

Permanent War or Peaceful Development: The Unique Approach of Lyndon LaRouche

The following is a transcript of the April 3, 2024, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with founder and chairwoman Helga Zepp-LaRouche. Embedded links have been added. The video is available [here](#).

Harley Schlanger: Hello and welcome to our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and chairwoman of the Schiller Institute. Today is Wednesday, April 3, 2024. I'm Harley Schlanger and I'll be your host. If you have questions or comments, you can email them to questions@schillerinstitute.org.

We're in the midst of an incredibly tense moment in history, where there have been developments in the last days which threaten to turn conflicts into regional wars and even world war. There was the Israeli strike on an Iranian consulate in Damascus, the Israeli murder of seven aid workers in Gaza. These are just a couple of the atrocities continuing there. And then, knowledgeable counterterrorism experts have pointed to MI6 and the CIA as likely behind the attack on the Crocus City Hall near Moscow, the mass murder there.

Now, the first question is taking up the strategic crisis and growing tension, from a contact in Oakland, California, who writes: "Helga, how close are we to world war? And how can Western leaders be so foolish or evil, to keep launching such dangerous provocations?"

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I'm not in a position to say how close we are, but we are very close. Because both of these so-called regional crises, in Southwest Asia and in Ukraine, have both the immediate potential for escalation, intentional or not, by accident or not, but it's enough to make one absolutely sleepless. And I wish that more people would get sleepless nights, because if we are sleepwalking again, like we did, sleepwalking into World War I, and how World War II was also something which could have been prevented, and

now we are about to do the same thing with similar arguments—Hooray for the war against Russia, demonizing entire countries and systems. But what I think is most worrisome, something which has appeared both in respect to the United States and Israel, and that is the apparent and obvious disregard for international law.

I think the most ominous and glaring example is the U.S. responding to these resolutions and decisions by the UN Security Council, with the argument that they regard them as "non-binding." That worries me the most, because if the United States sticks with that—I



International Court of Justice

The world awaits the decision of the International Court of Justice in the case brought against Israel for genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza.

mean, we have a system which is the United Nations. We have the UN International Court of Justice (ICJ), which makes decisions. On January 26, the ICJ issued a very clear order in respect to Israel to stop the genocide there, which was completely disregarded. Also, when the International Court of Justice makes a decision, it goes to the UN Security Council for implementation.

The United States had been acting to practically make the UN system defunct by continuously vetoing any call for ceasefire, which would stop the genocidal killing. However, in the most recent vote, the U.S. abstained, which meant that the resolution passed.

But then, when the White House or State Department spokesman was asked about it, he said, “we regard this as non-binding.” Now that means that the UN Security Council, which is the only existing and actually highest institution of international lawfulness, “rules-based order” if you want—if that is being disregarded as “non-binding,” then we are *really* in for trouble: Because

in Gaza. And then the attack occurred, killing seven people. Israel claimed it was a mistake. Netanyahu sort of apologized. But it is 99.9% impossible that this was an accident. Because if you have such a tight situation that—it’s a complete violation of any rule! And that means, if we are not capable of remedying that in the short term—We have a situation in Ukraine which is on

the edge. We have a situation, after the Israeli attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, which, again is a complete—I mean, just imagine if Russia would have attacked the American embassy in Luxembourg or someplace, what would have been the international outcry?

But here comes Israel, and they attack an Iranian consulate in Damascus, killing two high-ranking military commanders and seven other people! I have not heard such an outcry at all. And that double standard, that is not hidden: That is being seen by everybody, by the Global South, by the Global Majority. And apart from this increasing condition of lawlessness, I’m really worried more by the day that the behavior of the United States, the British, the EU, Germany, in the eyes of the world, is becoming more and more despicable, incredible, and it will have a lasting impact.

Now, the division of the world, as a consequence of that, is increasing. I was just reading a highly interesting article by the Russian analyst [Dmitry Trenin](#), who is a normally very level-headed analyst,

and he basically describes how the behavior of the West towards Russia has caused a complete change in the orientation of Russia; that for decades they had tried to be part of the West, to have good relations with the institutions of the West: This happened in the 1990s.

