

Response to Chancellor Merkel: Germany Needs a New Economic Policy

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Subtitled “Europe’s soul lies in the Platonic Humanist tradition, not in Voltaire!” this article, written for the German weekly Neue Solidarität, was translated from German.

The speech that German Chancellor Merkel gave before the European Parliament on Jan. 17, in her capacity as President of the European Union, betrayed a fundamental problem which lurks behind her policy of “small steps.” That she holds the opinion that Voltaire, of all people, expressed the soul of Europe, is alarming. One can only hope that it is just due to Mrs. Merkel’s youthful frivolity, as a “17-year-old youth in the European Union,” as she herself put it in her speech, that she sides with Voltaire, in the anti-Leibnizian tradition in Europe.

Mrs. Merkel missed an opportunity in her speech to warn the nations of Europe of the consequences of a further war by the Bush-Cheney Administration against Iran. It is not sufficient to demand the expansion of the Middle East peace process, the reactivation of the so-called Quartet (the U.S.A., Russia, the UN, and the European Union), and a unified position by the EU toward the Iranian nuclear program. Because even as Mrs. Merkel was speaking, Condoleezza Rice, during her Middle East tour, was pulling the rug out from under Mrs. Merkel’s plans. While Rice pretended to promote dialogue, in reality the U.S. Administration is supporting the conflict between the Palestinian groups Hamas and Fatah, and is simultaneously constructing the argument that Iran and Syria are supporting the insurgents in Iraq—which naturally could provide the pretext for their desired attacks against the two states.

The second essential theme of our time—the fact that the world financial system finds itself in an unsalvageable situation—the Chancellor didn’t even find worthy of being mentioned. Instead, she spoke of a further deregulated “transatlantic market,” and, without her mentioning the Transatlantic Free Trade Zone, which has been proposed by people such as [former U.S. Ambassador to Germany and Lazard bank official] John Kornblum, her proposals still go in that direction. She also uttered not a word about the changed balance of power in the United States and the potential that America can return to the tradition of the economic policy of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Mrs. Merkel failed during her recent trip to the

United States, to meet members of the new Democratic majority.

Merkel declared that a top priority of the German Presidency of the EU, is to bring the European Constitution back onto the agenda, although, after the “No” vote in the French and Dutch referenda, and the ruling of the German Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, there is no legal basis for it. That is a total waste of energy, because none of the Presidential candidates in France want a European Constitution which will sacrifice the sovereignty of France to a supranational apparatus. The EU as an imperial structure (as Robert Cooper, the director for foreign and political-military affairs of the EU Council, and the advisor to EU foreign affairs spokesman Javier Solana, has in mind) is a useless concept for representing the true interests of the European states, which should instead cooperate as a Europe of the Fatherlands, in the sense of Charles de Gaulle.

No Smashing Success

In Berlin as well, Mrs. Merkel’s Grand Coalition government is not achieving a smashing success. The alleged break-



European Parliament

Chancellor Angela Merkel at the European Parliament on Jan. 18, with its new President, Hans-Gert Pötering. Merkel is President of the European Union this year, and launched her stint with a speech the previous day, that typified her idiotic policy of “small steps,” failing to address the most important issues of our time.



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Helga Zepp-LaRouche confers with members of the LaRouche Youth Movement in Duesseldorf. While Mrs. Merkel sides with Voltaire and the tradition of Anglo-Dutch Liberalism, Mrs. LaRouche is building a youth movement in the tradition of the humanist scientist and philosopher Gottfried Leibniz.

through in health-care reform which Merkel proclaimed the “most important project of the legislative session,” and which the chairwoman of the Council of Experts, Bert Rürup, correctly identified as a “monster,” means merely a strong increase in insurance contributions for 50 million publicly insured patients, and a grievous worsening of health care as a result. Actually the health-care reform in practice means the same second-class medical care as the system of private health maintenance organizations (HMOs) in the United States.

In this connection, there is also the dubious fact that the Health Ministry, during 2003 and 2004, brought in a total of 44.6 million euro in donations from unnamed private sponsors, which is about four times as much as all the other ministries combined. Despite censure by the Federal Accounting Office, the government is still not ready to publish the names of the industrial enterprises involved, and therefore it is impossible to know the conflicts of interest and improper influences. It is not to be excluded that, for example, pharmaceutical concerns, private clinics, or the Bertelsmann Foundation have provided the models for this health reform.

