

# A Victory in Abuja

*This is an edited transcript of the March 1, 2018 Schiller Institute New Paradigm webcast interview of the founder of the Schiller Institutes, Helga Zepp-LaRouche. She was interviewed by Harley Schlanger. A [video of the webcast](#) will be available.*

**Harley Schlanger:** Hello. I'm Harley Schlanger from the Schiller Institute. Welcome to today's international strategic webcast, featuring our founder, Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

We have some really big news to report to start the program, which comes from Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, the site of a conference focussed on a project that's near and dear to our hearts, a project that Helga's been fighting for over many years. Helga, report on what happened in Abuja.

**Helga Zepp-LaRouche:** It is really fantastic that this conference took place in Abuja with the participation of the Nigerian government and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the other members of the LCBC in addition to Nigeria: Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Algeria, Central African Republic, Libya, and Sudan. They officially adopted the Transaqua project. A communiqué issued at the close of the conference announced the participants' agreement that the only solution to the Lake Chad crisis is to bring water from outside the Lake Chad basin by building the Transaqua project.

Let me quickly explain what this is: If it is carried out, it will be the largest infrastructure project, I think, in all of history. This idea was first developed in the 1970s, by the Italian engineering firm Bonifica, to take 3-4% of the water from some of the tributaries of the Congo River, which is now flowing unused into the Atlantic, and redirect it instead from a point 500 m above sea level, through a system of canals into Lake Chad. This will work very well, because of the difference in height of flow, so it will be a very efficient system. It would not just refill Lake Chad, which is obviously an absolutely urgent necessity, because this lake has been



courtesy of the Government of Nigeria

*A meeting of the Ministers' Council in Abuja, Nigeria. Claudio Celani is at the far left.*

drying out—only 10% of its original surface area is left. Poverty, which has been increasing because of the growing lack of water, has given rise to the terrorist Boko Haram, which is one of the reasons why all the countries participating in this project now say that it's not an option, but a necessity. If you don't realize such a development program, you may as well hand over the whole territory to the Boko Haram.

This project would refill Lake Chad, making plenty of water available for irrigation of the Sahel zone. It would give water to all participating countries—but not only water, it would build modern infrastructure in the heart of Africa. It would create an inland waterway for these countries for shipping as well as generating much needed hydropower generation of electricity.

This is really, really fantastic. The Schiller Institute has been campaigning for this project as part of our World Land-Bridge. Even earlier, [we started to hold conferences](#) on this in the beginning of the 1990s, working with the engineers from Bonifica: it's really our work. There was an article in *People's Daily* last year,

which said that this connection between PowerChina—the Chinese engineering and construction firm—and Bonifica is really thanks to the work of the Schiller Institute. So, I'm very happy that this is happening.

At the conference, the Italian Ambassador to Nigeria proudly announced that the Italian government will fund more than half of the cost of the feasibility study, which is now going to go into motion. All of the people involved are completely passionate about this idea, they were happy, really happy about the conclusions reached.

We had two members of the Schiller Institute participating as guests at the conference: Claudio Celani, who's Italian, who has done good work on all of this, and also one of our French members, Sébastien Périmony. Celani pointed out in discussion at the conference that this is not just infrastructure, this is not just two countries working together for the first time, but that this can be a model for the New Paradigm of cooperation by means of the New Silk Road; China working with Italy, a European country, and this Chinese-Italian collaboration working together with African nations on this very far-reaching project.

I think this is really fantastic and I'm absolutely convinced this will work very well. Bonifica is an extremely efficient company as is PowerChina—they both have great expertise. PowerChina built the Three Gorges Dam. They have a lot of experience with such large earth-moving and similar kinds of technologies. So, this is really, really good!

These kinds of projects provide a perspective for solving the refugee crisis: that is exactly what is needed. You have to get the young people involved in building such projects. As the President of Ghana said in a trip to Germany this week, in 20 years, Africa will have 2 billion people—you will need a lot of jobs, and a lot of education. The President of Ghana on an earlier occasion emphasized that these young people should be able to work to build the continent, rather than fleeing through the Sahara and drowning in the Mediterranean: he wants to reverse that, and that is why he wants investment, not development aid. This is an example of exactly how it can be done.

This is *really* good news, for anybody who cares about the human species.

**Schlanger:** Helga, you mentioned that this is a realization of the New Paradigm. A couple of weeks ago at an Africa Day event in Berlin, I was talking to a number of African ambassadors about this. One of them said,

“Transaqua, that's big. We need big. We don't need people to tell us to be small any more. We need big projects. We need to leapfrog.”

This is in the context of the overall advance of the New Silk Road dynamic. There's been a lot of discussion in China about projects that are under way. Why don't you fill us in on what's going on from China on this?

