

I. Peace through Development

Live Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Days of Decision—Build a Mass Movement for Peace Through Development

This is an edited transcript of Harley Schlanger's weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and leader of the Schiller Institute, on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2023. Subheads and embedded links have been added. The video of this dialogue is available [here](#).

Harley Schlanger: Helga, it's beginning to look likely that the pause in fighting in Gaza may be extended for another two days, possibly even a little bit more, but we're reaching a moment of decision: There's growing pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and on President Joe Biden, to stop the death and destruction that's been unleashed by Netanyahu's invasion of Gaza, and it does appear as though this is having some effect. The International Peace Coalition, which you're very much involved in, is mobilizing to promote a lasting ceasefire and an actual resolution based on economic development.

What's your assessment at present of where things stand? What can people do to increase the pressure on Netanyahu, and on Biden, to make sure that there's a deal for a permanent ceasefire?

There Must Be a Peace Conference

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: Well, as we are speaking here, the UN Security Council special meeting is taking place, which had been



EIRNS/Elke Fimmen

As part of the worldwide pressure for peace in Southwest Asia, this demonstration drew thousands to the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Nov. 30, 2023.

called by the Chinese, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is chairing the meeting in New York. There are several other very high-ranking members of the government of China, who travelled with the Foreign Minister to this meeting. The Palestinian representative and the representative of Israel have already spoken today. The whole world is watching this event, because this is the highest-level intervention in an effort to bring peace to Gaza. The situation is threatening to spin out of control.

China has made a proposal to conduct an international Middle East peace conference, and I think that that is the only way how to approach the situation. The International Peace Coalition (IPC) and the Schiller Institute are engaged in an international mobilization, joining with all forces



UN/Eskinder Debebe

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi presents a peace plan at UNSC meeting to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Nov. 29, 2023.

we can, to introduce into the ongoing discussions the proposals of Lyndon LaRouche, which he first put forward in 1975, for an “Oasis Plan”: That is, for a comprehensive development plan for this region.

This region has been used by the British Empire and the former French colonialist powers as well, to be the area where geopolitics would cause conflict and sow distrust and wars, essentially against, first, Russia; now in the recent period, clearly against the emergence of a new development system sponsored by China with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and the growth of the BRICS nations, which in August accepted the application of six new members. The BRICS originally was Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. At their Johannesburg Summit they accepted six new members, Ethiopia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Argentina. Four of these countries are either in the Middle East, or direct neighbors, like Egypt, which serves as a bridge between Asia and Africa.

I have been making the point for some while, that while the Ukraine war and, now, the war around Gaza, both have their historic roots and origins and specifics, nevertheless, one has to see that they’re also the pawns in the much larger fight between the neoliberal world order, which is clearly on the downfall, despite all efforts to talk it up by some people like NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg, and the rising nations of the Global South centered around China and the Belt and Road Initiative.

This is really where that fight plays out, because either you continue to play geopolitics and you divide nations and you distribute tensions and war, or you come to a new paradigm. That is really what is at stake. Our point has been that we are promoting the idea of a comprehensive development plan for the entire region.

Now, people who have travelled in the Middle East can confirm that the one thing which is lacking in that region is water. When you fly over several of these countries, and you look down from the plane, as

Features of LaRouche’s Oasis Plan



Without a comprehensive regional economic development, no enduring peace is possible. Shown: Lyndon LaRouche’s Oasis Plan from the 1990s.

EIRNS

I did, you see desert, desert, desert—there is not one green spot. The Oasis Plan, which was promoted by Lyndon LaRouche in the 1970s already as a peace plan, proceeds from the idea that you need to create a lot of fresh water, which can be created in many ways: The most efficient way is by canals between the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Dead Sea, and then have desalination of that water. Then you can have other methods of creating water by creating artificial rainfall by ionization of the atmosphere, by tapping into the aquifers, and basically having that water available for massive infrastructure development, industrial development, and agricultural development.

Only by introducing this idea, which was already on the table when the Oslo Accords were signed [at the White House in 1993], but then were sabotaged by

the World Bank at that time. Only if you have a development perspective is there any hope that you can have peace between Israel and Palestine and get an overall agreement among all the neighbors to work for the common good of all. If you don't inject such a perspective, it is very difficult to see how you can get peace in the region, given that the positions are so hardened.

Such a comprehensive peace plan for the Middle East would then be, maybe, the beginning of a new development and security architecture for the whole planet, which would take into account the security and development needs of all countries, because I think that is urgently needed to get out of this present geopolitical confrontation.

