

Book Review

Lionel Jospin: *My Vision of Europe and Globalization and Europe we want*

Revision of French Left in the Globalized Europe

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The Europe I would like to build is a strong Europe, conscious of its political identity, respectful of the peoples which make it up, shouldering its responsibilities in the world, prepared to support the burden of its defence, determined to preserve its balanced economic and social development model, resolved to independently define and stubbornly defend its diplomatic, industrial and commercial interests, passionately committed to its cultural diversity. The construction of Europe demands the best of all of us: ambition and imagination in vision, humility and tenacity in work. (Lionel Jospin, Paris, 2001)

1. Introduction

The above speech by Lionel Jospin well represented the left desirable scenario towards the EU. This speech was selected from the book named 'My Vision of Europe and Globalization Lionel JOSPIN and Europe We Want Pascal LAMY and Jean PISANI-FERRY' which I intend to review and give some critiques on. This volume is edited by Frederic Mitchel who is the director of Policy

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Network. The book consists two main parts as its name revealed. On 'My Vision of Europe and Globalization', Lionel Jospin is a contributor. Jospin is well known among the European watchers as a high-level politician, former prime minister, presidential candidate with Jacques Chirac and Jean-Marie Le Pen. Jospin's loss during the first round 2002 French election had great impacts. It can be said that the left ideologies lost its ground in French politics, while nationalist and racist sentiments increase in France as well as in other European countries.

Pascal Lamy, the first contributor for the second part 'Europe We Want', is also well regarded among Eurocrats in Brussels. He was the former Chef de Cabinet of Delors Commission. Lamy was behind major European decisions, especially the Single Market and Maastricht Treaty. At present, he is chosen to be Trade Commissioner in the Prodi Commission. Jean Pisani-Ferry, the other author for the same part, is the Chief economic adviser to the French prime minister. Thus, we cannot reject that Pisani-Ferry is on top of government jobs.

To introduce three distinguished contributors to the volume is not only intended to commercialise the left forefronts. Their high-profiles instead give us easy readings and thorough knowledge on the EU vis a vis France's developments. Their suggestions are keen and practicable. If they had a chance to assert their political impetus, France today might look different. Before reviewing the volume, it is important for the readers, who are not familiar with the EU or European concepts, to have some background on French roles in the EU and the difference between European capitalism and the overriding capitalism. Thus, the first two parts will introduce the readers to the EU with France as a member and the

contested concept of capitalism. The latter three parts will correspondingly concern the volume itself.

2. The Role of France in the EU

2.1 French Export and Malaise

To name the Frenchmen who were the most important persons for the European integration, I definitely say Jean Monnet, General Charles De Gaulle and Jacques Delors. These three men were very distinctive in that they came from different backgrounds. They had different statuses in the European arrangements. And the most crucial thing was that they produced different outcomes for the European integration.

Monnet, a technocrat, was the greatest exporter of the French organisation model to be the functionalist input in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)¹, the origin of the EU today².

Monnet let alone the Eurocrats to oversee the integration with least intervention from national governments. He started the integration

¹European Coal and Steel Community or ECSC consisted six founding members which were France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Italy.

²Monnet experienced the integrationist model from the French Planning Commission during the World War II. He realised that permanent European peace would only be consolidated if the Franco-German rivalries were solved. He started the process of reconciliation between France and Germany by neutralising coal and steel of both countries in order to reduce disputes and resource monopolies. In my own assessment, the process was semi-voluntary. France was delighted to have access in German abundant coal mines. In contrast, Germany had no choice as a war loser, the country had to cooperate to restore the image of peace-loving country. Fortunately, the process made considerable progress of coal and steel outputs to all ECSC members.

process from certain economic sectors like coal and steel with the belief that talking on business would not lead to conflict.

The EU can be said that it was well started by Monnet, while the crippled EU today was partly derived from nationalistic De Gaulle. President De Gaulle supported the centrality of states in the EU decision-making. He opposed British application for European Economic Community (EEC) membership in fear of American hegemony stemming from the Atlantic Alliance³. De Gaulle rejected any single reform on the common agricultural policy (CAP), since it was very vulnerable to French farmers. Moreover, he rejected the idea to empower the European Commission, which we witnessed in the event of the 'empty chair crisis' when French representatives walked out of the Council meetings⁴. It is clear that President De Gaulle would not allow the roles of Eurocrats to supplant those of states.

Delors, the strongest President of the Commission, so differed from Monnet and De Gaulle that he was neither a liberalist nor a rightist. His left thinking, however, produced the Single European

³ Atlantic Alliance is the term used to explain the closer ties between the United States and the United Kingdom. These ties exist until now especially the cooperation between US and UK in the 'war on terrorism' which makes the UK to be the special European.