**Zepp-LaRouche:** I think the Silk Road spirit is really catching on. At the recent Dubai Global Business Forum, for example, in Dubai, the President of Panama, in an interview with Xinhua, strongly endorsed the Belt and Road Initiative. He said he wants Panama to be a part of it. An agreement has been reached with China to build a high-speed railway system between Panama and Costa Rica as a first step to connect Central America with Asia in a much more productive way.

Almost every day we have new developments. Several Chinese professors commented that the Belt and Road Initiative is not just for China, but it will uplift the whole world. This approach provides a model for all developing countries to improve their industrial base, and all the neighbors of China will also do so. Another professor who has written several books on the New Silk Road, Prof. Yang Yiwei, said the reason the West is so full of anxiety about the rise of China is because there is a complete lack of economic self-confidence in the West. That is why there is so much hysteria about China.

Then there was a very beautiful interview with Su Qianke. He is the chief engineer of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, which is now completed. It includes a very long tunnel that reduces the travel time between Hong Kong and Zhuhai from three hours to only 30 minutes. He was asked if he was optimistic that China could reach its development goals in 2020, 2035, and 2050. He said he was absolutely certain that these goals would be met.

This bridge is really fantastic. I had the good fortune to be on the bridge at the end of November—I was invited to a Maritime Silk Road conference in Zhuhai. Part of the program was to travel over the bridge. I was only 15 km from Hong Kong and it was fantastic. It's the longest sea bridge on the planet. I think it's altogether 55 km long. To construct it, 150 new patents were needed, all of which were invented by Chinese engineers.

This region—the Hong Kong, Macao, Zhuhai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen region—is probably *the* powerhouse of the world economy by now. All its cities are

modern, with relatively beautiful architecture—I was really surprised to see that—it’s a powerhouse attracting young, creative people in the high-tech areas. This is the kind of example, where you see that with modern infrastructure, such development becomes a magnet: everything flourishes around it.

I hope that we in the West, including in the United States, could do exactly the same thing! I recently saw an article that asked if “the United States could have a 7% growth rate, like China?”

The answer was, yes, it could, *if* the United States would go back to the economic policies of Alexander Hamilton, which after all is what China is now doing! China is basing its own model on Alexander Hamilton and Friedrich List, and other such proponents of physical economy. The theories of my husband are also quite well known in China and I think they are also being studied very intensively.

This is all very, very good, and there is absolute reason for optimism.

**Schlanger:** And this brings up the broader scope of Chinese diplomacy. Liu He is going to the United States. He’s one of China’s chief economists. He’ll be meeting with people in Washington. What do you expect will come from this trip?

**Zepp-LaRouche:** I think it is very interesting. There is clearly an effort by President Xi and President Trump to collaborate. The good news is that Xi will now remain President beyond 2020, which has caused great hysteria in some quarters, but I think it’s a very good development. Clearly, the Chinese people appreciate his successes in the anti-corruption fight and the New Silk Road and the Belt and Road Initiative is a *huge* success. Trump has announced that he will run again in 2020. And therefore, I think it’s very important that the two presidents continue the policy of having direct contact with each other, and in that way bypass some of the neocon loudmouths and the efforts to destabilize the relationship between China and the United States.

The economist Liu He was the main speaker for



*The just completed, 55-km Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge connects the three cities on the Pearl River Delta.*

China at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. He is also the most important economic advisor to President Xi. The Davos Forum took place only two weeks after State Councilor Yang Jiechi was in the United States, meeting with Trump and other officials. The personal relationship between Trump and Xi is functioning well, and this is a very important counter to much of the other nonsense and anti-China hysteria that is being pushed right now.

**Schlanger:** On the question of anti-China hysteria, we have to take a look at this new report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), which just came out last week. It claims that China is planning cruise missile strikes on Washington that will assassinate U.S. leaders, and that China is also planning to invade Taiwan. This is a further escalation of what we’ve seen in the last weeks. What’s going on with this, Helga?

**Zepp-LaRouche:** This is an example of what General Dempsey, the previous Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, had warned of: the “Thucydides trap.” This describes a situation in which the dominant power, now the United States, thinks that it is confronted with the rise of a new power, China, in this case, and that the United States thinks it must continue to dominate China. If the United States were to follow such crazy scenarios as that advanced by CSIS, it would fall into the Thucydides trap.

Thucydides was the Greek historian who described how the Peloponnesian War developed out of the rivalry between Athens and Sparta and how that conflict

led to the demise of ancient Greece. So, if the United States were to fall into this trap of confrontation, it would be absolutely terrible. China has frequently put forward a new kind of relationship among the great powers. It has offered to cooperate with the United States in the win-win policy of the New Silk Road. So this utopian CSIS claim is really stupid. Similar to its line against China, CSIS claims that Russia could make a surprise attack in the Baltics. That has *no* logic whatsoever. It is absolutely not in the self-interest of Russia to do that. And anybody who knows the situation can see that very clearly.