This is right now the focus of our mobilization. This coming Friday, we will have our next on-line meeting of the International Peace Coalition where we will present an updated version of this Oasis Plan. People should contact us, call us, write to us, to get an invitation to that meeting and become part of our mobilization. You can write to us at questions@schillerinstitute.org.

We need a unification of all peace movements around the world to focus on the *solution* to the conflict. It's not enough to just be *against* the war. We need a two-state solution for the Middle East, but that can only have a chance of working if there is a massive improvement in the living standard for all people in the entire region.

Broader Diplomatic Implications

Schlanger: Several people have sent questions about the broader diplomatic initiatives. One person writes: "What is holding back the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League from withholding oil and gas deliveries to Israel?" Jack Gilroy, of Pax Christi, sent in this: "What about the BRICS proposing economic sanctions against Israel?" What do you think of those proposals?

Zepp-LaRouche: I'm not sure, certainly the problem is not solved by punishment or revenge, you only get a new cycle. I understand the sentiments; I understand why people would like to break diplomatic rela-



Gerard ter Borch

As difficult as it may be to accept, Israelis and Palestinians could learn a lesson from a principle of the 1648 Peace of Westphalia: For the sake of peace, do not forget the crimes of the other side, but forgive them.

tions with Israel or go in the direction of sanctions. I have a slightly different approach. It does not mean you forget the unforgivable crimes that have been committed. However, you must look at the experience of the Peace of Westphalia, which several-year process ended 150 years of religious warfare in Europe. That warfare took the lives of almost two-thirds of the people of Europe at the time, or of large parts of Europe. Those who were still alive came to the conclusion that you have to introduce something completely different.

The Peace of Westphalia developed the principles that for the sake of peace, you have to forgive the crimes on the one side and the other side. That doesn't mean you forget them; it doesn't mean you do not uphold the memory and draw the conclusion for the future. But you have to put a line where you forgive. Because otherwise, if you keep counting, "this side did that, and that side did that" ... and it will just continue the cycle of violence.

I know this is very difficult for people to accept, but I think given the fact that this is not an isolated problem, because as I said just before, what is at play, including in the case of Ukraine. Just think about the five, or now six times NATO has expanded to the East, encircling Russia with the clear geopolitical aim to dismantle Russia eventually.

Yesterday, [Russian President Vladimir] Putin made a very important [speech](#) before the Russian People's Council (founded 1993). He said that

there are people who are again talking about “decolonizing Russia,” freeing the people, the ethnic groups inside Russia, and that there is a game-plan to dismantle Russia. Unfortunately, that is corroborated by many activities, and one can clearly see that despite the fact that there are specifics—our time is too short now to go through them—the larger game is between the West and Russia and China. The Middle East, or Southwest Asia, is part of that grand strategic game. So, you must take into account all factors.

In my view, it does require that we get an understanding among all the nations and all the forces in the world, that we need to move to a completely different level, we need to move to a new paradigm of international relations, where we put the one humanity first, and put all national interests in cohesion with that one humanity—a sort of spiritual jump, a mental jump to a completely new level, based on the thinking of Nicholas of Cusa and the Coincidence of Opposites, the *coincidentia oppositorum*, a method of thinking he developed, which I think informed the Peace of Westphalia, because it enabled the participants, despite all the war crimes on both sides, to move to a new level and establish that their foreign policy from now on had to be based on the interest of the other, meaning all others; and that foreign policy had to be built on love.

That is a quality, which, I know may sound utopian to some people, because they argue that the military-industrial complex will not in our day ever come to the level of love in foreign policy. But if we get a mass movement for peace, and a completely different kind of international cooperation among all nations, well, then also the power of the military-industrial complex will not be forever.

I’m trying to say that we need a completely different quality if we want to avoid world war: In the case of Ukraine, as well as in the case of Southwest Asia, if these conflicts would escalate—and in both



kremlin.ru

Russian President Vladimir Putin is among the few world leaders who understands that, in order to overcome conflicts on a regional level, one has to proceed from the higher standpoint of the one humanity.

cases, that danger is absolutely there—and it would come to the use of nuclear weapons, it is the logic of nuclear weapons that they all will be used, once one is being introduced, and that that will lead to the end of civilization, the annihilation of everything we ever knew, loved and cared for, because there will be nobody left to even consider what went wrong. There are some extremely crazy and insane people who are playing with that, as if you could “win” a nuclear war!

