
Documentation

Raymond Barre's Trilateralisms

The following utterances of the very Trilateral Monsieur Raymond Barre come largely from two sources: 1) his 1984 book, *Réflexions pour Demain (Reflections for Tomorrow)*, published by Hachette; and 2) the Sept. 6, 1985 issue of *L'Expansion* magazine, where he is interviewed by his friend Jean Boissonnat, who will be joining him at the Trilateral Commission meeting in Paris this October.

On the Soviet Union

Another aspect of East-West relations concerns trade. The countries of Europe and of the West do not want an economic war with the Soviet Union. Without showing the slightest complacency with regard to the ideology of the communist regime, they tend to consider that the socialist countries should be integrated progressively into the international commercial and financial system. In this way, a peaceful cooperation could develop, and political dialogue would be facilitated. The Europeans have coexisted with Russia for centuries; if an armed conflict were to break out, it would unfold on their territory. From this comes an inclination to give "détente" a chance. In any case, European governments do not think that economic sanctions or restrictions on trade and credits would oblige the Soviet Union to temporize its foreign and military policy. They share, in the last analysis, the idea expressed recently by Ambassador George Kennan: "An attempt to prevent or slow down the economic development of a not democratic state in a time of peace. This is a means of preparing a new war, not of preventing one [*Réflexions*, p. 326]."

In spite of the disgraceful attacks directed at myself on this subject, I do not take back anything I have said or written about East-West relations. I have no sympathy for the totalitarian regimes of the East. I believe that the Western countries must exert a constant moral pressure to defend human rights in the Eastern countries. . . . But at the same time, it is normal and useful for the countries of Western Europe to maintain a nation-to-nation political dialogue with the Soviet



Union and the Eastern countries, and to develop economic, commercial, and cultural exchanges with these countries. This is important for security and peace on our continent. It enables us to alleviate the problem of a divided Germany [*L'Expansion*].

On the United States

I have become cognizant, on the ground level, of the fact that the construction of the United States of Europe, if it could happen one day, would certainly not occur by the methods that created the United States of America [*Réflexions*, p. 428].

On the IMF

In the course of the last 18 months it has been possible to avoid an international financial crisis linked to the massive indebtedness of the developing countries, thanks to the concerted action of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, of states and of central banks, and finally, of commercial banks. The debtor countries have courageously put into effect the program of economic adjustment recommended by the IMF. . . . Here we see a great success in international financial cooperation. . . . The crisis that has broken out in the world has had, in all countries, a salutary effect. . . . The effect has also been salutary for the developing countries, which themselves have also benefited from this prosperity and from this facility. . . . I think that the criticisms currently being directed against the IMF, are always exaggerated, and, to a certain extent, unjust [*Réflexions*, pp. 374, 388, 390].

The IMF's action was indispensable and quite useful. . . . Since 1982 the IMF has succeeded in mobilizing significant means to avert financial collapse. . . . Without the IMF's program, the consequences for Latin America would have been very serious. Fortunately, however, these countries car-

ried it out. . . . The IMF's policies were necessary in order to put an end to illusions and to correct economic policies which would have been horrible in the long term [from various Venezuelan newspapers during his July 8-11, 1985 visit to Caracas, where he met with President Lusinchi, among others].

On the monetary system

What has emerged from the present crisis is a system of collective management of the international financial system. We have seen central banks, international financial institutions, commercial banks, and governments, unite their efforts to avoid the collapse of the international financial system. I believe that this is the line of the future, in spite of the vicissitudes and the problems. We are witnessing a growing consciousness of drawing closer together; of the interdependence of the economies of the East and the West, of the North and the South. We see emerging, slowly but steadily, methods of collective management favorable to development, stability, and peace [*Réflexions*, p. 469].

On his intellectual background

My intellectual formation in the years from '45 was marked by the influence of the great economists of the period, that of Keynes in particular, who then dominated economic thinking. . . . I have always "admired" Keynes made in the House of Lords, in 1944 on the International Monetary Fund, and, in December 1945, a short time before his death, on the financial accords between Great Britain and the United States. These texts have an inexhaustible interest [*Réflexions*, pp. 432-33].

On the SDI

President Reagan and Mrs. Thatcher, during their meetings in Camp David in December 1984, recognized that the "Initiative" was not incompatible with the ABM Treaty; they admitted that the day when the "Initiative" became operational, they would have to have serious negotiations with the U.S.S.R. to avoid any situation that would be detrimental to international security. That appears very reasonable to me. In any case, we Europeans must see that the ABM Treaty is not put in question [from an interview with Patrick Wajzman, *Politique Internationale*, Spring, 1985].

No one can say how the SDI will turn out in operation. Europe's best protection lies in nuclear deterrence, and nothing can replace it so soon; that is the basic concept [*L'Expansion*].

On the U.S. 'recovery'

It is in fact the work of Paul Volcker, who has presided over the Federal Reserve Board since 1979 (note that he was appointed by Carter). But this success was obtained at the cost of a draconian monetary policy, which brought with it a massive rise in interest rates and provoked, through 1982,

the worst economic recession the United States has known since the end of World War II [*L'Expansion*].

On the pacifists

I consider the German pacifist left as a new form of nationalism. The Germans fear that they have been abandoned by the United States. Since certain declarations of Mr. Kissinger, saying that the President of the United States would always hesitate to sacrifice Chicago for Cologne, and confronted with Mr. Reagan's talk of a limited nuclear conflict in Europe, the Germans are saying to themselves: "We run the risk of serving as a battleground, and of being abandoned" [*Réflexions*, p. 466].

On Germany

The young Germans have never known Nazism, nor the post-war period, nor the period of the Marshall plan and the Cold War. They desire peace; they do not want their country to be the theater of a nuclear conflict; they hope to be able to maintain as close as possible relations with their compatriots in the German Democratic Republic. They have rediscovered their country's historical tendency toward *Mittleuropa* [Central Europe]; they are reviving the themes of German Romanticism, beginning with that of the German forest. . . . My distinguished friend Mr. Arthur Burns, the U.S. ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, recently stated that the "best contribution" one can make to the security debate "would be talk less about missiles in Europe and to further stress our shared fundamental political, economic, and cultural values [interview in *L'Express* magazine, March 2-8, 1984].

On Greenpeace

I condemn the operation against the *Rainbow Warrior*. In itself, it is a detestable act. It seems to me that the national Navy is all we need to ensure, in the light of day and with the required effectiveness, the protection of the Polynesian islands, where France is conducting nuclear tests indispensable to its defense. I abstain from any further comment [*L'Expansion*].

On austerity

Western Europe will have to get used to living with higher rates of unemployment than in the past, and the Socialist experience will have to serve to bring about this change of conscience, according to Raymond Barre, writing in an economic article in *Commentaire* magazine (Julliard). In the article, which is devoted to comparative studies of employment in the United States and in Europe over the past 10 years, the former prime minister notes that "public opinion, whose hopes for a rapid conclusion to the crisis have been nourished far too long, is now beginning to comprehend [that it will take time to solve the unemployment problem] and to accept the necessary sacrifices [report from *Matin de Paris*, Oct. 3, 1985].