

The economic relations between de Gaulle and Kennedy

by Jacques Cheminade

The following is an edited transcript of Mr. Cheminade's speech to the Schiller Institute-International Caucus of Labor Committees semi-annual conference, on Sept. 3, 1995 in Vienna, Virginia. Mr. Cheminade was one of the nine candidates for President of France in the April 1995 first round of the presidential race. He is a well-known economist and author, and a prominent member of the Schiller Institute in France. His remarks concluded the panel on "The Big Commodities Hoarding Crunch of 1995," published as a Special Report in the Sept. 15, 1995 issue of EIR.

I want to tell you a few things that may not seem directly relevant to what was said before, but are the proverbial key to open the house of economics, or more precisely, some advice given by our predecessors on how to find that lost key of economic sanity.

When a great moment of opportunity appears in history, the worst sin is the sin of omission. In an almost timeless moment, you should realize the potential leverage of your small force, and measure what is going to happen if you don't intervene at that precise point: It's like a landscape appears before your eyes; you suddenly become the painter of that landscape. It is a moment when you can't improvise, when your eyes have to see through the eyes of all those that built this landscape before you, a landscape in the sense of a universe of ideas that you inherit from your predecessors to continue to perfect.

We are now at one of those moments in history: The French and American Presidents are committed to fulfill their tasks of Presidents, for the common good of their citizens, and not to submit themselves to an outside dictate. Maybe no more, but that much, which is already a lot. As an immediate result, we have the long-awaited air strikes against the Serbs in Bosnia, an event which goes well beyond Bosnia in itself. First, because an act of justice always remoralizes and inspires, and second, because it creates in the process of its achievement a composition of forces for the good, which potentially can change the director of history and spread in other areas. It is this motion, this change, which breaks with the prevailing moral indifferentism and virtual reality, opens a new way for before us and lights a beacon of hope.

My point here today is to communicate to you how, in that new political context, a context that our contributions from various simultaneous sides have shaped, a crucial eco-

nomie debate has been unleashed in France.

This was first expressed by French President Jacques Chirac, by his declaration at the end of the Halifax summit, on July 7, when he said that the worst danger for the world economy is the "financial AIDS" of speculation. All observers on the French political scene could not, and have not, missed the point: During all my own presidential campaign, as Lyndon LaRouche did before here, I had denounced the "financial cancer" that kills the body of the physical economy. The cat was out of the bag, even if Chirac said that the medicine should be given to the patient only in June 1996, at the coming Lyons G-7 summit in central France.

The problem was that Chirac had to strike a compromise with one of the worst representatives in France of that financial AIDS, Economics Minister Alain Madelin, hailed by the *Wall Street Journal* as "the perfect French version of Newt Gingrich." It's quite horrible, to imagine it. It's worse than Newt Gingrich, actually.

Therefore, there you had a President denouncing financial AIDS, with an economics minister representing it. Madelin is also a translator into French, as Lyndon LaRouche said yesterday, of Austrian-British neo-liberal (that's what he calls himself) von Hayek, and Madelin is a prominent member of the Mont Pelerin Society, that can be fairly described as a bridge between fascism, satanism, and liberalism.

The ouster of Madelin

Well, this could not last, this compromise. It had to go one way or the other. Fortunately, it went the right way: On Aug. 25, Prime Minister Alain Juppé, Chirac's prime minister, in a very strongly worded statement, asked Madelin to leave his government, saying that the "declarations of the economics minister [Madelin] contradict the reforming will of the government, based on a policy of social and tax justice, and on a method of broad and responsible participation of the people." This made it clear that Madelin's presence in the government was judged incompatible with the policies of representative democracy and the commitment for change.

Here again, I had been campaigning with a few others in France for the ouster of Madelin—not as a result of a personal feud, but as a question of principle. This, also, was not left unnoticed.