Then they tried to adjust to the rejection in the 2000 period and 2010. But now, for a number of years, because of the behavior of the West, they basically have given up completely, and they’re completely discounting relations with the West, turning to Asia, to China,



The precision rocket strikes on well-marked food delivery vehicles of the World Central Kitchen (WCK) are emblematic of what virtually all of Gaza’s 2 million Palestinians have been made to suffer—death, injury, hunger, terror. Erin Gore, CEO of WCK, wrote, “These seven beautiful souls were killed by the IDF.... Their smiles, laughter, and voices are forever embedded in our memories. And we have countless memories of them giving their best selves to the world.”

that means there is no institution that can be appealed to, and we are entering a complete state of jungle lawlessness.

And obviously, the same thing happened with Israel, with the attack on the seven aid workers from the World Central Kitchen, which is delivering food to people all over the world, but especially also now in Gaza. As the information now goes, this was pre-announced, that this convoy would drive and go on, because nothing happens without checking with the IDF



CG/Rajanews

The Iranian Consulate in Damascus was hit by Israeli rockets on April 1, killing 12 people, including two Iranian generals and a member of Hezbollah.

India, the BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. And while that is obviously a reaction and a blowback to these policies, in order to remedy the situation, I think we are really moving towards something much worse than a new Cold War. Because if there is no more understanding that we are the one humanity, because of what is going on, I think the consequences could be absolutely fatal for all of civilization.

So, the answer to your question is, yes, I think we are very close to a potential nuclear war, and it really should make everybody sleepless.

Schlanger: Here's a question from a prominent talk show host and podcaster, who's very familiar with your work and the work of Lyndon LaRouche. He brought up this question of talk going on in Europe of a Trump presidency and the need to prepare for that. But he said, meanwhile, he's watching events in the United Kingdom, and he wonders what you think of this—that you have the health scare in the Royal Family, with King Charles and Kate Middleton; you have the collapse of support for the Tories and Labour; the reemergence of David Cameron, who was involved with Obama in the destruction of Libya. He says: “Do you think the Brits are orchestrating a policy shift to deal with the failures in Ukraine and Gaza?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, if they are, I definitely have not noticed it, and I would be very skeptical, because all I can see is that the British in the recent period have

been the ones always pushing ahead, putting troops on the ground in Ukraine, all of these things. So, if I understand the question correctly, that you mean by a policy shift, that they would stop that, I'm not exactly optimistic that I can see something [like that].

What I see instead is a relentless effort by NATO to cement the present policies. There was just a meeting headed by [NATO Secretary General Jens] Stoltenberg, proposing that NATO must adopt a so-called “Trump-proof” policy by putting all the NATO members under obligation to finance a package of 100 billion euro (\$107 billion), potentially without U.S. participation. So that even if the United States would basically not be part of that any more, with a new Trump presidency, that the present weapons to Ukraine policy would be continued.

Now, I find that highly incredible. There is no way how this war will go on for much more time, because we are clearly reaching the limit. And many international military experts are basically saying that, simply for manpower reasons, the Ukrainians cannot keep up this war much longer, and therefore, what is this NATO policy for permanent, continuous warfare all about?



NATO

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said that NATO must be made “Trump-proof.”

I think that NATO should really dissolve. I think they should have dissolved 30-whatever years ago, in 1991 at the latest, when they lost all *raison d'être*. They clearly have transformed from a North Atlantic defensive military alliance, into a global offensive military alliance. And I think the voters in every country would be well advised to vote in such a way that that cannot be maintained. (Not that voters' voices mean much these days, but nevertheless, there must be a mobilization to change that.)

So, I don't know: I'm not optimistic about such a change, or I may have missed it.

Schlanger: Well, there's sort of a follow-up question from John Nunez. He asks: "Do you think the U.S., UK, EU, and NATO will peacefully surrender their dream of unipolar world hegemony, as the Soviets did in 1991, given the failure of their policies?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I'm afraid that the answer to this is a loud "No." Because the Soviet Union in 1991 dissolved peacefully—no tanks [deployed]. They agreed earlier already to German reunification peacefully. And that was, in a certain sense, luck, one of these rare "star hours of history" [*Sternstunden der Menschheit*], which was completely, utterly missed. Now, given the entire direction of NATO and the U.S., British, EU increasingly, they are so much geared toward militarization—military-industrial complex—that I cannot see that they would peacefully dissolve.