⁴ The empty chair crisis occurred for six months during July till December 1965 when France did not attend any meetings in the Council of Ministers in opposed to the introduction of qualified majority votes by the Commission. The dispute was compromised in Luxembourg meeting, called 'Luxembourg Compromise' which allowed states to continue using veto power.

Act (SEA)⁵. This agreement created the Single Market which was the first time the grand scheme of economic integration with a consideration on social protection. We can see that the European welfare state started to establish which was the same direction of France under Mitterrand administration. It is also the system highly practiced in the continental Europe which we will see in the next part.

During the passing to the new millennium, France's roles in the EU decision-making were diluted. France was no longer exported any impressive models. As Lamy and Pisani-Ferry pointed out, it was a 'French Malaise' whereby the European Central Bank (ECB) is that of the German model of Bundesbank and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is taken lead by the Britons. The concept of multi-level governance is, in addition, taken from Spanish form of governance. (Michel, 47)

Jospin, Lamy and Pisani-Ferry intended to revive France's roles in Europe by utilizing the left ingredients. In the current situation, domestic politics of France showed the trend towards the rightist and racism after the result of the first round 2002 election when Le Pen the far-right passed through the run-off with centre-right

⁵ The Single European Act or SEA was signed in 1986 and came into force in July 1987.

It was the first substantial revision to the Treaty of Rome. The SEA gives formal recognition to the European Council and European Political Cooperation (EPC). Main changes introduced by the SEA are the extension of qualified majority voting (QMV), the cooperation procedure, the assent procedure and the establishment of the Court of First Instance. The SEA was also created to correct the flaws the previous common market had made by targeting at the eradication of non-tariff barriers (NTBs).

President Chirac⁶. Three contributors agreed that among the founding states of the European Communities (EC), France had the most marked influence over its shape and structures. On the other, it has the most difficulty in coming to terms with the current direction of the EU. (Michel, 55) It is, thus, the time that the French left need to state their visions.

2.2 Continental capitalism versus Atlantic capitalism

First of all, the clarification of the different kind of capitalism in Europe will be conducted through political viewpoints. Starting with the original capitalism, I would term 'Atlantic Capitalism'. The reason I used this term because it is intensively used in the United States and the United Kingdom, which we previously realised their geographical and historical connection. This kind of capitalism means the freedom in all economic transaction with least state's intervention. People can trade commodities freely as they want. Market will decide whether that business is profitable or whether that good is popular.

In contrast, Continental capitalism is widely accepted in France and Germany where the system of welfare states have been embedded. Continental capitalism is capitalism in Europe way in that the government has the right to intervene when consider that economic flows within the country is unjust to the consumers.

⁶ Three presidential candidates in the first round French general election in June 2002 are centre-right President Jacques Chirac, left Prime Minister Lionel Jospin and far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen. The result was that President Chirac and Le Pen passed through the run-off. It was a shock in the case of Le Pen, since he had a strong policy of anti-immigration. Finally, Chirac won a landslide vote which made him one of the most powerful president and governed majority in the parliament.

Especially during the intensified globalization, government will regulate the process, set standards, which is identical to the 'controlled globalization' called by Jospin.

Two clashing methods of capitalism have complicated the European integration for many decades. Gaps between France and Germany vis a vis Britain widen. For example, health and education are fully provided to French and German citizens and in some case to foreign students resided in the two countries. While in the UK, national citizens must pay for education because the government does not subsidise. From these general cases, we could understand why during integration pace, Prime Minister Thatcher opposed to the social protection clause in the Maastricht Treaty because the government was not willing to absorb the social burdens. The UK, as an Atlantic capitalist, relies heavily on the 'invisible hands' or the 'markets' according to Adam Smith. We can say that British elites used the 'let it be' theory.

In the case of CAP, France fully supported the European subsidy on farm products, put import barriers to overseas crops particularly from developing countries like Thailand, in order to be competitive at home and the world market. France and some other continental countries like Italy, Spain and Portugal will not allow the international trade stemming from globalization to ruin domestic economies. Not only the disputes on farming with developing countries, there are number of conflicts between Europe and America in steel and aviation industries.

3. Book Review: Lionel Jospin *My Vision of Europe and Globalization and Europe we want*

3.1 What Jospin says on the Vision of Europe and Globalization?

Lionel Jospin had given speeches in three important occasions; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 6th April 2001; Paris, France on 28th May 2001; and Rennes, France after the September attack 2001. He addressed three related issues, namely the controlled globalization, the European enlargement and institutional reform, and the social Europe.

Globalization, according to Jospin, shall be controlled to contain negative forces such as inequality, digital divide, organised crime and famine (Michel, part 1, chapter 1). The controlled globalization is, in my opinion, identical to the regulations. The controls or regulations should fall upon finance, trade, international organization, environment as well as culture. This paves way for the ultimate role of the government to be the legitimate regulator of the globalized process. Government should ensure that market economy would not transform to the thing Jospin called 'market society' (Michel, part 1, chapter 1).

