

'Anti-Semitic Europe' Myths from Washington

by Mark Burdman

Although no American figure has (yet) added nations of western continental Europe to its ever-expanding "axis of evil" opposing what certain Administration officials consider to be the "New American Empire," there is an ugly anti-European mood coming from Washington and related environs. As dismayed Europeans, long loyal collaborators in NATO, reported on return from recent trips to the American capital, dominant American policymakers have "written off" Europe, as they plan their "Phase Two-and-beyond" attacks on Iraq, Iran, etc.

Indicative was an April 18 column by William Pfaff, himself an American, in the *International Herald Tribune*. Speaking of a conference at the elite Ditchley Foundation in Great Britain, Pfaff said that the mood was extremely tense, because the U.S. representatives laid down the law on a coming attack on Iraq, and informed European opponents of such a war "that the United States does not need allies. . . . The disagreement is the most important that has existed between the allies since NATO began. It . . . could set the former allies against one another."

Intense anger has been whipped up by the alliance of "Christian fundamentalists" and extreme "Zionist Lobby" in the United States, over opposition among European influentials to the present policies of Israel.

The Final 'Final Solution'

In late April, a British expert on international relations and the Middle East, who has been active in these fields for decades, commented to *EIR*, "A simplistic argument is gaining ground throughout America, that the *only* explanation for the Europeans' policies on Iraq and Israel, is that European anti-Semitism has resurfaced." In recent weeks, powerful elements in the American policy establishment have been cultivating this idea, that Hitler's ghosts are rising from the graves of Europe.

The same mood was manifest in the U.S. Senate, in an extraordinary 99-0 vote on April 26, to send a letter to President George W. Bush, calling on him to condemn anti-Jewish rhetoric and violence in Europe. On April 1, Bush himself, in what was attacked as a breach of diplomacy in the French press, had told a California audience about his concern over "the old demons of anti-Semitism" rising in France.

Diatribes against Europe have come from the pens of top "neo-conservative" columnists, such as George Will and Charles Krauthammer. Writing on May 2, in the *London Times*, Foreign Editor Bronwen Maddox, an American who was formerly the paper's correspondent in Washington, focussed on the "explicitly anti-European rhetoric" coming out of Washington, particularly the "anti-Semitism" hype. She wrote: "The past fortnight's comment in the media and politics has been so poisonous, so homogeneous, and so voluminous, that it amounts to a sharp change of national mood, and is a real diplomatic problem of its own." On that day George Will had erupted in the *Washington Post* that Europe, having murdered Jews by the millions in the 1930s and 1940s, was now practicing "anti-Semitism without Jews," and was playing its part in the "second—and final?—phase of the struggle for a 'final solution' to the Jewish question."

Never wishing to be outdone in demagoguery, the organized crime-linked Anti-Defamation League (ADL) made this a leading theme at its May 7-10 "Leadership Conference," in Washington. In his keynote speech, on receiving the ADL's "Statesman Award," Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon warned of the "new anti-Semitism in Europe and elsewhere." Worse, ADL National Director Abe Foxman ranted, "If a country is critical only of Israel's actions, this is anti-Semitism. If Belgium continues in its attempt to bring the Israeli Prime Minister to trial for war crimes, this is anti-Semitism. . . . If the Danish government refuses to recognize the credentials from only a diplomat from Israel, this is also anti-Semitic."

The American Jewish Congress has begun a boycott of certain French-produced items. And so on, *ad nauseam*.

'Obscenely Offensive Rubbish'

In a May 7 *Washington Post* commentary entitled "Stop Blaming Europe," European Union External Affairs Commissioner Chris Patten, himself British, blasted the attacks by George Will and others as "obscenely offensive rubbish," a "mad and grotesque assault on reasoned debate" over the policies and philosophy of the Sharon/Netanyahu Likud party leadership in Israel. Patten reported that a Washington colleague informed him that Will's outburst was "a pretty typical piece. He had seen plenty more like it, and there was similar muttering on Capitol Hill." Patten expressed alarm at this spreading "visceral contempt" for Europe. Noting the comment by a U.S. Democratic Senator, that "All of us here are members of Likud now," Patten wrote, "So any criticism of the policies and philosophy of Likud condemns one as an anti-Semite? . . . It is not anti-Semitic to say . . . that we will do our common campaign against terrorism irreparable damage, if we allow it to be hijacked by Likud." Peace in the Middle East requires the creation of a viable Palestinian state, Patten said, based on a return to the 1967 borders (official U.S. policy, but not that of Likud).

There is, of course, a growing mood in Europe diametric-

cally opposed to those pro-Likud berserkers in Washington, moved by disgust at what Sharon and the Israeli Defense Forces have been doing in Ramallah, Jenin, Bethlehem, and their other brutal occupations. It is despicable, as Foxman and the unfortunate Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, Dr. Jonathan Sacks, have done, to equate this with “anti-Semitism of the traditional sort.” For many sensible Europeans, it is Sharon’s ravings that remind them of the worst of the 1930s, and threaten new wars erupting from the Mideast.

