

## **EDITORIAL**

# Never Again

Nov. 9—It is time to reverse the criminal neglect which has now left 8.7 million people in Afghanistan on the brink of starvation. Very little has been done, and the plight of these millions of people has been dropped from the pages of the major media in the United States and Europe.

The Schiller Institute began to mobilize for international cooperation to [rebuild](#) Afghanistan in July, even before the West withdrew and the Taliban took over. We have joined with others to put pressure on governments to unfreeze the \$9.5 billion in Afghanistan's reserve funds frozen in U.S. and European banks. However, the looming disaster of "biblical proportions" is clearly the fault of the so-called "donor" countries, which had been financing 75% of the budget of Afghanistan up to the point the United States and its allied nations pulled out, after 20 years of warfare, at the end of August 2021.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan said recently that everyone knew when those funds were cut, withdrawing that 75%, the Afghan economy would be thrown into complete chaos. Afghanistan's economy collapsed: No food, no money to import food, no medical supplies.

What does it say about the West when we wittingly let the Afghan people die, 8 million—almost 9 million people dying right away, are in the process of dying; babies freezing to death; no milk for babies; parents who can't buy food selling their children for \$40.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche closed her international strategic [webcast](#) on January 6 with a profound call to reflection and action:

I'm calling upon you to help us to mobilize, to help us implement Operation Ibn Sina: start with a health system, modern hospitals in Afghanistan, and then take that as the beginning to build

up the economy in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative: This must be done.

People have to understand that the moral indifference, the depraved indifference the Western world is showing toward Afghanistan, is the same reason why people tolerate the behavior of the governments in respect to not managing the pandemic. The privatization of healthcare systems for the purpose of financial profit is a core part of the failed response. After two years of the pandemic, we should realize that it is not functioning, and it will not function as long as you have profit driving the health sector!

Right now, in the United States the COVID-19 Omicron wave is out of control. And even though some experts believe that it is less lethal than the Delta variant, the fact is that it is overwhelming the health system. The governors of several states have declared states of emergency; that may happen in many more states, because the health system is completely at the edge. But the continued negligence since the beginning of the pandemic, not protecting the people of your nation by building new hospitals—hospitals were closed during the pandemic in the United States, and in Germany as well—is a horrible symptom of our failed system of profit-driven health care.

I think we need a complete reversal in priorities, and the population has to wake up, that their indifference, perhaps your own indifference, towards Afghanistan is what allows these rotten policies to go on in our own countries. And we have to have a mobilization for a new paradigm, both within our own countries and also in relations among nations, because these are expressions of the same problem in the system.