, where he was scheduled to meet with United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan.

As a nation populated by diverse religious and ethnic groups—Shi'ites, Sunnis, Christians, Druze and others—with a history of civil wars, and yet with experience as an independent democratic nation since 1943, Lebanon is a crucial testing ground for how the Peace of Westphalia principle can be applied. That principle was the basis for ending the "religious" conflict that nearly destroyed central Europe in the early 17th Century. It has two crucial components. The first, is that the parties achieving the peace must proceed from the standpoint of the "Advantage of the Other": In other words, to put the interest of the other party ahead of any short-term interest or consideration one might have. The second, is that each party must embrace forgiveness, because dwelling on mutual recriminations will make the achievement of a true peace impossible. This is a matter of particular importance in what's called the Middle East, where the conflict of neighbor against neighbor has been often fierce and bloody.

What is required, therefore, in all those nations party to the peace, is a leadership which is big enough to adopt this perspective. In most cases, it will also be crucial to have outside support, especially from nations who are willing and able to provide credits for economic development, in the context of a long-term perspective for growth such as that embodied in Lyndon LaRouche's New Bretton Woods and Eurasian

Land-Bridge proposals.

EIR's sources in Lebanon had already communicated to us that the leading figures are looking toward the Peace of Westphalia concept, and are determined not to be manipulated by forces in other nations, who might wish to touch off a civil war situation in the wake of the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. There have been concerted efforts to prevent a breakdown along religious lines.

We present here a foretaste of the interview, which we will present in full in our next issue.

EIR: As you know, we have been discussing with our mutual friends in Lebanon, LaRouche's concept of a New Peace of Westphalia, which is based on the concord that brought peace to Europe after the thirty years war.

Patriarch: This is our image, and I hope I have gotten the message across in this country—the message that what we want in Lebanon is good relations with all countries in the region. What is good for Lebanon is what is in the common interests of all of our neighbors. We, in Lebanon, want peace. We want to be good friends with all of our neighbors. We want to walk together hand to hand, heart to heart.

EIR: Many have feared the intention of some in the United States and other countries to use Lebanon as a playing card in the region, as a provocation for war.

Patriarch: I hope all have understood my message. Lebanon must be independent, sovereign, and free. Up to now, we have not been free. Now, Syria will have respect for Lebanon as a sovereign country, and Lebanon will have respect for Syria as a sovereign country. Lebanon as a free country must have no interference from any country in the world. . . .

EIR: What kind of example do you hope that Lebanon can be?

Patriarch: I hope that Lebanon can be an example of peace, of overcoming the problems of the past. A free nation has no reason for any interference, from any country, from the outside. When we have peace, we can create jobs and a hopeful future that can bring our young people back from all over the world.