

Schiller Institute Webcast Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Peace Requires a New Strategic Architecture: If We Unite We Can Move Mountains

The following is an edited transcript of the April 25, 2024, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with Schiller Institute 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. This is Thursday, April 25, 2024. I'm Harley Schlanger, and I'll be your host today. You can send your questions and comments to questions@schillerinstitute.org.

Helga, there were some highly consequential votes since we last spoke, including the veto by the Biden administration of a resolution in the UN Security Council that would have granted UN membership to the State of Palestine. And also the votes in the U.S. House and Senate to pass the \$95 billion supplemental defense budget, to fund the proxy war in Ukraine, the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, and to prepare for a war against China in the Indo-Pacific.

I've received a number of emails from people: Some are writing in to say how surprised they were to find how quickly the Republicans folded and went along with the Biden administration. Others wrote and said they weren't a bit surprised. But people from both groups have a question for you, which is: What do we do now?

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, that is, indeed, a very good question. What we have said from the beginning—after the Russian special military operation in Ukraine started in February 2022, it was clear at that point that we were on a trajectory to World War III, because obviously—one is not allowed to say this, but it is the fact that history did not start on Feb. 24, 2022. Some people may think otherwise, but there was a whole pre-history, and it was very clear that we were on a trajectory of a potential conflict between NATO and Russia. And at that point I started to talk about the need to move to a new international security and development architec-

ture, which would take into account the interests of every single country on the planet. And I remember, at that point I had discussions with some military experts, and they said, "Oh, that's a good proposal, but it's much too early. You have to wait until this plays out, and then after the disaster is obvious, then you can make such a proposal, and maybe people will listen."

And I said, "Well, it may be too late at that point," and I think we are very quickly reaching that point: Because, what is behind the vote for these three topics you mentioned, Ukraine, Israel, and the Pacific? If you take all the different things together, there is no question that the NATO forces—the United States, Europe, the British—they are all determined to keep the rise of China down, to basically deny Russia a role as a world player; they would like to have Russia split into many pieces.

It is amazing. Despite the fact that all of these calculations clearly have not played out, there is a new, very interesting strategic assessment, in an article by Gen. Harald Kujat, the former head of the NATO Military Committee, and before that, General Inspector of the Bundeswehr—whose judgment is highly respected internationally. He basically pointed to the fact that both sides miscalculated. Russia clearly miscalculated in thinking that the special military operation could be done very quickly—which obviously did not take place, because they underestimated the level of training of the troops in Ukraine—who had been trained for almost eight years by the West and NATO. But also the calculations of the West—of NATO and the United States—absolutely did not play out. Not only did the sanctions not bring down Russia, not only did the Russian economy not evaporate, but to the contrary, it strengthened. And Russia is still capable of developing new technologies in weapons systems. They have just announced that they have a new missile defense system, the S-500, which can apparently hit hypersonic missiles in flight, which is obviously aimed at the coming generations of hypersonic missile systems being developed in the West.

So the potential of miscalculation absolutely is continuing. It is so clear that the decision in the United States, involving both parties—and we should talk about what caused that shift of House Speaker Mike Johnson to occur—but also in Europe, the idea of militarization of the economies, of the German economy being prepared for a coming war in Germany, that is complete insanity. And that makes all the more important the need to make what I call an “intellectual jump,” to somehow get above the idea of geopolitical confrontation—the Wolfowitz Doctrine in the United States—which says that the United States, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, should maintain its status as number one in all fields—economically, politically, socially, militarily—and ensure that no other country or group of countries surpasses the U.S. power in this respect—which is clearly not possible. You cannot try to curb and slow down the Global South. The Global South is now already 70% of the global GDP, 88% of the world population. China is rising without any question: If you look at the number of new engineering students they are producing every year, it is much more than Germany, Japan, and Italy combined. And that has something to do with China having a population of 1.4 billion people, and having an economic policy which is set on innovation—the injection of the most advanced technologies all the time.

