

Editorial

Defend the Westphalia Principle

In recent months have appeared a rising chorus of public proposals—from Henry Kissinger, Tony Blair, George Shultz, European Trilateral chairman Count Otto von Lambsdorff—that international law as developed since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, and as based upon the principles of that Treaty, be done away with as “obsolete.” Kissinger has demanded the concept of the Westphalia Peace, which ended 150 years of religious “perpetual wars” from 1511-1648, absolutely cannot be allowed to be applied, today, to the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. George Shultz—a key figure involved in the Nixon Administration’s ending of the Bretton Woods fixed-exchange-rate system in 1971, and therefore a prime responsible for the current crisis of the world monetary system—attacked the centuries-old Westphalia principle of sovereign nation-states, in a *Wall Street Journal* column, and instead insisted on the principle of “preventive intervention” by some states into other, “rogue” states.

Tony Blair, in a speech in Britain in early March, not only promoted the new U.S. *nuclear preventive war* doctrine derived from this, but went further to claim that he had seen the need to trash Westphalia long before Sept. 11, 2001. Count Lambsdorff categorically demanded the abandonment of the Westphalia principles in a March 27 *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* commentary, insisting they are hindering free markets, human rights, and “open societies.” Lambsdorff declared most dangerous, the axiomatic basis of Westphalia—social protection, regulated by governments—“whether as anti-dumping rules or legislation of social standards.”

These figures are proposing nothing less than the return to the feudal order of law which prevailed before Westphalia. And this means a religious “100 Years’ War” today, just as much as it did from 1511-1648, particularly in the gruesome Thirty Years’ War 1618-1648. So, in fact, did former CIA chief and neo-con fanatic James Woolsey mean his “100 Years’ War against terrorism”; and so do defenders of the preventive nuclear war doctrine speak of more than 60 nations in which “regime change” is necessary.

The 1648 Westphalia Peace has provided, since

then, the basis for the entire development of international law, including the UN Charter and the Geneva Conventions. The Treaty of Westphalia was a world-historic breakthrough of the first order; it laid down that the basis of foreign policy was not revenge but love, and that injuries among states in war be forgiven and forgotten “out of the will for peace.” This fundamental Westphalian principle is today the sole chance to find a solution for the terrible war crises of the planet, whether that in the Middle East, or the Great Lakes Region of Africa, or in other regions. The alternative—and Kissinger, Shultz, Blair, and Lambsdorff are not so historically ignorant as not to know it—is continued carnage and massacres until almost no one remains alive in those regions.

The truth underlying these proposals, is that the highest levels of the establishment well know that the global “free-trade” financial system (whose wild speculation is steadily impoverishing the majority) is hopelessly at an end. And these circles’ model to replace it, is the order which arose 200 years ago against the American Revolution; namely, the Vienna Congress “restoration” of 1815. Its so-called “Holy Alliance” was dominated by the oligarchical, racist, and anti-Semitic ideas of the likes of Joseph de Maistre, and by the imperial designs of Castlereigh and Metternich. Its imperial powers assumed that they were responsible for the “values” of mankind, and therefore, for the internal affairs of all European states; if one was governed by a “false system,” or suffered an insurrection, they assumed their right to intervene. The American Monroe Doctrine was conceived and adopted in 1823 to stop such interventions as a threat to the peace and security of the then-emerging nations of the Western Hemisphere.

Whoever proposes to eliminate the Westphalian principles today, is knowingly playing with world war. Thus Helga Zepp-LaRouche, leader of the German Civil Rights Movement/Solidarity, has demanded that above all in Europe, which suffered the worst of the world wars of the 20th Century, parliamentary leaders and parties must have courage to denounce these proposals for what they are.