The key point to see is that this decision is having two major consequences:

- First, it has put the French President and his prime minister against the wall: The hopes they have raised in the population during the presidential campaign are fading away, with the continuation of austerity, and the ousting of Alain Madelin may be their last chance to change policies, and they know it. This means both domestic and international policies, as a coherent whole, because if you want to launch a recovery inside France, you have at the same time to break the grip of the international monetary and financial system. Therefore, Chirac's schedule—let's take care of the problems in Lyons in June 1996, I remind you—Chirac's schedule has been greatly accelerated because of the dynamics brought into play. The moment is clearly here and now.

- Second, the ousting of Madelin, by shaking off the dust, is revealing what is still alive under it: I mean the tradition of a Gaullist dirigist policy, the "French exception" after World War II. This, in turn, is made more clear by the French initiative to restart nuclear tests—that goes well beyond the tests themselves, which are not really the issue. The issue is, that France having expressed this tendency toward a policy of national independence, even if the tendency is still modest, immediately the financial oligarchy has mobilized its forces against her, overdoing it, revealing itself and therefore compelling the French institutions to measure, historically, when a sinister circumstance happened in the past. The institutions are realizing what was so exceptional in the de Gaulle period that permitted France to fight and achieve an extremely successful economic development in the 1960s.

Well, what comes out is the need for a science-driver for the whole economy and *planification indicative*—which I think should be translated as "targeted planning." Beyond that, it is the Kennedy-de Gaulle era, a moment where families expected a better life for their sons and grandsons, a moment where there was a commitment to a higher cause—whatever the imperfections of those engaged in the task—and their imperfections were many—but the higher purposes subsumed their petty personal interests at that time.

Targeted planning and a science driver for the economy—"l'ardente obligation", as de Gaulle said, "the burning issue"—coming back to us from the debates of the early 1960s, is the primary point to understand.

Targeted planning expresses, in economics, the capacity of the human being to create, to conceive a creative project with other human beings, and to give it as a contribution for future generations. "Planning" is to organize a mission, it is to say: "I have to do this, I can do it, and I am going to do it, because it is good, and I will feel good in doing it"—the feeling being in the doing, not in the digesting. It is Kennedy, saying in 1962, we are going to put a man on the Moon by the end of the decade; it is de Gaulle saying we are going to develop French nuclear energy and a nuclear bomb to guarantee our national independence, both against Soviet Russia and the Anglo-Americans. Planning, in that sense, is when words are not followed by gossip, but by verbal action.



Former French presidential candidate Jacques Cheminade addresses the Schiller Institute-ICLC conference on Sept. 3. When a great opportunity presents itself in history, he said, "the worst sin, is the sin of omission."

The 'One' and the 'Many' in economics

There is more to it—and I want to stress a point, relevant to what the previous speakers on this panel are doing here—although I have not enough time to go into any detailed development. This point is that targeted planning defines a One, a single project, with the free contribution of the Many, with three interrelated aspects to it that I want to go briefly into:

- First, that you have to define an "Agency"—in the sense Gottfried Leibniz defined an "Academy" or a "Philadelphic Society" (some of you may know that *philadelphia* means a philosophical society; it comes from Leibniz)—an Academy to work on scientific breakthroughs on top of the mountain, developed downstream in machine-tool design, machine tools, and new products corresponding to higher forms of man's mastery of nature. And I mean new form of products that were not conceivable in the past set of axioms and assumptions. This was exactly the intention of, for example, Louis Armand, a very interesting character, de Gaulle's collaborator together with Jacques Rueff, who defined that agenda in the image of the scientific center built by Portugal's King Henry the Navigator in Sagres—to prepare the discovery of America. "In those times," Armand says, "the horizon was the discovery of a new world, America. Today it is the space conquest and its exploration." If we go still one step beyond, this one agency—the agency of "earthly planning" as the *Mater et Magistra* encyclical puts it, exemplifies God's mandate on earth: Scientific discoveries for the common good is what makes men able to

master the Universe and increase its density of population.