There was a very powerful answer to this study in *Global Times*, which points out that the United States is being frightened by its own mirror image. *Global Times* then quotes a utopian from the Pentagon Office of Net Assessment, who developed all these airpower policies, Andrew Marshall. He had coined this notion of a “mirror image,” meaning that countries will often mistakenly project their own strategy onto the supposed intention of other nations. That’s exactly what the United States is doing, reports the *Global Times*. Who is pushing preemptive war? That is the doctrine of the United States, not that of China. Who has been pushing regime change? It’s the United States, while the policy of China always has been to respect other countries’ sovereignty. The article continues with several other such comparisons. This CSIS study is really bad. People should really not fall for it because anybody who studies history knows the horrible consequences of such an approach.

There is also the danger of charges by Marco Rubio and others, alleging that the Confucius Institutes spy on U.S. colleges—it’s all absolute paranoia. In China today, you have a very successful approach, which is lifting many of the underdeveloped parts of the world out of poverty. China is, however,



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Economist Liu He, speaking at the World Economic Forum, Davos, Jan. 24, 2018.

rried about China—but that perspective is really, absolutely wrong.

**Schlanger:** And we saw the same thing at the hearing at which Marco Rubio made his crazy remarks. At that same hearing, FBI Director Christopher Wray basically said that every Chinese student studying in the United States is a potential spy. So this is something worse than the McCarthy era.

On that same theme, we’ve seen recently, a very difficult rough patch in U.S.-Russian relations. Now, with the dangers of an explosion about Syria—with people blaming Russia and saying the Assad regime is allegedly planning a possible chemical weapons attack—Russian foreign minister Lavrov had some comments on this: He called on the United States to back the UN Security Council resolution for humanitarian aid in Syria. What’s going on there, from what you see, Helga?



CSIS: China and Russia are enemies of the U.S., waiting to pounce.

absolutely not trying to impose its own model on other countries.

The United States could go back to its own successful periods, like the American Revolution, Lincoln, John Quincy Adams, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy. If the United States were to go back to its own strength and the European nations back to our best traditions, we would not be importing the Chinese model; we would be regaining our own true identities again. But since the West is not doing that, some people are indeed wor-

**Zepp-LaRouche:** After the Russian intervention in September 2015, the Syrian territory was basically re-conquered, step by step. Now you have very few enclaves controlled by al-Qaeda-related groups. One of them is the suburb of Damascus, Eastern Ghouta. To get an idea of what is going on now in Syria, think of it this way: If you were to have in the German city of Potsdam or the Schwabing district,

thousands of ISIS fighters shelling the inner cities of Berlin or Munich, or if there were ISIS fighters in New Jersey shelling New York City, what would be the reaction? Government has the absolute right to try to stop such violent attacks. These terrorists, in Syria, are keeping the whole population hostage. Now, thanks to Putin's intervention, it became possible to have five-hour corridor ceasefires every day. The world is now witness to the fact that these terrorist forces are trying to prevent those individuals and families trapped in Ghouta from leaving—the terrorists are using those people as human shields behind whom they can hide.

The accusations of the West—some Western powers are still advocating the policy of regime change; this was the policy of the European Union, of the German government, and of the British government. This is absolutely wrong.

I do not think regime change will succeed, but these policies just escalate the suffering of the Syrian people, and I think it cannot, it will not, work, because the forces now backing the Assad sovereign government have proven to be militarily superior. But it's a terrible tragedy and it should stop immediately.

**Schlanger:** We've had a new debate in the United States following the killings—the tragedy—that took place at the Parkland high school in Florida. There was a very interesting intervention by the Governor of Kentucky, Matthew Bevin, who made the comment that what we're looking at is a "culture of death." I think the theme that you've taken up with the Schiller Institute over many years, about the necessity to address the cultural degeneration which is directly related to warfare, is a key point to bring up. So I'd like you to present your thoughts on this. It is at the heart of a lot of the discussion in the United States, but it's not a local issue, it's part of the overall degeneration of the culture.

**Zepp-LaRouche:** Many, many years ago, I gave a speech about the dangers of Pokémon, the danger of certain violent movies, the danger of video games. At that point, I looked at it, and it was very clear that some of these videos came directly from the Pentagon's strategic studies and training programs. In the post-war period, people realized that during World War II only 15% of the soldiers were willing to shoot at the enemy. There is a natural block in people about shooting another human being. The aim of these video games initially was to increase the army kill rate, and they then became the basis for commercial video games. This has

now reached a new degree of violence, violence for the sake of violence. Coleen Rowley, a member of the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS), talking about the Parkland shootings, pointed out that the Pentagon and the CIA have, in the last several years, worked directly with Hollywood on 1,800 movies that have a hero who is some kind of deranged person, some military veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder, running around in killing sprees, and that this has been a significant contributing factor in this present explosion of violence.

