

Money: Ends and Trends

World Trend Watch—Part IX: The Rise of Europe

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing seemed to be behaving rather comically as he led the recent proceedings of the European Union's (EU) constitutional convention this past year. As its president, every day he would place the figurine of a turtle on the dais.

Reported the Irish Times on the final day of the 105-member proceedings, July 11, 2003,

"The Convention on the Future of Europe has ended with a final display of soaring rhetoric. Its president, Mr. Valery Giscard d'Estaing, closed the last session after a number of last-minute changes to the draft constitution, including provisions for an official EU flag, anthem, holiday and slogan.

But he saved his final words for Wu Kei, a green tortoise with a dragon's head that Mr. Giscard has placed on his desk during each convention session. The tortoise is believed to have helped the first Chinese emperor to tame the Yellow River more than 4,000 years ago and has long been a symbol of longevity, patience and stability. 'The last person I wish to thank is my tortoise Wu Kei. She has followed - or led - our trip. When we were in the middle of the stream, she guided us, as she did for the first Chinese emperor, until we reached the river's banks. And I expect, as many of you probably believe, that, since the beginning, she knew where she wanted to go,' he said.

Mr. Giscard then produced a few lettuce leaves and fed them to the ornamental tortoise. The tortoise said nothing."

The story of his tortoise may seem rather trivial. Actually, it is rather chilling as I will explain. The symbolism of the turtle holds great significance besides the fact that it may have had the head of a dragon.

Unseen Aspects of the Unification of Europe

From the ruins of WW II, Europe has again risen to great world prominence. It is a remarkable story and definitely qualifies as one of the big World Trends I want to cover in this series. Importantly, this development is tightly linked with money, economics and the endtimes as you will see.

Many prophecy teachers point to unified Europe as being the fulfillment of the Revived Roman Empire that the Bible prophesies. The primary scriptures interpreted to predict this event are found in Daniel 2 and 7 where it mentions that a fourth empire gives rise to the antichrist.

This revival of the Roman Empire is a theme widely taught by most prophecy experts (*though not all agree upon its final role in the endtimes*). Rather than retreading this well-worn path, I wish to emphasize two different and crucial aspects of the rise of Europe: 1. A conspiracy to ignore its significance; and 2. The real motivations and stimulus behind its formation.

The Phenomenon of Europe

Never before in history has it ever occurred that so many countries and people — perhaps as many as 465 million — have voluntarily come together in a time of peace.

There has not been a dictator that has swept across Europe to forcibly put them together. All past empires, the Ottoman, Roman, Medo-Persian, Mongolian, Seljuks, Greek ... etc. all occurred at the behest of brutal force and war. The unification of Europe, on the other hand, is peaceful — in fact, even in the name of peace. Single sovereign nations that possess hundreds of years of history and identity are willingly coming together.

Said Jacques Delors the former head of the European Union in the early 1990s, “*We must hurry, History is waiting.*” I am not sure if his statement reflected an understanding of what the Bible says would come, or was just an insightful comment. To be sure, Europe is hurrying. Its merging together has happened amazingly quick ... right under the nose of much of the world which has been caught mostly unawares. The recent draft constitution produced by the Convention on the Future of Europe, over which Mr. Giscard presided, was completed in a remarkably short 17 months. Crucially, it paves the way for a European president — one man leading Europe.

From the time of the European Steel and Coal Community of 6 nations in 1951, today the Council of Europe has 44 members. The economic union itself now comprises 15 nations, soon to be six more. (*In total, there are ten potential acceding countries — Cyprus, the Czech Rep, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovak Rep, and Slovenia.*) For developments of this scale, this is fast.

Already the EU is almost as large as the US in terms of economic might. Once the other six new countries join, the EU economy could be approximately 10% larger than the US. Of course, this comparison could change much more rapidly should the US dollar fall further against the euro, the EU common currency.

Why the Cover Up?

Despite the rapid ascension of Europe, one would be hard pressed to find much acknowledgment of this achievement in North America. Why this is so has always puzzled me. The attitudes of policymakers and leaders in North America towards Europe have consistently carried a tone of mockery — “schadenfreude” at every turn. The commentary from the press and Wall Street clearly promoted a message of European pessimism and certain failure. Why was the coverage so one-sided and ill-informed? The negative coverage served to completely deny and ridicule the European phenomenon.