● Second, “dirigism” is to be the rule,—statism, as was said yesterday—in the sense that a directionality of purpose is the very definition of physical economy: There is no physical economy if there is not a purpose in the state policies. (And as you can see all around Washington, a “liberal” never manages to build a decent house for the family.) But this doesn’t mean Cartesian logic; it means to create what de Gaulle called the “approval of the heart.” For that, the Agency has to organize the contributions of the Many to the One, in a spirit absolutely opposed to that of liberalism or corporatism: The subject-matter of targeted planning is, above all taking into account thinking, the advancement of human knowledge. And it is around that advancement of knowledge (science, the institutions of science, education, and public health), that the contributions of the many have to be organized. After 1945 and under de Gaulle, it took the form of priority for the nation defined by a mixed labor-industry set of working committees: horizontal working committees (organized according to subjects, like employment or credit issuance) and vertical planning committees, (organized according to the branches of economic accounting, like steel production or transport). The notion that some of you would recognize here is that of *concordantia oppositorum* [Nicolaus of Cusa’s “coincidence of opposites”]—how to “tune” the disagreements so as to make them organized into a composition. Let me give you a beautiful quote on that, which is not—ironically—from de Gaulle, but from his political opponent (but also a friend of Kennedy’s family, and an admirer of de Gaulle even if opposed to him) Pierre Mendès-France: “The institutions of the state have to compose a coherent whole, whose different parts, instead of opposing and contradicting each other, as it was often the case in our past, should reinforce, complement and support each other. This whole, this one, is called planning.”

I found it interesting to quote Mendès-France to show you how prevalent this conception was in the France of the 1960s, both in the opposition and majority, linked to this conception of physical economy—and, I must say, at that time, to the American dream—with a rather obvious corollary that Mendès-France states bluntly: “Nobody today, therefore, could believe or support the liberalism of the 19th century, or any other form of liberalism.”

Tradition of anti-liberalism

This quote introduces my third point: What comes out of the reopened debate with this reference to de Gaulle’s policies and to the de Gaulle years, is an absolute abhorrence of liberalism. This is ingrained into two converging French traditions—the combination of which forms the “party of the nation.”

● One is the republican tradition, that of Leibniz, Huyghens, Colbert, and Papin’s Academy of Sciences, that of Polytechnique, going into Pasteur and the French space and

nuclear programs of the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, that we hope to open now, in a really consistent way.

● The other tradition is the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, based mainly on Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which was elaborated in such other encyclicals later as *Quadragesimo Anno*, *Divini Redemptoris*, *Populorum Progressio*, and *Centesimus Annus*, and this involves the very close relations linking Charles de Gaulle, Paul VI, Jacques Maritain, and Jacques Rueff, the fight of French Thomism and its conception of “integral humanism,” as they called it, against the evil dualism of Cartesianism and Aristotelianism, as they called it also, clearly.

So this is what is again emerging today, in a hesitant, incomplete, inadequate, *clumsy* way; but emerging: the historical “party of France” against its fake republican, pro-British caricature—covering up for merchant and financial interests—and also against its fake Catholic caricature—a camouflage for feudal landlords and physiocrats, the fanatic lovers of Gaia’s dividends. This is exactly what Leo XIII had so deeply understood: that, although France in appearance seemed to have cut its distant roots, it is ironically one of the countries where the seed had not died, and could be revived, provided a higher purpose is put forward beyond the fake confrontation—the fake “war of religions” organized by the Venetians and then spread by the British. That was Leo XIII’s intent in what he called the atonement of Catholicism and the republic.

Interestingly, all kinds of books are now being published in France against liberalism and monetarism, such as *The Liberal Dead-End*, by Philippe Arondel, a blast against what he calls von Hayek’s “imposture,” or *The Forbidden Debate*, by Fitsoussi, a call for a new, two-pronged Marshall Plan directed both toward the South and the East.

Let’s face it: We, in part through our presidential campaign in France, have shaped this environment, not by influence on so-and-so, but by doing something that we can uniquely do: To awake the memory of the nation, to awake the memory of nations. By “we” I mean myself, but a “myself” composed of all of you—Americans, Germans, Canadians, and others—all of you, who came to France for my campaign and also those that did not come, but shaped the campaign without being fully conscious of it. So, it is fair to know what you have done.

