

The Urgent Need for a New Paradigm in Africa

This is the presentation of Jason Ross to the Schiller Institute conference in Morristown, N.J. on Feb. 16, 2019. Ross is co-author of the Schiller Institute [report](#). Extending the New Silk Road to West Asia and Africa.

It's a great honor to be here to speak to this wonderful event. I'm glad so many people are here; it seems we'll have to get a bigger room next time, which is really good news.

What I want to discuss today is the urgent need for a New Paradigm in the world, using Africa as a case study. And I want to talk specifically about Lyndon LaRouche's proposal for a New Bretton Woods conference as the way to create a New Paradigm and institute a new order of economic relations among nations in the globe: something that's absolutely needed at present.

If we take a look at the world as a whole, just looking at it at night provides a very good way to get a sense of its state of economic development. Places that are dark at night, are dark because there's no electricity. Looking at this map, [Figure 1] it's easy to identify what some of these places are: either due to a lack of development, or due to just a lack of people. So, some of these areas—for example, Australia, there's just not a lot of people there. Africa, not a lot of development, compared to what it should be. You can look at the United States, and see the difference in land use. [Audience member: "Where's Canada?"] Canada? It looks like Canada is about a 60-mile sliver north of the United States.

So, what's going to change this? How are we going to make the world what it ought to be? The



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African Union (AU) has adopted what it calls Agenda 2063; the AU adopted this in 2013 as a 50-year proposal for the development of the African continent. One of the proposals is for a Trans-African Highway network. Completing this project will be a great transformative step to integrating the economies of Africa.

Power is another absolute essential for development. [Figure 2] Look at the Congo River, passing through the Democratic Re-

public of the Congo. And near where it enters the Atlantic Ocean is the most perfect location for hydropower on the planet. A very steep drop of a very huge river—the Congo is second only to the Amazon in terms of its flow out to the ocean. It's a huge river and a wonderful place to make 40,000 MW of hydropower: good, clean, non-polluting hydropower. So, this proposed Grand Inga hydropower facility, which has not been built yet, was dropped by the World Bank as being environmentally and otherwise irresponsible a few years ago.

This is just one example of what we heard in that clip from LaRouche earlier, speaking in Germany when

FIGURE 1



NASA

The Earth at night: 20% of the world's population has no access to electricity.

FIGURE 2
Congo River



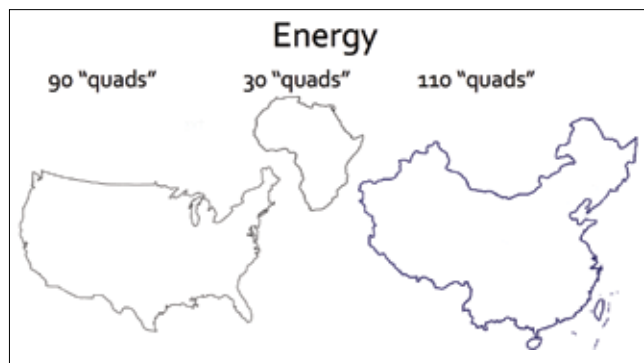
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he was 90, about the Green policy being a suicide policy. It's not only a suicide policy, it's also used as a *homicide* policy, as a new form of colonialism. This is, I think, a powerful example of that.

Africa-China Relations Against Colonialism

In contrast, is the really exciting development of relations between China and the nations of Africa. Every three years, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation meets, alternating between China and the capital of an African nation. At the last meeting, which was held in 2018, the meeting was in Beijing, and in 2021 it will be held in Senegal. What China has been doing with its cooperation with Africa, has been making available large amounts of credit for the kinds of projects that just make sense: rail lines, power systems, water systems, transportation, road networks, industrial parks—these kinds of significant investments.

FIGURE 3A



This is not charity; this is not a case of somebody saying “We’re going to step up to the plate and donate to those poor Africans who can’t help themselves.” That’s not the case. The United States is a bigger donor to Africa than is China. But I think if you speak to many African nations in terms of which nation is doing more at present to provide a *long-term* future, it’s not aid that lasts for a year; it’s taking the lid off and saying, “We’re going to develop a full economy here, not perpetually slightly alleviate poverty; that’s not a future.”