So, I think a little bit of realism would be required. And the only way out of this, is to get enough support for the idea that we need a new world order which allows for the wellbeing and survival of every single nation on the planet. And that means nothing else than that Europe and the United States should find a way of cooperating with the Global Majority. In my view, that is the only thing which will solve this problem. I know that the entire military-industrial complex is going in a



Ministry of Defense, Russian Federation
S-500 Russian anti-aircraft missile system, which can take out hypersonic missiles in flight.

completely different direction, but that is the problem we have. And I’m absolutely certain that if we are not capable of giving ourselves a new order in the tradition of the Peace of Westphalia—which ended 150 years of religious warfare in Europe, because everybody was convinced, that if they would continue the war, nobody would be left alive to enjoy the victory—[we will not make it]. And in the present age of thermonuclear weapons, that is more true today than ever.

So, the short answer to your question is help us to organize such an international security and development architecture, starting with conferences. We have to introduce this subject in universities, in think tanks, among groups of countries; we have to start to discuss it, and think about implementing it in earnest.

Schlanger: On that proposal, there were a couple of people who wrote in with their suggestions, and they wanted to know what you thought. One is Charles, who is a regular correspondent, who says he’s somewhat optimistic that while the West is moving toward an end-game, there’s hope that perhaps India as a BRICS member could back the Oasis Plan, or maybe Italy could play a role in pushing against the wars. And he also points to what’s happening on the U.S. campuses, exploding as an antiwar potential, as a positive development.

But then we have: “Why is it we haven’t endorsed Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., as one who is against corporate lobbies and against the military-industrial complex; and why not Sahra Wagenknecht in Germany, since she’s been organizing antiwar rallies? Why not support these candidates?”

Zepp-LaRouche: On the first question, I do, indeed, hope that there will be other countries like India, like Italy and others, that can be brought into the Oasis Plan development. We are working on that, after the very excellent internet conference we had. We now have a video summary, and we are doing massive outreach to all institutions and all countries. And if you

have any free time, then join us; help us to promote this. Because I think, given that the countries that are neighboring Israel and Palestine have a fundamental interest for a peaceful, stable environment—I do not exclude that we will succeed in convincing them, because it is in everybody’s interest. But if you have time, do not just watch it; help us to get it around and get in contact with us, because we have far too much work for the number of people we have.

Now, why do we not endorse Kennedy? Well, the problem is that, while Robert Kennedy, Jr., has made some excellent points—for example, his speech in New Hampshire in the tradition of his uncle, whose June 10, 1963 peace speech was very excellent—but he’s not so clear on other issues, like policies on the Middle East. And we have a very high standard, which was set by my late husband, Lyndon LaRouche, in terms of what principles we defend. Therefore, we are not objecting to entering into discussions and negotiations, and are hopeful that they can lead to some clarifications on some of these points—but we have a very good name to preserve. And Mrs. Wagenknecht, I’m open to talk to her. I think they’re in the process of building their party. I think they’re extremely restrictive in whom they allow to be a member—even some older members of the Linkspartei are complaining that they were excluded—because they are very careful not to be infiltrated and not have rowdy elements.

But I can only say that we’re in such a situation that we are absolutely open to talk to anyone who is reasonable and honest, and if possible, even do joint mobilizations. This is why we are organizing, every Friday, the International Peace Coalition, because we want to unite all elements of the international peace movement: Because as long as we and they are all fragmented—I think, given the enormous power and momentum of this war machine, these efforts so far have not been sufficient, and therefore, we would welcome any kind of suggestion along the lines you have made, but they must be followed up.



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Sahra Wagenknecht, founder of a new German party that defends Palestine and opposes the war there, the Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW, Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance).

Schlanger: On the question that you posed about what happened with House Speaker Mike Johnson, who did an apparent about-face on military funding, there have been a couple of things that have been somewhat evident. Johnson was under enormous pressure from Republican strategic hawks, including people like Lindsey Graham; also Christian fundamentalists—John Hagee did a drop-in right before the vote and put some pressure on him, and Johnson has a tendency as a Christian fundamentalist. Democrats and foreign leaders were gang-ing up on him. But there was also the question of Donald Trump, who seemingly changed from being an opponent of funding Ukraine, an opponent of reauthorizing FISA [Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act], to instead,

stepping back and saying to Johnson, go ahead, it’s not worth the fight right now.