Thanks to you, thanks to the work of Lyndon LaRouche, Jacques Rueff’s work is being revisited, and his attack against the *Monetary Sin of the West*, (MacMillan, 1972), is becoming a commonplace debate in France.

Should we feel happy and proud? Yes, but not satisfied. We are at the very beginning of the process—we have created a great moment of opportunity, the potential, but it still remains to be actualized.

In his conversations with Kennedy, Benjamin C. Bradley (W.W. Norton, 1975), describing a dinner in late April 1962, says the following:

“At one point, the President got off on France and de

Gaulle—how difficult de Gaulle was,” (this was Kennedy), “how difficult it would be to find his replacement, and then he digressed on the French economy, which he said he had been studying. ‘It’s fascinating,’ he said. ‘Here’s a country getting a 5½% annual increase of its Gross National Product, while we struggle to get 2½%. They have almost no unemployment, while we have too much.’ Kennedy then revealed that he had asked Walter Heller, the chairman of his Council of Economic Advisers, to send some CEA staffers to France for a report on how France was able to do it.”

I have tried here to give you some elements for an answer to Kennedy’s question, which is very relevant today for us all, at a moment when France is recovering its memory, but not yet its economy.

The campaigns against France and against the lives of President Chirac and President Clinton, the campaigns against the United States and France in the persons of Chirac and Clinton, representing the nations, these are unmistakable signs that a potential exists, that true policies in the interest of our nations and their populations can soon be implemented, against years of controlled or uncontrolled liberal disintegration.

What was lacking in the 1960s was a committed body of leadership in our respective nations, to lead that process. Today, instead, we are on the stage, endowed by our predecessors to act.

For that, we have to look at what moved the world, during the early 1960s, on both sides of the Atlantic, and how we can revive that potential into a higher order, because we have to win.

The Civil Rights movement was, with no doubt, the best cause in the United States of the 1960s, because by nature it went beyond *any* personal self-interests. The decolonization movement was, with no doubt, the best cause of the 1960s in France, for the same reason. Both causes implied the respect of each human being—*agapē*—and confidence in his or her powers to participate in the definition of the future of his or her country and, beyond, in the future of humanity. I felt that way when I was demonstrating in the streets of Paris for the independence of Algeria in the early 1960s—not against France (as unfortunately many of the other demonstrators), but for a higher purpose of France—and I felt then, close in my heart, to the Civil Rights movement here.

Today, our task—if we want to fulfill our task, if we want to find the social base for our task—is to regenerate moral forces both in America and in France. True profit is creative discovery, and there is no creative discovery without a deep moral commitment.

Such a regeneration is what is required to organize the mass-based movement in support of a rebirth of the physical economy—what Kennedy implied and de Gaulle also tried to achieve—an economy in which concrete means are given to each and all human beings to accomplish themselves as creators. One and the same movement—civil rights and decolonization, liberation of the creative powers of all, re-

spect for the sovereign powers of each—has to be revived today.

Domestically, France and the United States have the immense chance, despite the abomination of racism, to be melting pots, and therefore we have in both of our countries the duty to launch once again the republican policy representing the political horizon of that melting pot. To be part of our nations, in that sense, is to restart today the train of social integration by putting an economic driver up front. Interestingly enough, this raises immediately the question

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of a coherency between domestic policy and foreign policy: integration at home cannot succeed without a worldwide integration—what was once called, by people who tried to do it, and did not succeed, an Alliance for Progress, that Martin Luther King has left in our hands as his most precious legacy in his last speech, his Gethsemane speech.

The Eurasian land-bridges

This means, worldwide, what Lyndon LaRouche has defined as the two bridges from western Europe into Far East Asia, the irony of it being that these two bridges, one through the Mideast and one through Russia, can only be built from western Europe, but only with the support of the United States.