Let’s look at the numbers on this. The United States has 0.3 billion people, Africa has 1.2 billion people, and China has 1.4 billion people. Africa and China have a similar number of people, despite Africa being at least three times larger as a continent than China. Regarding energy use, [Figure 3a] the U.S. and China use a similar amount of energy. China, however, has four times the population. When we look at it on a per capita basis, [Figure 3b] here you have a sense of how much energy is available per person. Very quick, very simple numbers, but you can see that there is a massive deficit to be overcome. When this is done, the benefits will be enormous.

Currently, transportation among nations in Africa, for example, is at such a poor level that there is very little trade among Africa nations. Most trade by any African nation is not with its neighbors, it’s with countries outside the continent.

If the road and rail networks are developed, you can see the estimates for, in many places, ten times the trade flowing; the potential is all there. It’s huge, and it needs to happen. This [Figure 4a] is a chart of passenger rail use by country, color-coded; freight rail use by country, color-coded [Figure 4b]. Now look at access to improved water [Figure 4c]. There’s a lot to be done. Now, what is preventing this? Although 50-something years ago, the African nations by and large achieved official independence, full *economic* independence has not occurred, because

FIGURE 3B

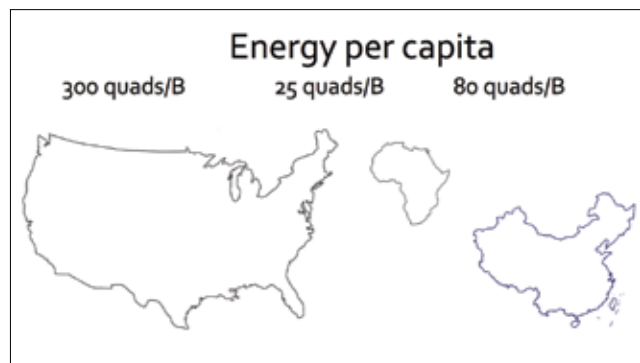


FIGURE 4A

Railways, Passengers Carried

(million passenger-km)

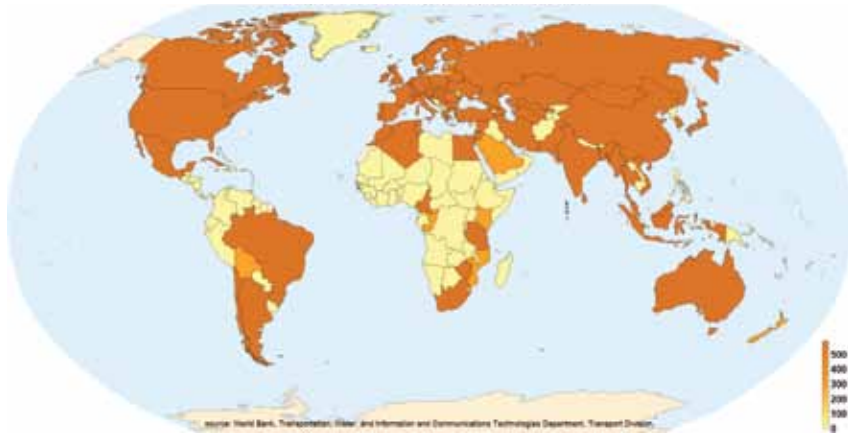


FIGURE 4B

Railways, Goods Transported

(million ton-km)