The reform has not yet gone through. The reporter for the union in the accounting committee, who was commissioned to examine the constitutionality of the reform, Merkel’s enemy Friedrich Merz (of the American law firm Mayer, Brown, Rove, and Maw, as well as the financial “locust” TCI), had previously not given his approval, but now has expressed the

idea that this reform is a step toward a socialist single payment system. Merz, who had previously warned Federal Justice Minister Zypries of this in a letter, could ask for the additional opinions of experts who see constitutional problems with the reform, with the intention of letting it run aground.

But Roland Koch [Governor of Hesse and No. 2 in Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union party, the CDU] has already declared his veto on behalf of Hesse, too, so an agreement in the Bundestag is already blocked. President Köhler has already demonstrated that he can defeat the bill. Otherwise the road to the Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe is still open. Therefore, even if the reform should become law on April 1, as a bad April Fool’s Day joke, it can perhaps not be put into effect. Friedrich Merz, after the election of Angela Merkel as Chancellor, had projected a term of one year for her Grand Coalition government, and could be tempted to prove himself right.

In contrast, U.S. Democratic Congressman John Conyers has brought a bill before the Congress which would introduce to the United States a health-care system such as the German system used to be. The “U.S. National Health Insurance Act,” in the tradition of the previous Hill-Burton Law, would guarantee everyone residing in the U.S., universal health care of the highest quality, and that is with regard to medical care as well as to the capacity necessary to provide it. Due to the new majority in both Houses of Congress, the passage of this bill is likely. At the same time, the Congress is preparing a bill which will put the reindustrialization of the United States, in the tradition of Franklin Roosevelt, into motion. In this, the ideas of Lyndon LaRouche on the conversion of the auto industry and the composition of an investment institution, are playing a decisive role.

Oligarchical Thinking

But why is the German government going in the wrong direction, when, from America, a positive model, which could lead to re-establishing the once-excellent German health-care system, is being shown in health policy? And why did Mrs. Merkel not use the opportunity, during her recent U.S. visit, to meet with the Democratic majority in Congress, when she always meets with the opposition during her visits to Russia? Perhaps all these political mistakes and omissions have something to do with the previously mentioned axiomatic problem in her thinking, which was expressed in her absurd assumption that the soul of Europe is expressed by Voltaire.

The cynic and sophist Voltaire's books *Candide, Or the Best of All Possible Worlds*, which was directed against Leibniz, and *La Pucelle*, which drags Joan of Arc into the mud, demonstrate in the best way that Voltaire was perhaps clever, but in no way creative; he belonged to a group of Aristotelians such as Paolo Sarpi, Antonio Conti, Lagrange, and so forth, who joined in the judgment of Machiavelli that a society must permit technological and scientific progress if it does not want to fall behind militarily, but, from oligarchical motives, must deny the population access to creativity. For this reason, they consciously introduce mechanical and obscurantist thought, in order to make the pursuit of discovery of universal principles impossible.

Europe's True Soul

The soul of Europe is rather to be found in the tradition which Solon of Athens and Plato pursued to develop the humanity of society, and which proceeds from a fundamental difference between the human individual and the animals. In that idea, man has, in contrast to all other forms of life, the capability of continuously developing his cognitive capacities, of understanding the laws of creation better and better, and of developing from this an improved scientific and technological understanding, while continually improving the living conditions of mankind. The soul of Europe lies also in Classical art, which contributes to the ennobling of the character of man.

So when Mrs. Merkel in her speech used the word "tolerance" 18 times, obviously for rhetorical purposes, that did not make her argument any more correct. And there is a huge gap between Voltaire and Lessing, whom she in one breath calls representatives of tolerance. Lessing, together with Moses Mendelssohn, laid out the basis for the German Classical period, because he fought against the decadent influence of such people as Voltaire, and the whole English and French Enlightenment.

Mrs. Merkel also cites the publisher Peter Prange, that everything that Europe has achieved, is thanks to its inner contradictory nature, the constant back and forth between opinion and counter-opinion. Perhaps Mrs. Merkel in her youth read Mao's piece "On Contradiction" too often, but perhaps she is also only really an Aristotelian and scientific pluralist, who is tolerant in the face of contradictory beliefs. This gives one minestrone, but not scientific discovery.

One can therefore only hope that Chancellor Merkel will study Leibniz in the future, instead of Voltaire, and will write his name on the banner of Europe. Because Leibniz had a vision of Europe, he proposed, for example, that France should develop Africa, and Germany develop Russia. He also had the idea that Germany and China should work together as the two poles of Eurasia, in order to bring the entire territory between them onto a higher level. The relevant vision for the 21st Century, is the improvement of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, as the centerpiece of a new and just global economic order.