The bridge between Europe and Far Asia through Russia, the bridge between western Europe and Far Asia through the Middle East: These are the “economics of civilization” that de Gaulle had foreseen with his Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, and his recognition of Mainland China as a nation and partner in 1962, a policy that John Fitzgerald Kennedy was following very closely. And I remember when Kennedy was murdered, in France, that de Gaulle declared a week of

mourning and there was immense emotion in the nation, which was probably even deeper when Martin Luther King was murdered. And this remains in the memory of the French, and what we are doing here *is* reviving that memory, and reopening something emotionally frozen in the French, which is probably the key to relaunch these projects of the de Gaulle-Kennedy years, probably the most important.

Today, beyond that and with that conception of the two bridges as a crucial predicate, we have to build yet another bridge, what LaRouche defines as a bridge from Hell to Purgatory into a New Age of Reason. This raises the question of culture—what is on the tip of the tongue to generate economy. Let me give you only one angle to it: We have here in the room some American singers who already came to Europe, and are now coming back to France for a set of nine concerts. With their singing of Spirituals and German Lieder, they are going to bring into France a sense of what true American culture is, the culture of the creative powers of the human mind, building that bridge across the Atlantic, as the path of reason that *always* has to go through the heart, this “approval of the heart,” that de Gaulle was mentioning as they key to economics.

This, in turn, is going to put many more people in the spirit of building bridges, which is to “go beyond.”

And I want to finish on this, which is very relevant to economics: The demand put on us is precisely to go beyond,



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because the substance of humanity is in change, the Being is in the Becoming.

“Go beyond,” *first*, because our predecessors—let it be de Gaulle or Kennedy, or others—were human, therefore necessarily imperfect, and that even if we are dwarves compared to them, we are standing on their shoulders—just as the heroes of the New Testament stand on the shoulders of those of the Old Testament in the stained glass windows of Chartres Cathedral that you all should come to visit. Maybe, standing on the shoulders, maybe a bit disoriented, suffering from some vertigo, but firm and looking farther.

Second, we have to “go beyond,” because to be faithful to what our predecessors have accomplished is to be faithful, beyond themselves and their own accomplishments as such, to that divine quality expressed *in* themselves *and* their accomplishments, not as final product but as a single inspiring source.

This one inspiring source—universal history coming to us in a timeless moment of willful decision, where *we* have to act—is precisely what makes us human. Human in the sense that our higher joy and our happiness lies in the discovery of the created universe through our creativity, our capacity to relate to the universe of ideas, to broaden our horizon in that landscape that I was referring to in the beginning, by discovering or assimilating a “one,” a one idea that challenges them all—all established hypotheses and postulates—one that both broadens our view and makes us always more and more humble in the face of what remains to be known. That very simple idea is true love for the created universe and its creatures.

It is, from us and our country, a gift given to the universe. De Gaulle used to refer to a “certain idea of France,” a contribution of France as a nation-state to the universe of ideas, here and now, to meet the challenge of immediate history.

This goes far beyond the United States or France, or any other country, as such; it is the key question of legitimate policy, inspired by natural law, expressed by the power to transform and improve the universe, given to each and all human beings, a legitimate policy of that sort which a nation-state is the earthly, necessarily imperfect, but nonetheless absolutely necessary embodiment.

France, therefore, or the United States as such, are nothing limited to their formal legal existence; what matters is that a certain idea of France and a certain idea of the United States and a certain idea of all other nation-states, are made congruent with the past, present, and future of human history, through *our* continued intervention, our *action*.

What is the pursuit of happiness?

Friedrich Schiller stresses repeatedly that our best actions make us happy, but never satisfied, and that true happiness implies that feature of dissatisfaction, the drive to know more, to accomplish yet another action of a higher order, and yet

another one, and yet another one—with no rest. Lyndon LaRouche said once, that we should divide our time into two parts: half working, and the other half, working.

