

## Editorial

### *Tectonic shifts*

The sudden resignation of German Finance Minister Oskar Lafontaine on March 11 may have taken most of the political world by surprise, but not *EIR*. Such shifts are paradigmatic of the world political situation since last fall, when the world's industrial nations refused to take action toward a more rational world monetary and financial order, and thus set the stage for the instability and strategic crises which are wracking the world today.

The particulars of the German situation deserve only brief mention here. As a Finance Minister presiding over the deepening economic depression in Germany, Lafontaine was in a losing situation. All the measures which the Social Democratic-Green Party coalition had chosen to deal with the situation—energy taxes, budget cuts, and the phase-out of nuclear energy—had led to a political backlash from labor, farmers, and industry. Lafontaine decided to quit rather than fight.

*EIR* had said from the outset that the red-green coalition would not last long. After only 160 days, the major reshuffles have begun.

Similar political upheavals can be expected elsewhere, at increasing frequency, and they will totally change the political-strategic map. The most dramatic such upheaval in the last months was the de facto emergence of a strategic alliance between China and Russia, as a result of the decision of the United States and Britain to dump the UN Security Council, and take unilateral military action against Iraq last December. But there are others in the making.

Look, for example, at the visit of Iranian President Khatami to Rome. A mere 20 years after the Khomeini revolution, which was accompanied by a dramatic conflict between East and West, a major leader of the Islamic world is taking dramatic steps to create “a spirit of dialogue between Muslims and Christians,” to quote the Vatican official communiqué. This, too, is a tectonic shift, driven by the determination of the Pope and Khatami to avoid what looks to be inevitable war.

Americans, in particular, tend to rule out the possibility of such shifts occurring in the United States. But,

such an assumption is foolhardy. The same kinds of pressures which led to the German government shift, and are now leading to a visible realignment of the Italian government, for example, away from NATO's new confrontational policy, will shape the immediate political developments in the United States as well. Thus, just as the “powerful” Lafontaine can suddenly be out of political office, so could the “powerful” Al Gore go back to backwoods obscurity in an instant. And, if Gore goes, George “Shrub” Bush will not be far behind.

Of course, if one wishes these changes to go in a positive direction, it is not adequate to sit back and watch. We in the LaRouche movement make our projections in full knowledge that we will be acting to shape the political environment in a sane direction, as we indeed have done over the past decades, and will continue to do.

In a message to a conference in the Philippines, held on March 12, Lyndon LaRouche addressed this process of shifts as follows:

“Now, during the weeks and months immediately ahead, the world will pass through successive crises of the quality which break men's will, and drive many mad. Thus, through those crises, we shall come to a new chance to make the corrections in world policy which should have been introduced no later than last October. The best hope for mankind in these times hangs upon three crucial elements:

“1. That the spread of new cooperation among a growing number of Eurasia nations, grouped around China, India, and Russia, will continue to be strengthened.

“2. That continental western Europe will join in partnership with that emerging Eurasia bloc, as it is inclined to do.

“3. That the President of the U.S.A. will find the courage, clearheadedness, and support he needs, to play a leading role in bringing the U.S.A. into its appropriate key role in partnership with Eurasia and Europe.

“This will be a period like that of fighting a major war; but it is a war which can be won, a war which we must win, for the sake of all humanity.”