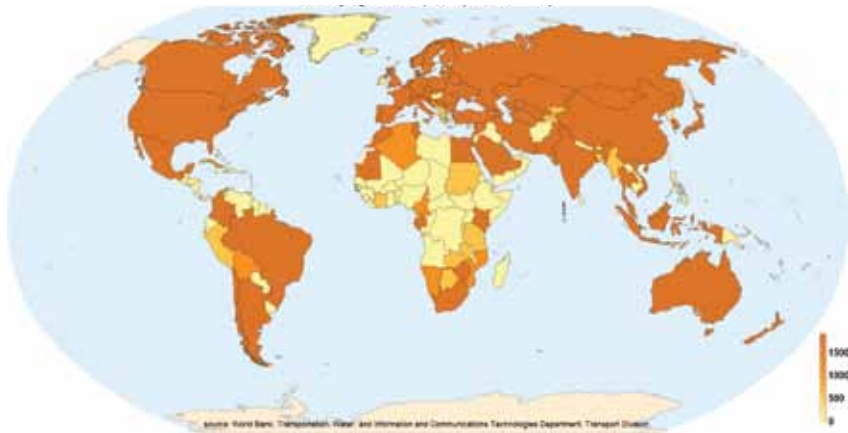
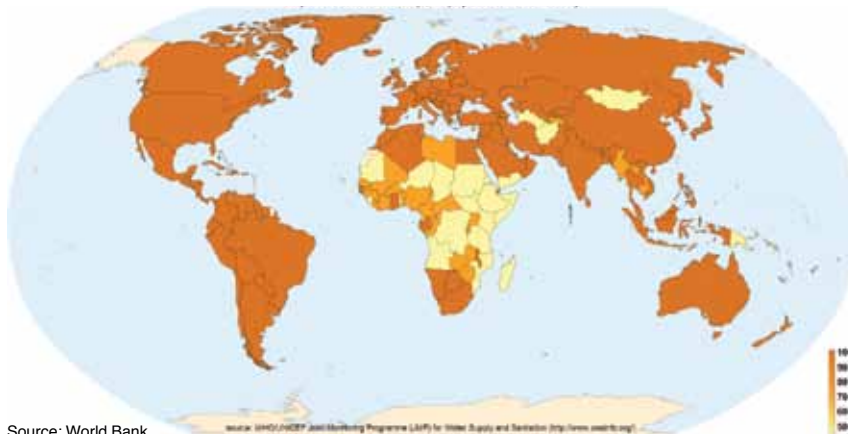


FIGURE 4C

Improved Water Source

(% of population with access)



Source: World Bank

colonialism has continued, although in other forms. And that colonialism is *not* the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. It's much more the British.

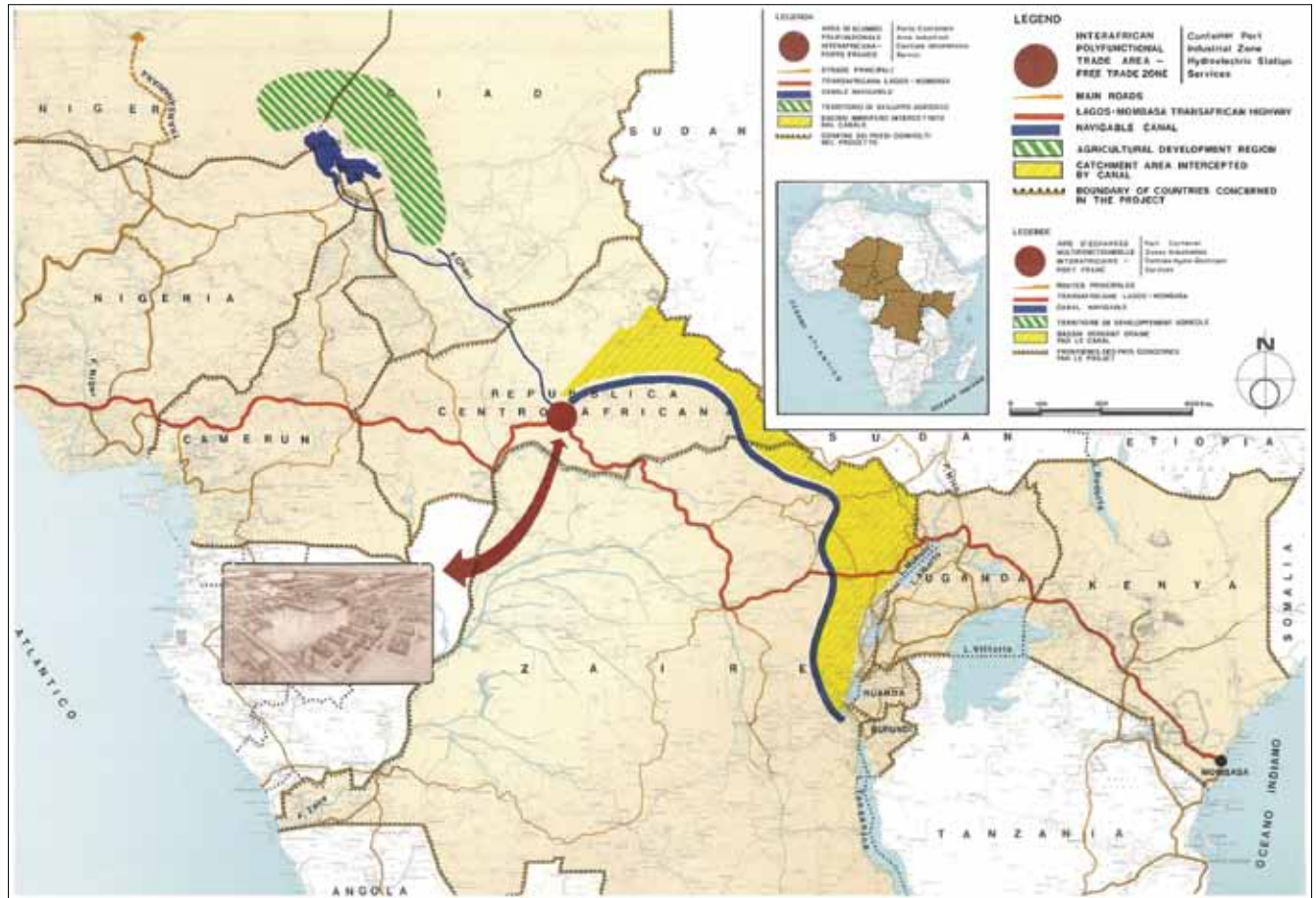
Take for example the Heads of Government Meeting of the British Commonwealth, a ridiculous institution. Behind the creepy Queen at these meetings, are the leaders of powerful countries with many people—President Buhari of Nigeria, Prime Minister Modi of India—over a billion people. There's only about 60 million people in England. Why does this institution even exist? Why do people willingly go to grovel before the Queen and say they're willing to essentially continue the old colonial system?

