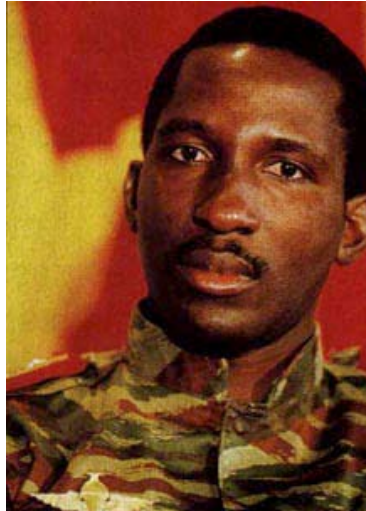


Thomas Sankara on Africa's Debt Burden

After his presentation, Cheminade showed a video of a speech by Thomas Sankara, the former President of Burkina Faso, comparing it to the 1982 speech by then-Mexican President José López Portillo to the United Nations, which was shown the previous day (see EIR, Sept. 7, 2007 for excerpts). Sankara gave the speech on July 29, 1987, before the Organization of African Unity. Cheminade then commented as follows:



Well, you have listened to what Thomas Sankara had to say: “If Burkina Faso stands alone in its refusal to pay the debt, I am not going to be here at the next Conference.”

Burkina Faso stood alone, and Thomas Sankara, after a decisive confrontation with French President François Mitterrand, was murdered on Oct. 15, 1987, less than three months after his speech. And, as he had said, he was not present at the next Organization of African Unity conference.

I must add two things:

1. If you notice similarities in the Sankara speech and the López Portillo speech, you are right on the mark. López Portillo was very close to Lyndon LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche, while Thomas Sankara was kept informed of our fight through a friend of mine, now deceased. Now, today, we have collected two signatures of French deputies and more than 20 signatures of French mayors, supporting Helga Zepp-LaRouche’s proposal for a New Bretton Woods. Michel Rocard, a former Socialist French prime minister, is also calling for a New Bretton Woods, in his own way, and he was a close political friend of my past friend. So, we are reintroducing some motion in France on the pathway opened by LaRouche, López Portillo, and Sankara.

2. Sankara—a name coming, by the way, from an Indian wise man from the Eighth Century, a famous scholar of the Vedantas—was then alone, or almost alone, in his fight for a new, more just world economic order. He did not have a very good overall sense of world dynamics, and was somehow blinded by a cultural bias for African self-sufficiency. Today, the world is obviously a One, and we are not alone in our fight, so we don’t have any excuse to fail. Proof is the coming report on the work of the LaRouche Youth Movement, our future.