Now, the question that came up on this is: “Doesn’t the way this unfolded demonstrate the point that Lyndon LaRouche always made, that there aren’t statesmen; no people with principles who are making the decisions? And isn’t that what we have to start looking for, finding people who have a principle behind what



CC/Gage Skidmore
House Speaker Mike Johnson, under pressure from Republican hawks, reversed himself to support more military funding for Ukraine.



CC/Eric Haynes

The U.S. Senate passes an almost \$100 billion military aid package for Ukraine, Israel, and Taiwan. President Biden signed the bill into law April 24.

they're doing?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, absolutely. I'm not privy to what went into these negotiations and discussions around Mike Johnson. But if you look at it overall, what is happening on the planet, what is very clear is that coming from the United States, there is a gigantic effort to divide China and Russia. And I think this is not limited to the Republicans or the Democrats, but echoes of that come from all sides. For example, Secretary of State Blinken is presently on a three-day visit to China, and various voices were pressuring China—threatening them with sanctions—if they would not curb all trade with Russia for so-called “dual-use technologies.” Now, China has maintained so far that they are not directly supporting, militarily, Russia in the Ukraine war. But naturally, the notion of what is a “dual use” technology is a very flexible one: You can take a hammer, and say this is a “dual-use” technology, because you can use it to hit a nail in the wall, and then it is peaceful; you can take this hammer and hit the head of your neighbor, and then it's a military object. And the same thing applies to almost everything.

So it's a rubber paragraph, which is really designed to try to sanction China, after recognizing that the sanctions policy utterly failed with respect to Russia: The Russian economy grew after the sanctions, and they have reoriented toward the South and the East, to the

disadvantage of the West. So that didn't function, but now apparently they're trying to do the same thing in respect to China. But obviously, from the other side, Trump has promised that if he would be elected President, he would end the Ukraine war in 24 hours. But there are also elements around Trump who very clearly—some seem to follow the policy tradition of Brzezinski by hoping to somehow get an alliance against China, or, vice versa, with China against Russia, with Russia against China.

I think this will absolutely not succeed, because I think the alliance between Putin and Xi Jinping is very solid.

They have a clear friendship, but they also have clear strategic interests, which combines their efforts. So, in my view, it's a hopeless geopolitical effort to disrupt the relationship between these two countries.

I think there are tactical and strategic games being played, whereby people are not principled, but they think—for example, despite these enormous weapons packages, there is no guarantee that it will function, for the very simple reason—as former General Kujat pointed out—that there is an incredible shortage of soldiers in Ukraine, which you cannot compensate for, even with the most sophisticated weapons systems. So, a collapse of Ukraine is not to be excluded, even before the U.S. elections, and it is very clear that the blame-



State Department/Chuck Kennedy

U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken meets with Shanghai Chinese Communist Party Secretary Chen Jining in Shanghai, China, April 25, 2024.

game of “who lost Ukraine?” is possibly a factor in the calculations.

But you are absolutely right: All of this is completely unprincipled, and therefore, it cannot succeed. And the fact that it seems that the big politicians are so weak in terms of principles, it means that we have to have more state citizens who rise up and make sure they get the kind of government next time, which carries out such principles. And right now, the only people I can fully put my word behind are Diane Sare, who is running for U.S. Senate from New York, and Jose Vega who is running for U.S. Congress from the 15th CD in the Bronx, because these two people are principled. And the more you support them, and the more you help them to make their campaigns nationally recognized campaigns—not a presidential campaign, but a nationally recognized campaign—the better it is for the United States, and the world.