What Is American Policy?

Let's look back at another colony and how it reacted to the British system. Our United States Declaration of Independence, in setting out the causes for which we declared our independence from Britain, said at the end, "Let the facts be presented to a candid world." What was the first of those facts? Don't let the automobile license plates in Washington, D.C. fool you, it was not taxation without representation; it was "He [King George III] has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good." The *number one* item on the Declaration of Independence—the common good is not being promoted; that there is a refusal to allow the promotion of the common good.

Compare that with National Security Study Memorandum 200, authored under Henry Kissinger in 1974, which stated, for about two dozen countries in the world, that the growth of their populations represented a threat to U.S. strategic interests. Because it would be more difficult, essentially, to get materials from countries that were developing and prosperous than countries that are dis-

FIGURE 5
Transaqua



Bonifica

arrayed and poor.

Compare this to when the British ran their official empire. Consider India, for example. Some people say that at least Britain helped develop India, building railroads, and so forth. No, Britain ruined India. India was one of the world's leading manufacturers of cloth, for example, and had a major ship-building industry, which was destroyed by the British. Empire destroys the economic potential of its colonies, and that is the reason that development has been deliberately held back in the world.

In a sense, what China is doing now with the tremendously important Belt and Road Initiative—keeping in mind its origins and the promotion of the New Silk Road, the World Land-Bridge by the Schiller Institute, by Lyndon and Helga LaRouche for decades—represents something which is very sensible in a certain way: Cooperate with others to develop together. The whole idea of the Thucydides Trap, which Professor Gong referenced, depends on the idea that the nations that are going to compete with each other, both have the view of them-

selves as existing *to be powers*, as having their interest in essentially being an empire or holding dominion.

If that's not the relation among nations—if another's rise is not your loss—then there is no reason to look at the world like a mischievous child who sees somebody else getting the candy and then getting mad at them. We can all grow together.