On the future of an enlarged Europe, Jospin wanted to see Europe with its identity, responsive goals for its people and exemplary roles in the World (Michel, 15). Jospin adopted the concept 'Federation of Nation States' as previously proposed by Delors to be the form of enlargement. The term 'federation' here differs from 'state' in America or 'Länder' in Germany. Federation of Nation States is not an entity but a gradual controlled process of sharing or transferring competence to the EU level (Michel, 27-28). This is similar to the term 'subsidiarity' whereby the EU would

only act in the area that states are incapable⁷. To accommodate the federation, Jospin urged for renationalisation of public policies, especially, the structural policy and redirection of the CAP to promote the farming technologies.

EU institutions should be adjusted to accommodate the next enlargement, following Jospin's viewpoint. Power of the European Council should be expanded to oversee multi-year legislative programmes, which was formerly the roles of the European Parliament (EP) (Michel, 32). President of the Commission should come from the European political groups which win the European election (Michel, 31). Council of Ministers should be permanent posts (Michel, 32). Election on members of European Parliament (MEPs) should be placed in the civil society forums (Michel, 31). EP can be dissolved by the European Council after receiving the proposal from member states or the Commissions in the case of crisis (Michel, 32). At this point, it is difficult to judge to what extent can be called crisis and it is certain that inter-governmentalism is indispensable for the Jospin-styled integration.

European social model, according to Jospin, based on the belief that social policy is a productive factor of market economy not cost. Social issues should not be divorced from economic integration. The control of European market and public services

⁷ Subsidiarity is a balance of power between EU institutions and national, regional or local authorities. It explains that decisions should be taken at the lowest level in the political system. However, this principle becomes a means of limiting the EU's competence. It was stated in the Maastricht Treaty that 'in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community or the EU shall take action in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity...only if the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the member states and be better achieved by the Community'.

are necessary. Crucial societal programmes, such as innovation of health and environmental sciences, measures on food safety, combat on organised crimes should be strengthened (Michel, part 1, chapter 3). Besides, cultural pluralism should be fostered against cultural uniformity (Michel, 21-22).

3.2 What kind of Europe Lamy and Pisani-Ferry want?

Lamy and Pisani-Ferry were most familiar with the EU day-to-day activities among other French elites. They insisted that Europe had provided comparative prosperity for France although EU present integration is market integration and the acceleration of globalization (Michel, 59). European citizens cannot, nevertheless, deny that this growth and prosperity still lacked democracy and link to the grass-root level (Michel, 62-63). The two contributors also saw the conflicts among EC common policies. In particular, the competition policy did not go along with industrial and regional policies.

Lamy and Pisani-Ferry proposed 'Eight Paths to the Future'. The paths comprise means for eight areas; namely, enlargement, democracy, common economic policy, sustainable development, the social Europe, CAP, a judicial space, and EU foreign policy.

Among eight areas, there are numbers of great initiatives. First of all, the contributors proposed a 'convergence pact' for the enlargement based on redeployment of structural funds in favour of candidate countries and programme of investments (Michel, 95). In form of democratic consolidation, they encouraged European public debate and direct membership of European parties as well as tax exemption for EU-interest political foundation (Michel, 105). They also invited the national

parliament debates on the Euro. They promoted the use of QMV in the fiscal and monetary policy (Michel, 115).

In the environmental area, the contributors supported eco-tax and the realization of single market on energy and service (Michel, 124). One outstanding social initiative was the European work contract which set minimum standard to meet (Michel, 130). The CAP should be reformed to avoid direct financing and bonuses for farming should be given (Michel, 135). In the area of JHA, Europol and Eurojust should have power of investigation (Michel, 138). They finally encouraged EU to be a true international player by delegating the Commission to negotiate globalization-related issues, ie. environment (Michel, 144-5).

3.3 Why this book is worth reading?

This volume is the grand collection of the French left ideas on the present EU politics. It was contributed by the French elites who expressed very keen and profound visions. These key policy-makers explained theories and doctrines that governed their views through easy-reading essays. They apprehended inter-related consequences of the EU and the globalized world. They also addressed strategies to adjust roles of the French government to accommodate France in the euro, the enlargement and the CFSP.

It is clear that the French left mainly wanted Europe to counter 'American Hyperpower' and pressures from globalization. If the desired scenario did not happen, the contributors warned that there would be a vicious circle that might create France's greater distance from the EU. However, the contributors did not losing sight that France also needed to reposition itself to benefit from regional integration. France shall prioritise its interests, stop defending the CAP as it is or block market integration. France

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rather puts more political impetus in all European projects. The French left finally reaffirmed their future visions are for the country and Europe's own benefit (Michel, 149).

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