Schlanger: Speaking of abandoning principle, there’s a question that just came in, asking, “Can you say something about the Spirit of the Elbe anniversary, today?” This was on April 25, 1945, when Soviet and U.S. troops met at Torgau, a city on the River Elbe, and there’s been a commemoration of that meeting especially in recent years. However, the person writes in, “I heard that the U.S. government prohibited the Russian Embassy from participating in a replay of the ceremony with the United States, at a plaque in Arlington Cemetery” in Virginia. “This seems to be the wrong way to go in achieving peace.”

Zepp-LaRouche: I can only wholeheartedly agree with that. It’s completely stupid. If there’s any hope to get back to diplomatic solutions, then it is exactly such historic milestones which mean a lot, or should mean a lot, in the identity of both nations, and the fact that this is being kicked aside is really tragic. The problem is, right now, that no government of the West—not one I could easily think of—is right now pursuing diplomacy as a way to resolve conflict. It’s all military buildup, military victory, and unfortunately we have two examples in the 20th Century, where such an outlook led to world wars: And we are extremely close to a Third World War!

If you just project this a little bit more—just take the fact that Poland’s President Andrzej Duda is now requesting that the United States should station U.S.

nuclear weapons in Poland. The Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergey Ryabkov, just said, this makes these nuclear weapons a prime target. I mean, these weapons would be on the border of Russia! It’s like a reverse Cuban Missile Crisis! And people are just—there’s not even an outcry in the media. All of these things are being discussed and reported in a completely nonchalant way, as if it were just nothing. But we are moving step by step toward a point of no return. And anybody who clearly thinks through the situation should be having sleepless nights about it.

Because the tension is so high already, one mistake—and after all, we still have the large NATO maneuver, Steadfast Defender 2024, which brings 90,000 NATO troops to the border of Russia, to rehearse [NATO’s response to a hypothetical] Russian attack on one or more NATO countries: This is a nightmare. I really wish people would wake up and say, let’s go back to the spirit of the Elbe River, let’s find diplomatic solutions, let’s save lives. Because as long as these wars continue, more lives are being sacrificed and families are being thrown into trauma for the rest of their lives.

Schlanger: Here’s a question I got just before we came on air, from someone from Serbia: “While German Chancellor Scholz was in China for talks, the German Interior Ministry is claiming it has uncovered a Chinese espionage operation tied to a leader of the AfD, the Alternativ für Deutschland party, running in the European Parliament elections. This was most likely not a coincidence, and seemed to be aimed at sabotaging Scholz’s China meetings.” And she asks, “Was there anything positive accomplished by the Scholz trip?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes. German industry is in a state of rage against the policies coming down from Brussels, and also from the Greens and the Free Democrats in the coalition government. Under these circumstances, Scholz went with a large delegation of CEOs of some of the major firms, and the visit, from what I can decipher—especially what the Chinese are saying about it, but also some Western coverage—under the circumstances was very useful. Because that team rejected the de-risking, the decoupling, which is all an effort to basically prepare for World War III, because that’s what the de-risking and decoupling will open the way for.

So, this visit was positive, within limits, naturally.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, as part of a large delegation of CEOs to China, gets a tour of the megacity of Chongqing.

But this campaign to now discover Chinese agents under every bed is just absurd. I don't know about the specific case of the lead EU Parliament candidate of the AfD Maximilian Krah—it was an assistant of his—it may be that he was a Chinese agent, I can't say. What I can say is that the out-of-proportionality of how this case is being played up is just absurd. If you look at the overwhelming advantage of China and Germany and Europe, and also the United States—the countries that are trading with China—it's a very straightforward business. I mean—I hope I'm not making some Chinese angry right now—but my conviction is that the Chinese are pretty incapable of spying. The very simple reason is that, if you observe them, they always hang out in Chinese restaurants, they only remain among Chinese, they never mingle among so-called natives. So the ability to spy is really not their mentality. And in any case, the Chinese foreign policy is, at large, it's based on this win-win cooperation. Why do you think the majority of the Global South prefers to do trade with China and not with the West? Because they get advantages! Would they do that if it were just a way of coercing them and cheating them? Obviously not!