Happiness is change, transformation, no rest: In their own way, with their own imperfections and worse imperfections in their entourage, de Gaulle and Kennedy bring to us this example of a certain idea, that can only be accomplished by setting impossible goals—goals that appear impossible according to the standards of the day when these are set. We are going to put a man on the Moon, we are going to give France the most advanced form of nuclear power: impossible goals, and nonetheless both have been reached, and ahead of time.

"Impossible n'est pas français," [the impossible is not the French way] is a well-known saying in France, but I feel obliged to erase the slight chauvinism involved in it by stating, instead, that to think that something is impossible is not human.

Economy, in that sense, the "economy" of the sort uncovered by the ousting of Alain Madelin in France, is the art to make the impossible possible, to make the idea, the thought-object "possible" as a means to transform nature, to make human beings better tuned to their human quality.

We have to win, because it cannot be otherwise, and because we have started to meet the conditions for that necessarily imperfect but absolutely necessary victory, necessary to make humanity fit to survive. We owe that to Kennedy, we owe that to de Gaulle, we owe that to the future generations. It is either our victory—and the possibility for a New Age of Reason—or a new Dark Age before us.

As French, as Americans, as Germans, as people in general informed by the Christian Socratic tradition and what Lyndon LaRouche has brought to all of us, we have a special responsibility towards the future of humanity, to prevent that the self-destruction of evil brings down with it the entire fabric of our society.

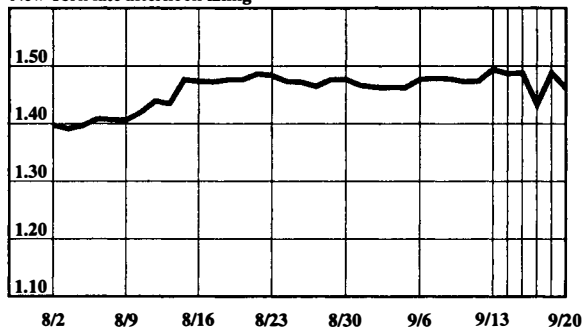
One last word: We should never allow ourselves to be frightened by what we have started. To pursue happiness (which is written in your Constitution, and unfortunately is not written in the Constitution of France), is to love justice more than our possessions, to love the common good more than our sensuous pleasures—it is to inspire and ennoble. Election campaigns are precisely the moment when an opportunity is given for an inspiration that can change the government and the people, breaking the rules of the game.

I wish you all the best for your campaign of 1996, which has already started in 1995. You have been given here today the ammunition, a gift to awake even a TV addict, I think. We in France are committed to pack and cross the bridge over the Atlantic that you have built at the beginning of this year to help us; it was already there, but you have made it more real. When a great moment appears in history, the worst sin is the sin of omission, but to intervene to—to dare to intervene—generates discoveries, economic development, curiosity, hope, and is a joy forever.

Currency Rates

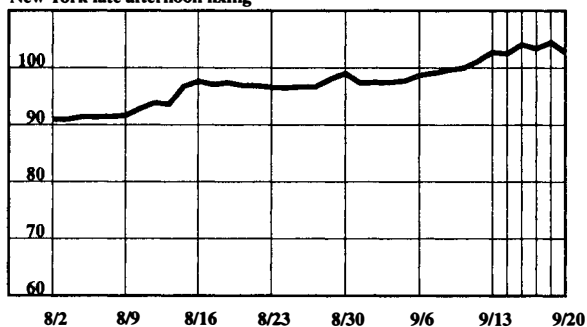
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



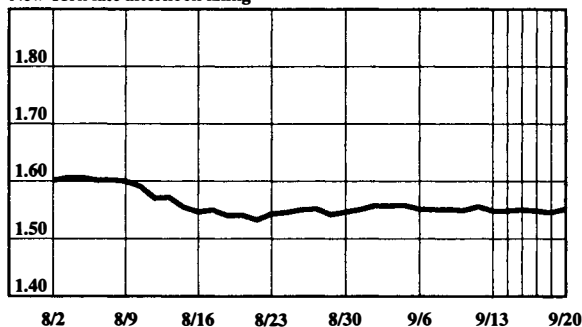
The dollar in yen

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The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