European statesman and policymakers have constantly been portrayed as bumbling fools and old-order bureaucrats caught in a time warp, their economies calcified and social and labor policies outmoded. In contrast, America and its Anglo-Saxon siblings are presented as smart and progressive, and so much more enlightened.

Such biased reports in the North American media are endless. To illustrate, here are just some recent examples:

“Europe’s systemic problems of labor inflexibility, weak productivity growth and a large pension overhang are going largely unaddressed and will continue to act as a drain on [economic] growth.”¹ “In general, European consumers lack the frenzied gusto of their American counterparts.”²
(Note: No mention is made of America’s real and equally-troublesome pension and employment problems, nor the looming consequences of rampant, debt-laden consumerism.)

On August 30th, business newspapers splashed the bad news that Germany (*the major economy of the EU*) is now expected to experience a budget deficit of some 3.8% of their GDP (*economy*) in 2003. *(Note: Yes, this is indeed not an ideal development. But missing from all of these articles was the fact that the US federal budget deficit is much higher and expected to worsen next year.)*

The relative positions of the US and Europe are not nearly as lopsided as the media may wish to portray. The real facts are very different than are popularly believed, as is evident to those who care to research such things and can discern deception.

By saying all this, by no means am I an apologist for Europe. After all, this is not the emerging superstate that will make the world a better place. Far from it. However, it is important to distinguish facts from myths. Here are a few examples shedding light on the real relative positions of the EU and America, among many that I could examine.

Myth: The US economy is considered more vibrant and faster growing while Europe, on the other hand, is slow and sluggish.

Fact: Economic growth per person for Europe and the US has been exactly the same over the past three years. A recent paper³ notes that over the period 1992-2003, net economic output per person rose 1.4% per annum in the EuroZone (*the collective term for all European countries using the euro currency*), and just 1.1 per cent a year in the US.

Myth: Europe lags far behind the US in technology and productivity.

Fact: Much of the productivity growth that the US claims for itself is bogus. These figures are calculated completely differently than in the rest of the world. Though America is the clear leader in many areas of technology, the fact is that Europe does not lag very much. *(Space does not allow me to cite supporting statistics.)*

Myth: Alan Greenspan and his Federal Reserve Board, the keeper of the US dollar and its monetary developments, is brilliant ... a virtual god of prosperity. The European Central Bank, on the other hand, is disorganized and clueless. Its head, Wim Duisenberg, is constantly attacked as being comatose and totally out of touch with economic realities.

Fact: The US Federal Reserve has slashed interest rates in almost panic fashion to the lowest levels in 50 years over the past year and a half. Generally, Europe has not followed. Why? They don't have to, to put it simply. Nor do they want to invite the disastrous consequences. Longer-term comparisons could also be made. For example, over the past four decades, the core of Europe has had less inflation.

Myth: Europe is extremely uncompetitive.

Fact: Common sense would require the question that if Europe is so far behind, why is it that the US has such an enormous trade deficit with the world (*including Europe*). America is forecast to have an all-time record trade deficit of \$623 billion next year.⁴ That means \$2.4 billion must now be borrowed from the rest of the world each business day in order to support this consumptive addiction. Somebody is obviously buying more goods from Europe than the US. Who are these ill-advised people?

What does Europe think about all this slanted reporting? Largely, they are unconcerned. Why? They are pursuing a very different strategy — one that is patient and long-suffering.

The Symbolism of the Turtle

What could Mr. Giscard's harmless turtle signify? It represents a very powerful philosophy. Reported the Financial Times on July 23, 2003:

“As Mr. Giscard d'Estaing explains, [the turtle] is a Chinese antique. It embodies longevity, thinks long-term and achieves its aims at its own pace. All the characteristics, in short, that the convention's 76-year-old chairman claims for himself.”

The turtle is used as a symbol of longevity and wisdom in many pagan religions. For example, a turtle with a dragon's head is a favorite talisman in China. If placed in the south-east corner of one's home, it is thought to bring good fortune and success. We see that Mr. Giscard D'Estaing openly appeals to these “magic” values.