Refilling Lake Chad with Transaqua

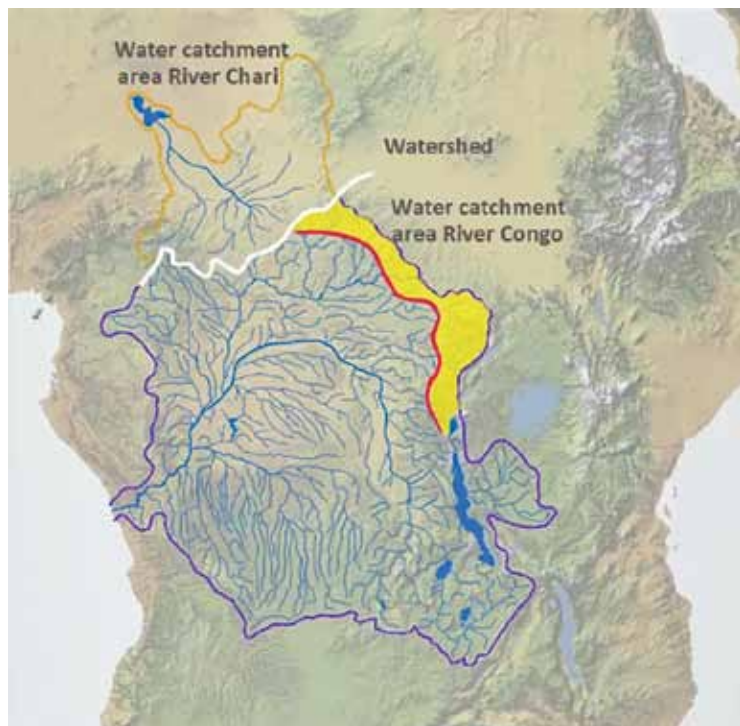
I want to give one example now, very briefly, of a specific project in Africa, and look at how it is moving forward; and then briefly conclude with what this means for the world as whole.

Again, this is an example where the World Bank “refused its Assent” to financing something “the most wholesome and necessary for the public good”: like the dropping of support for the Grand Inga Dam. The example I want to take up is Lake Chad.

For those who know the geography, Lake Chad is an interior lake in Africa. Water that comes into the lake

FIGURE 6

Congo-Chari Rivers' Catchment Basins



Bonifica

doesn't leave; it just evaporates or filters through the ground, but it doesn't flow out to the ocean. There's not enough incoming water in the basin to sustain this lake. The lake's size has both fluctuated significantly and overall shrunk dramatically from the mid-1970s. Over the last 40 years, the lake has lost 90% of its water, while the population around it has increased several times. There are now 30-40 million people now essentially economically dependent on this lake in various ways, and the lake is disappearing.

What is to be done? There is a proposal that has been made for decades, and has been promoted by the LaRouche movement. [Figure 5] It was initiated by an Italian company, Bonifica, which proposed to take part of the water that goes into the Congo River—again, the second-largest flow rate in the world, plenty of water [Figure 6]. Take 8% of that water, and through a series of dams upstream, create a channel where the water could flow by gravity. This could refill the lake; you could make hydroelectricity; you could make power at each of several dams. You would have a navigable channel for barges to transport things; you could build a road along it. It's an excellent idea.

This is a workable and brilliant plan that has been in consideration for decades. But just recently, in the past couple of years, tremendous steps forward have been made, again, in part because of China. In December 2016, PowerChina and Bonifica both signed agreements to do more work on the feasibility. In February 2018 at the Lake Chad Basin Commission meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, the assembled countries said this is the way we're going to go. Water transfer is the only way to save this lake. That's what people on the ground say. What do Western donor countries, the ones giving money to slightly alleviate the poverty, say? They don't even want to talk about this. They'll hold a meeting and talk about more efficiently identifying people at risk of starvation, but they will not talk about refilling the lake. It's simply not on their agenda.

So, what's needed is the United States, Russia, China, India to come together and call for another conference like that held in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire at the conclusion of World War II. At that conference was put in place a stable financial system that, overall, worked for decades. Roosevelt had the goal that, after World War II, *all* colonies would be free. He wanted to defeat not only the Nazi and Japanese attempts at colonization, but also the British Empire and the French Empire.

If the four countries identified by LaRouche (U.S., Russia, China, and India) come together to institute a new system on the planet today, we can grow out of the frankly adolescent oligarchical viewpoint, which says "another's rise is my loss," and recognize that we have shared human dreams for development; and that if we work together, we truly will all benefit. And we also will be much happier.

Thank you.