Fewer and fewer Americans, especially as the generation of World War II veterans passes on, any longer understand that Europe lived through two horrifying wars in the last century, and only thereafter, because of the brilliant statesmanship of a handful of individuals, achieved an effective process of reconciliation.

Wiser voices in Israel have risen to dispute the equation that “anti-Sharon equals anti-Semitism.” On May 12, Avi Primor, former Israeli Ambassador to the European Union and to Germany, now vice-president of Tel Aviv University, wrote in the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz*, under the title, “No Longer Ghetto Jews”: “We are under severe attack in the European media and among European public opinion, as well as in ruling circles. This is something we must cope with. In most cases, the criticism does not emanate from the extreme right, or from classically anti-Semitic circles—these groups are, in fact, doing all they can, to express support for the government of Israel. The worrisome point, is that the most acute criticism is being voiced by circles that have traditionally been friendly toward Israel, and it is criticism that is aimed not at the State of Israel or its people, but at the current policy. If we automatically categorize this as anti-Semitism, we will be wide of the mark, and only do ourselves harm in the long run. When France was condemned by the world over the war it waged in Algeria, no one claimed that the criticism was anti-French racism, nor was racism put forward in connection with the criticism of the United States and its war in Vietnam, or in the case of Milosevic’s behavior in Serbia.

Le Pen ‘Supported By So Many Jews’

Primor also debunked the myth that the vote for Jean-Marie Le Pen for President of France represented a “resurgence of anti-Semitism” in France, as much of the American and Israeli media have been propagandizing. He stressed that “many Jews in France voted for Jean-Marie Le Pen. . . . Some 10% of the Israelis who hold French citizenship voted for Le Pen in Israel. What kind of anti-Semitism is this, which is supported by so many Jews?” Primor’s point was publicly confirmed by Jo Goldenberg, a Holocaust survivor whose restaurant was bombed by terrorists 20 years ago, and who voted for Le Pen, telling the French press that he was far from alone among French Jews in doing so.

One high-level intelligence source, in a discussion with

this author, recently labelled Le Pen “the French Sharon.” The orchestrated public hysteria, in Israel, about the Le Pen vote, must be taken with a grain of salt.

The deeper reality is that French and European Jews are by far *not* the targetted group in most of Europe. If one looks at the polemics of Le Pen, or the successes of like-thinking parties in recent weeks in Denmark and Holland, the “enemy image” of such parties, and their leaders, is immigrants, many of whom are Arabs and/or Muslims, and there have been many instances, in France and elsewhere, of horrific acts of violence against poor, Muslim immigrants. Insofar as one word may sum up that real problem, it is *racism*.

That anti-immigrant poison—also prevalent in parts of the United States respecting Arabs, Muslims in general, Hispanics and others—is, to a significant extent, caused by the *economic depression* spreading across Europe. Immigrants are a ready scapegoat and an enemy image as unemployment rises, and as the conditions of life become worse for millions of European citizens.

Who Benefits?

Though there has been, unquestionably, a rise of attacks on synagogues in Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, and Great Britain, the actual incidents of vandalism and destruction often have a murky origin. In some cases, as Primor points out, these are carried out by “marginal groups of second-generation immigrants from Islamic countries, who are frustrated by absorption difficulties and agitated by the events in the Middle East.” Such cases, he stresses, have nothing to do with the “historical anti-Semitism,” typified by what happened in France with the notorious 1890s frameup of Capt. Alfred Dreyfus. In other cases, the incidents are committed by the punk/satanist scene, for which anti-Jewish attacks are *à la mode*. This is reminiscent of the Jewish cemetery desecration in the French village of Carpentras, in 1992. As soon as it had happened, the entire French political class and media jumped to portray it as a sign of the “dangerous rise of anti-Semitism,” until it was later revealed, that local satanists had done it.

Sometimes, these actions are done by neo-Nazi groups, but they are so penetrated by various intelligence services, that it is, in the end, difficult to say “who gave the orders.”

There is also a Likud *cui bono* factor. On April 22, after the first “Le Pen shock” round of the French Presidential elections, Israeli Vice-Minister and Minister of the Interior Elie Yishai insisted that “the Jews of Europe, in general, and the Jews of France, in particular . . . [must] pack their bags, and emigrate to Israel,” to escape “the growing number of anti-Semitic attacks.” There are, unfortunately, precedents for an “irregular” Israeli role in such misadventures. According to many sources, including prominent Iraqi Jews, in the 1950s, Mossad operatives, were involved in setting off bombs in front of synagogues, in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, to “encourage” Iraqi Jews to emigrate to Israel.