It is so far gone, that even in *Foreign Affairs*, the magazine of the Council on Foreign Relations, this week they have an article by Elizabeth Economy, and apart from some China-bashing in the beginning, basically she says that maybe the United States should learn from China in having a similarly attractive model; maybe we would get further ahead than we are presently. So, even in the United States, there is a rethinking: “Hey wait a second: Maybe the Chinese are doing something right, and maybe just pushing countries for military cooperation, and not providing economic benefits, is not such a good idea.”

I think that that is my short answer: It's totally overblown. Even if this particular person had some access because of his position in the European Parliament, it's limited, and as compared to what the strategic issues are, it's blown up out of proportion.

Schlanger: I have a question from a friend from Cameroon, who opens by saying: “Thank you, Schiller Institute, for your coverage of the rise of the Global South. It seems as though very few people outside of the Global South are aware of this, so thank you for what you've done.” And then she writes: “I'm worried about retribution from the West for the anti-colonialist stand being taken by governments in West Africa, such as Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, and so on.” And she asks, “Can the BRICS, or OPEC countries, or some coalition do something to help them economically, like issue credit against raw material reserves, or something of that sort? I thank you again, as a citizen of the Global South, for your answer.”

Zepp-LaRouche: I think that that is what is already happening. Naturally, it's not so easy, because it can only be done at this point on a bilateral level, or maybe some trilateral arrangements, but it's not yet at the point where, for example, the BRICS would have a joint reserve currency, because that would involve some more negotiations. So it's not yet fully developed. I would think over this year and next year—this year, Russia has the chairmanship of the BRICS. They will have a big summit in Oct. 22–24 in Kazan. I think certain steps can be expected by that time.

In 2025, Russia will appoint the President of the New Development Bank, which will be headed by Dilma Rousseff until then. So, provided we don't have some major strategic disaster, ending civilization, I'm

quite confident that it is the firm determination of the countries of the BRICS to fend off all attempts to sabotage it. And eventually, a lot of bilateral credit will be given, like China has done already, using all its state banks—apart from the New Development Bank. The AIIB [Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank] is still around.

So, I can only say that the more people define well-chosen, concrete development projects and say, “Look, here is what we would like to get going, for electricity, for water, for industry, for agriculture,” and start to talk to the countries of the BRICS, hopefully it will succeed. It will be a battle, but I’m optimistic that the majority of the world will, hopefully, be the ones who win out. It’s really necessary for all of humanity.

Schlanger: Helga, here’s a final question for today, from Menashe. You referred to this earlier, but he writes: “How significant is it that the university students are protesting in the U.S. about the Israel-Gaza conflict?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I think it’s very important, because the effort to clamp down on free speech and democracy, and the right to express outrage for what is happening—I mean, the “rules-based” society praises itself so much as being the ones to uphold democracy, human rights, rules in the order. But I think the more they are oppressive, the more the contradiction becomes clear. And the good thing is that young people don’t always think so much about what the consequences could be, but they often do what they feel is absolutely right. So I think in a certain sense, a lot of the hope depends on the young people, that they will not capitulate. I think it’s quite amazing that in all the major universities in the United States, you have this uprising. I was very interested in a recent interview which was given by Prof. Jeffrey Sachs with Judge Napolitano,



CC/SWinxy

Rallies in support of Palestine and against the war are continuing at college campuses all across the U.S. Here, a rally at Columbia University in New York.

where he describes this in very outspoken and very clear-cut terms. And after all, he is a professor at Columbia University, so one could only hope that some of his colleagues would have a similar standard in upholding these values of free speech, at least, even if they don’t support the topic of what the students are protesting against. So, I think it’s very important, and we should support them.

Schlanger: One of his colleagues at Columbia University is the lamentable Victoria Nuland, who may be handing out cookies to National Guardsmen who come to Columbia and smash the demonstrations. We’ll see!

Helga, that’s all the questions we have. Any closing words?

Zepp-LaRouche: Don’t take any cookies from Victoria Nuland—ever!

Schlanger: [laughter] All right! Thank you, and we’ll see you next week.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, see you next week.