What could happen is some unexpected developments. As things are now going, especially with the possible background coming out after this terrorist attack at the Crocus City Hall concert near Moscow, with Russia firmly resolved to absolutely punish those who were behind that—I think it likely that Russia will go for a military solution in Ukraine, whatever that may lead to. That could happen. That may catch some Western people by surprise. I think there is an awareness about the danger of an escalation: For example, to a question of a parliamentarian in the Bundestag, the scientific ad-



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Russia is firmly resolved to punish those responsible for the March 22 terrorist attack on the Crocus City Hall concert venue near Moscow, in which more than 140 died.

visory service of the German Parliament answered that question by saying that even if France is pulling NATO troops into Ukraine, that does not automatically mean that the Article 5 of NATO is being invoked, or can be invoked, because it's a national decision by France which does not involve an attack on France.

So, I think people are aware of it, but is that enough? I mean, one has the feeling that there is—I was just looking at this in a different context a few days ago: The mood before World War I was insane, and people were saying, "Let's go to war! Hooray, let's have war!" There was a war-lust, and people had no idea that this war would be for four years, and end in bloody fighting in the trenches, where the French and German soldiers in the trenches of Verdun would move back and forth, back and forth, killing each other in an absolutely *senseless killing*.

And by the end of that war, nothing was accomplished.

What was accomplished was the death and destruction of an entire generation of Germany. People were de-rooted, and that being de-rooted, plus imposition of the unjust measures of the Versailles Treaty, meant that it was just the stepping stone to World War II. And then basically the same thing happened again, this time especially with Russia.

So, I think if you compare this real insanity, articulated by some politicians who say, "Let's carry the war to the territory of Russia!"—But



NATO

French NATO troops. Will their entry into Ukraine invoke Article 5 of NATO?

this is insane! You know, Albert Einstein, who had a reputation of being a genius, wrote the famous sentence that if you keep doing again and again the same thing, and you expect a different result, that is the definition of insanity. And I think that is exactly what we are seeing right now. Because what led to World War I was this demonization of the supposed enemy, and geopolitical motives—and we are seeing exactly the same thing playing out again. Naturally, the predicates are different, the history is different, but principles of motivation are the same.

So, I think we are in a very dangerous moment, and I can only ask all of you: If you share my concerns, then join us in our [International Peace Coalition](#), because we are trying to make people more aware of the danger and get them to adopt solutions which still can stop this.

Schlanger: I have a couple of proposals from people about how to address the situation. One is someone who asks about the request of the Palestinian UN Observer today, that Palestine be accepted for membership in the United Nations. Do you think that's a good idea?

And then the same person also asked if we've approached wealthy Arab countries, such as the U.A.E. or Qatar, to support and help fund the Oasis Plan?

Zepp-LaRouche: I think both should be done. Obviously, I think the establishment of a Palestinian state, even if it would not be immediately recognized by Israel—obviously not, with the present government—but it would send a signal. Now, I have not studied that proposal from the standpoint of the international law feasibility, but spontaneously, I would answer with “yes.”

On the second question, I think all the neighbor states of Israel and Palestine should invest into their own future! Because it is so obvious that if the entire Southwest Asian region is being destroyed by war, and by now we are really—I mean, just imagine, if the Iranians, who up to now have tried very hard to not be drawn into a general war. Hezbollah has reacted relatively modestly: They could have responded to these repeated incursions coming from the Israelis, which they then answered and so forth, but it was all kept on a very low level. Because obviously, everybody understands that if it comes to a full-fledged war between Israel and Iran, even the use of nuclear weapons is not a taboo—you know Iran is extremely close now for some time with Russia and China—we are looking into the eye of World War III. And even if it does not go that far, if it would just be a general war in

Southwest Asia, leading to destruction, leading to more people displaced, people impoverished, people terrorized, traumatized youth. You have the next generation of terrorism right there, and that would be something any country in the region has to fear.

That is the whole aim of our Oasis Plan idea. It is not just about Israel and Palestine, but it definitely is asking all the major countries of Southwest Asia, and including the neighbors, reaching even into Central Asia and beyond, into South Asia—because all of these countries should have, and really do have, the fundamental security interest that this region finally find some peace and quiet [for] development.