My husband, Lyndon LaRouche, made extremely important comments after the Columbine high school shootings that occurred in 1999: he brought attention to the deep, deep axiomatic cultural danger to the United States that was exposed by this event. Since Columbine, there have been 38 school shootings with fatal consequences. After the Parkland shooting, there were 50 alarms in schools per day—obviously, pupils being concerned about other pupils, or weapons, or having strange social messages. I think this is really reaching a point where this has to change.

It's very good that President Trump made some extremely important comments on that: He met with some of the pupils from the Parkland school and he said there is terrible violence, a lot of it on the Internet, which is shaping the minds of young people. He is considering a rating system for movies, which may not have sex and therefore are not rated, but are full of killing.

I think this is a step in the right direction but it is not enough. I would really go for a much more radical approach and propose legislation forbidding any such movies because they contribute to the menticide of children. People have argued in the past that you can't block the violence on the Internet. I think you can. Some people criticize China for blocking certain things on the Internet—if the Chinese can do that, so could the West, to protect its own youth and children.

I think this is a very important. As I have said many times: The New Paradigm is not just about economics and the New Silk Road is not just concerned with transportation or infrastructure. The New Paradigm will also develop a completely new conception of the human being. The kind of bestialization, the absolute, terrible lack of dignity of the human person that Governor Bevin of Kentucky pointed out, is really the exact opposite of what is needed. We need a beautiful image of man, an image which is creative, which is truthful, and which develops all the potentials of each child in the fullest possible way.



White House

*President Trump (left) met students from the Parkland, Fla., high school after the mass shooting.*

Many people who have tolerated this degeneracy have, at the same time, stoked hysteria about China's system of giving advantages to people whose behavior is in the interest of the common good, while giving negative points to people who don't do that. There is a big debate, at least in Europe, about that. People are absolutely upset about it. However, after some discussion, we came to the conclusion that in Europe and the Americas similar systems have existed for a long time: we in the West just describe it differently. Even in Germany, which is not the worst place, 25% of all teenagers are regarded by industry as absolutely unemployable. They won't be hired, they won't get apprenticeships because they're not motivated, they're autistic, they're just not fit—so they have no chance of getting jobs. This is certainly a selective system as well!

Is this really the Western system, where everything is allowed, everything goes? You have not two sexes, or three sexes, by now you have something like 49 genders. Is it really acceptable, given that the drug epidemic in the United States has led to a decrease in the expected lifespan? Governor Bevin pointed out that some of these satanic messages are in the lyrics of the pop music, in the movies, in the video games—should we allow all of this and have our society be completely destroyed? There is an effect from all of this on the cognitive powers!

The Four Laws of Lyndon LaRouche are the only solution to prevent a collapse of the system. The Fourth Law demands a crash program for fusion power, for in-

ternational space research and travel. If you want this to work, you can't do it with young people who are destroying their minds, who are hooked on these things. We need these young people to become a creative, productive labor power.

So it's one and the same discussion, which is needed—we need a New Paradigm, and we have to have an education system that emphasizes the beauty of Classical culture, which emphasizes the beauty of the character as a development goal. This was an idea of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who after all, influenced much of the education system in Europe and the United States in the 19th Century, and his ideas lasted over a large part of the 20th Century.

His idea was that the aim of education must be the beauty of character. Who talks about that these days? If you go to some of these kids who are hooked on these violent video games, or even look at terrible material on the Internet which displays the use of torture and similar things, their minds are being destroyed!

So, since Governor Bevin asked for a national debate about that, and fortunately, since President Trump also wants to take on this issue, let us have a debate. In my view, we must have a debate on this because we can't let this continue. Solving this crisis is an integral part of the United States joining the New Paradigm and the New Silk Road. For many years, the Schiller Institute has proven that with Classical music, with Classical poetry, with Schiller, with Shakespeare, you can transform people and have an aesthetical education. That is exactly what is needed right now.

**Schlanger:** Helga, I think coming back to where we started, introducing projects such as the Transaqua project will give millions of young Africans a sense of the future. I would encourage people to go to the Schiller Institute site, and get a copy of the special report we have on that: "[Extending the New Silk Road to West Asia and Africa: A Vision of an Economic Renaissance](#)" which is now available.

So, Helga, with that, I'd like to thank you again for joining us, and we'll see you next week.

**Zepp-LaRouche:** Yes, till next week.