



The direction of French policy

The second installment of Jacques Cheminade's paper on the historical development of French political economy, published here, continues *Executive Intelligence Review's* series of background features on the policy issues now facing France. Cheminade, an official of the French Finance Ministry, presented this paper last Aug. 6 before the *EIR* seminar commemorating Friedrich List, in Frankfurt, West Germany. The audience of more than 100 included a number of foreign diplomats as well as German political, business and labor representatives, professors and students.

"We are faced today with a world situation in which a humanist Franco-German alliance is a matter of life or death for humanity," began Cheminade in the section we printed last week. "Not only France and Germany were made as republican nations by the predecessors and successors of Friedrich List, but List represents the turning point at which the 'American System,' made for America by the European humanist tradition exemplified by Alexander Hamilton, was brought back to Europe by the 'German-American' Friedrich List.

"That tradition instructs us Europeans to break with the IMF and World Bank and create as an alternative the European Monetary Fund, a monetary Zollverein" (the German customs union founded by List on his return from America in the 1830s), Cheminade said.

The first installment of Cheminade's presentation, in our Oct. 2-8 issue, linked List and his close French collaborators, notably Charles Dupin, to the tradition in political economy of Leibniz and the 16th century French "politique," Jean Bodin. In the second article Cheminade's narrative takes the reader from Bodin through the achievements of Louis XIV's famous minister Colbert, who was looked to by American System thinkers from Hamilton to Henry Carey as the founder of their approach to political economy. It leads up to Interior Minister Chaptal, the individual most responsible for transmitting Hamilton's conceptions back into Europe, at the turn of the 19th century.

Cheminade draws upon original sources that are not widely known even in France today to reconstruct the fascinating history of a "transatlantic conspiracy" that founded modern France and Germany on the basis of the American Revolution. As we go to press, France and the Federal Republic of Germany are drawing into ever closer collaboration. The two heads of government, West German Chancellor Schmidt and French President Giscard, held a summit in Bonn immediately following the Belgrade meeting of the International Monetary Fund.

Out of that Franco-German meeting, two significant joint initiatives have emerged. In a West German television appearance, President Giscard intervened strongly into the debate on nuclear energy now raging in that country. Giscard stated that the choice is either the development of nuclear or an unthinkable reduction in world living standards. Media reports that France is competitively gloating over the German moratorium on nuclear plant construction are the opposite of the truth, he stated.

Secondly, Giscard confirmed that West Germany supports France's proposed European-wide disarmament conference, a proposal that runs counter to Anglo-American efforts to arm for a confrontation with the Soviet Union.

Both projects are in the tradition of the de Gaulle-Adenauer alliance of the early 1960s, an alliance whose roots are traced to the history Cheminade develops.