Schlanger: You're listening to Helga Zepp-LaRouche from the Schiller Institute. The [Oasis Plan](#) she's speaking of will be the focus of an online conference on April 13, that will be co-sponsored by the Schiller Institute. And you can register for that on the Schiller Institute website.

Here's a proposal from Thomas, who is a regular contributor to our weekly dialogue. He says, the Global South, in his view, could bring the trans-Atlantic financial system to its knees, by letting the debt explode. “I cannot see any other way to change the financial system to a more just and equal system, except by destroying it.” What are your thoughts on that, Helga?

Zepp-LaRouche: That may happen, simply because there comes a point where countries come to the conclusion that to remain in the present system does not give them any chance. Now, that is not a desired outcome, because anything which is chaotic, and you cannot—in my modest opinion, you cannot conduct such an operation like a surgical, precise thing. It will be chaotic. You will have collapsing currencies, collapsing markets, interruptions of the production chain. So, anything which is chaotic like that is not desirable, for the simple reason that it can have unforeseen consequences. This could also trigger military actions of some kind.

So, as I said, it may come to that, because if there is absolutely no willingness to enter a reasonable discussion, that may be the consequence. But the much more desirable road to go, would be to do exactly what I have been suggesting now since the special military operation in Ukraine started—and it was a special military operation in the beginning. It was not meant to be all of Ukraine, and for sure not what it has become now. I suggested [a new international security and development architecture](#). And if you look at the Ten Princi-

ples, which I proposed to be food for thought from the beginning of such a discussion—it has emphatically the proposal of a new international financial and credit mechanism, a new credit system in the tradition of the Bretton Woods as it was intended by Franklin Roosevelt—not exactly what it became, because this was after Roosevelt was dead.

The best feature of it was the idea to have a lot of credit, long-term credit for development of the Global South; elevate the living standard of the Global South. That was the key part of what Roosevelt had intended. But because of his untimely death, Churchill and Truman fixed it such that it only helped the prosperity of the so-called advanced sector. Nevertheless, this idea of a Bretton Woods system, with gold-reserve backing, with fixed exchange rates, that is a roadmap milestone for where one could start a new international security and development architecture, which must absolutely include an orderly reorganization of the financial system.

Now, are the forces in the world ready to take that rational road? I can only hope so! And if not, it may come to what you say.

Schlanger: OK. Someone wrote in and asked, “Any comment from you on the conversation between Xi Jinping and Joe Biden?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, that is a tiny ray of light. According to the [readouts from the Chinese](#) they were very positive on the discussion. They regarded it as a continuation of their [Nov. 15 summit in San Francisco](#) and they basically give very high importance to the fact that Biden committed to the One China policy, to not supporting Taiwanese independence. Biden said, I think, also that the relationship between these two countries is the most important consequential relationship in the world—which nobody can deny, given the fact that these are the two largest economic powers in the world.

So, I think, with modest expectation, I would say that is definitely good, and better than the alternative.

Schlanger: We have a question from another regular contributor, who asks: “What channels would be acceptable to parties for de-escalation?” And then he asks,

“If there aren’t such channels, can people’s power make a difference?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, there are channels. You have, I think very important, Pope Francis, who, in his “[Urbi et Orbi](#)” Message for Easter, was, again, very, very powerfully demanding peaceful solutions to the two major crises: a negotiated peace, ceasefire. And he called attention especially to the victims, the children and others. So, I think the Pope, for sure, is such a channel, because he is definitely someone who is impartial, who is trying to really be in the spirit of Christianity, and therefore he has a very important reputation among all the other religious leaders. I think that channel should definitely be used and emphasized.

Then, there are other channels: China has made a proposal for Ukraine, [a 12-point peace proposal](#). And there was a Chinese envoy recently traveling in the region. China also made a proposal for a comprehensive Middle East conference, which unfortunately they’re not very active in promoting as far as I can see right now, but that’s a channel for sure. I would think that there are probably other channels, of people of goodwill.

But I think this is obviously not enough. I think the fact that there were in Germany over Easter, 120 Easter Marches, was important. They were a little bit bigger than last year’s, but by far not big enough. I think such demonstrations in the street are extremely important. You have, for example, right now, also very important, a young man whose name is Larry Hebert, a 26-year-old active-duty Air Force member, who just started a hunger strike in front of the White House, because of what he sees in Gaza, and he wants to do that in support of the self-immolation of Aaron Bushnell. He was in the department where the continuous weapons sales from the United States to Israel are being shipped every day, and that is what he is protesting against. And he said what upset him the most is the absolute silence on the side of the superiors, the higher-ups in the command, on the death of Aaron Bushnell; that he did not find *any* mention, not one word! And that again shows you the absolute division of the establishment from the people.