Even more significant is the fact that the turtle is the mascot of the original Fabian Society. Founded in the 1880s by John Ruskin, it has spawned many offspring around the world that are active still today. The Fabian Society still exists in Britain (*Tony Blair, the current British prime minister is an active member*). In fact, the ideas of Ruskin are very much practiced in both Europe and America today.

The humanistic, anti-Christian Fabians stood for a gradual takeover of society by the steady infiltration of its values — from the bottom up, in other words. Rather than openly attacking or overthrowing ruling institutions and governments by force, they undermined society's foundations by poisoning the values of the schools, churches, family structures, media, and so on. They took their name from the Roman General, Quintus Fabius Maximus who fought Hannibal. He is noted for the technique that he used to vanquish Hannibal. Rather than fighting head to head, Maximus used the weapons of time and patience, only engaging in

minor side skirmishes. It was the strategy of the turtle versus the hare. He won. The various groups using this strategy to achieve their humanistic aims have already worked great devastation in the formerly Christian societies of both Europe and North America ... past the point of return, in my view.

The Values of New Europe

Quoting another excerpt from the Irish Times article cited earlier:

"If the draft constitution is approved by EU leaders in an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) starting later this year, the blue flag with 12 gold stars will become the official emblem of the EU. Beethoven's Ode to Joy will be the EU anthem, the euro will be the official currency and May 9th will be Europe Day, to be celebrated throughout the Union. The convention has also agreed on a slogan for the EU - 'Unity in Diversity.'"

Here, in these symbols, we see some revealing indicators of Europe's values and impetus.

- The EU flag with the 12 stars is sometimes openly connected to the 12 stars that appear in pictures around the Roman Catholic Madonna — "the woman of the Apocalypse" as one European diplomat identified her.⁵ The number of stars is not intended to symbolize the number of countries that have joined the EU. After all, there are 15 members currently, not 12.
- Beethoven's Ode to Joy, the prelude in the last movement of his ninth symphony, actually contains the lyrics from Friedrich von Schiller that describes a pagan story about the uniting of all men in brotherhood by the power of magic. This is hardly a comforting source of inspiration for Europe. It certainly does not represent the worship of the God of the Bible.
- The euro may very likely be the world's major and most powerful currency as world events play out in the future, most probably throughout the Tribulation. This will be an important seat of power in the endtimes (*in my opinion, even more effective than military might*). By now, the reader can see how this might happen.
- The date of the proposed Europe Day, May 9th, was chosen for a reason. May 9th 1950 was the day that businessman Robert Schuman presented his proposal for the creation of an organized Europe. He regarded it as *"indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations."* This proposal, known as the "Schuman declaration," is considered to be the beginning of the creation of what is now the European Union.

Points to Ponder

Europe is deliberately taking the course of the tortoise, thinking that the hare (*the United States*) in the end will run himself into ineffectiveness.⁶ In the view of some of the leading thinkers in Europe, America is being deceived by Wall

Street, its citizens working ever harder for the same living standard, driving themselves deeper into debt and pursuing ill-fated short-term solutions.

Indeed this is all happening.

Europe (*and its possible world confederation representing the Revived Roman Empire, perhaps also including the US and Canada*) will be in the driver's seat of world affairs as the last-day events play out, not America. North Americans seem to have no inkling whatsoever that this will happen. Why? As pointed out: The effectiveness of the "tortoise" strategy and the deliberate misreporting of the real competitive position and success of Europe. How quickly could all this come about? It's difficult to say. The conditions are in place that it could happen very quickly ... suddenly. On the other hand, it may yet take decades.

Whatever you read or hear from the popular media, test the view that is being promoted. One of the greatest prophesied phenomena of the last days (*perhaps second only to the refounding of Israel*) is underway. And all the while it is being widely minimized and guffawed by the very nations that have the most to lose and the greatest ability to remain as defenders of the state of Israel.

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¹ Stratfor, an influential global intelligence research group based in Texas. Commentary of August 27th.

² Ibid. Commentary of August 20, 2003.

³ Credit Suisse First Boston, April 2003.

⁴ Recent forecast from UBS.

⁵ Attributed to Leon Marchal, former Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

⁶ Recently, the Economist (a British, Euro-centric publication) compared the European and American economic policies with the title, The Tortoise and the Hare, concluding with the statement, "*both the hare and the tortoise risk being run over in a nasty accident.*"