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Pope Francis, in his “Urbi et Orbi” message (“to the City and the World”) at Easter, very powerfully demanded peaceful solutions to the two major crises—in Gaza and Ukraine—ceasefire and a negotiated peace.

Schlanger: I have a couple more questions for you, Helga. The first is from a professor from Algeria, who wrote in about the nuclear deal just signed by Algeria and Russia. And he said, “It seems to point toward a potential for growing energy independence for African nations. This, in my view, is a positive step away from the old colonial relationship. What is your view of this?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I think this is excellent. I congratulate Algeria for this deal, because that is obviously the way to go: You need high energy-flux-density sources. It also is an indirect polemic against the stupidity of the European Union which wanted to have the North African countries to supply all kinds of “green” energy, which is not going anywhere. And soon, Algeria will be a more powerful economic country than Germany, if Germany continues on the green road—which is not what I want, but that’s how things are going right now. So, I want to encourage your country, and all other countries, to continue on that road, because fourth-generation nuclear energy is inherently safe. There are a lot of people who are still anti-nuclear, but they don’t understand that the anti-nuclear propaganda was based on so many lies, and very little chance to correct them. However, even if there were some weaknesses, those weaknesses have been overcome. The fourth-generation is inherently safe; you have the thorium cycle, and you have soon coming thermonuclear fusion power. So that is really the way to independence.

And nuclear energy and sovereignty are synonyms. So, my congratulations.

Schlanger: Here’s a final question for you from an activist. “I just heard that you were interviewed by [Kim Iversen](#). That’s great! And I can’t wait to see it. How can we get more exposure for you and the LaRouche movement, given the censorship against you?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, there is the Kim Iversen interview. We broke it down into segments. There is one segment on the Oasis Plan and some other segments. So my suggestion is to use those videos, send them to other broadcasters; or take this webcast, and [send the link](#) to all the people who should be broadcasting what members of our movement have to say. Because I would have better things to do, but there’s such a vacuum of reason in politics, that anybody who helps us to focus on solutions is so urgent: Because there are even people who are against the dangerous policies promoted right now by certain circles, but very few people focus on

actual ways out! And I think that because of the work of my late husband, Lyndon LaRouche, the LaRouche movement, the Schiller Institute, we are in a certain sense a factory of solutions, because that’s the method of thinking that Lyndon LaRouche taught all of us.

So therefore, help us to get the word out with the [Oasis Plan video](#), and try to tell them that they should be part of—Oh! There’s one really important development: I should end with a really positive note. There is right now a new resolution, which I just read only minutes before this broadcast started, by an actually quite large number of journalists from the first and second channel in Germany, NV Deutschlandfunk, which is sort of the official radio, and many of them have signed with their name; others have filed their name with a notary, because they still fear trouble if their name is known. But they make a strong protest against the effort to utilize the public radio and TV to basically push the NATO line. And they are calling on people to return to principles of journalism. I think this is fantastic! This is a really good development, and that shows you that if one organizes enough resistance, something can break. But in the meantime, join our efforts to get our message out, because until we get into these media, there may still be a little time.

Schlanger: I like what you said, Helga, about the LaRouche movement being a “factory of solutions.” That’s one factory that can’t be shut down by the deindustrialization movement.

So, Helga, thanks for joining us again this week, and hopefully the questions that people raised will cause them to do some thinking, and some acting. And at this point, it’s the activation that’s most essential. So, any closing words from you?

Zepp-LaRouche: I can only ask you to get your behind off the couch. That may sound not so polite, but I really mean it, because this is the most dangerous moment we’ve ever had! And if things go wrong, we may not exist! So the danger of nuclear war is very real, and we have to change policy, because the present establishments have obviously caught some strange bug in their brain which hinders their thinking. So we need you to get active with us, because it is more urgent than ever before.

Schlanger: Okay, Helga: thank you and see you again next week.

Zepp-LaRouche: Till next week.