You have to start from the worst-case scenario: a nuclear winter, following a nuclear war, and therefore, you have to define the solution from that end: In other words, you have to introduce a concept which overcomes all the conflicts on a regional level, and that has to proceed from the one humanity. The only government I have heard of talking about going in

this direction is, indeed, China, because Xi Jinping always talks about the “shared future of humanity,” meaning that we only have one future. I have heard Putin saying similar things, and some leaders from the Global South countries also moving in this direction, and I emphatically think that that is the



Master of the Life of the Virgin

Nicholas of Cusa, who developed the method of the coincidence of opposites as a new and superior approach to thinking.

only level on which this problem can be solved.

What Follows the Wars?

Schlanger: We have a question from a colleague of ours, who's an historian: "When the fighting has stopped, what next? Gaza is destroyed. Reconstruction—but how?"

Zepp-LaRouche: As in the Peace of Westphalia, there are a lot of details which have to be hammered out, but I think the reconstruction of Gaza, and the reconstruction of a Palestinian State, introducing exactly the kind of economic development measures which I was talking about before, is what has to be done. And it can only be done by the international community imposing their absolute determination that that must happen; and also asserting pressure on the United States. Pressure must come from both inside the United States, from the citizens of the United States, but also from the international community.

If the U.S. administration would tell Israel to go along with this policy, they would. Now, Netanyahu has recently basically boasted that he defied the U.S. pressure, but I don't think that's true. If the United States would insist, with clear language, that Israel had to comply, they would have to comply.

So the real task, therefore, is demanding from every single human being to not be quiet before what is happening, but the biggest responsibility, clearly lies with the United States and the American citizens to correct the mistaken policy of their government.

Schlanger: Here's a question that follows on that same line of thinking, from a regular viewer: "Given the growing opposition to Biden's commitment to give more money for the Ukraine war and the Gaza war, \$105 billion more in the supplemental bill, will [U.S. Senate Majority Leader, Democrat Chuck] Schumer and the pro-war faction in Congress be able to get this through, given the growing opposition in the United States?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, that is not a crystal-ball question; that is a question of political mobilization. I think that Schumer clearly is proving himself somebody who does play the game of the military-industrial complex. And I think that there are a growing number of people, in all layers, among the Jewish people, the

Islamic people, all kinds of ethnic minorities, and as well as Democrats and Republicans, who are really sick and tired of this endless war policy.

What did it do to the United States? When September 11th started the interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and probably a whole bunch of other countries, these countries were destroyed! Their destruction did not increase the power and reputation of the United States: As a matter of fact, I think the whole formation of the Global South now becoming a force for a new world economic order, is the result of a gigantic blowback. If the United States would not have started these interventionist wars, I don't think that the Global South would move with China for a new



NATO

Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Her remark in 1996 that the deaths of 500,000 Iraqi children due to U.S. sanctions "was worth it," has caused the whole Global South to rebel.

economic and financial system. I think the elites in the West, in NATO, in the United States, and Europe, should reflect that their policy caused this. It's not Russia; it's not China, but it is the policy of interventionist wars which has caused millions of people to die!

Just think of the Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's infamous, barbarian statement that the deaths of 500,000 children in Iraq as a consequence of the sanctions imposed after the war was a price worth paying. That "Ugly American" image that Madeleine Albright personifies like nobody else—well, I could name a couple of more people, but she is for sure an "Ugly American" if I have ever seen one—has caused the whole Global South to rebel. People are not stupid! They can see the intention of the sanctions policy, like the Caesar sanctions against Syria, namely, to cause the people of the respective country to rise up against their government and lead to a regime change. This policy

has clearly failed, and I think that that has to be driven home.

We are now at the point where, at this time and in this age of thermonuclear weapons, there is international recognition that war can no longer be a means of conflict resolution. That is dawning on more and more people. More and more people are against the idea of war, against military production. That has to increase, because now, it's also getting very clear that the trans-Atlantic financial system is experiencing severe troubles. The U.S. banking system is as good as bankrupt. The German economy is collapsing; it's falling like a stone. And you know, they're trying to militarize the German economy and go for a military buildup. Well, how do they want to finance it? They want to cut social services.

So, I'm calling on all people to actually count: how many schools could be built for the money sent to these endless wars? How many healthcare systems could be created? We have to start mobilizing the population to really put an end to this, because this military production is a complete waste, from the standpoint of physical economy, and it only fills the pockets of those who are speculating in the bonds and shares of the military firms. And that has to become clear, and a public mobilization should really put an end to that.

Schlanger: On Friday, Dec. 1, there will be another get-together of the International Peace Coalition (IPC). If you're interested, you can email us or call, and we'll let you know what you do to join in.

Many Unanswered Questions

We now have a question from Gregory: "What factors contributed to the Israel Defense Forces' failure to respond in a timely manner to the Hamas attack on Oct. 7? "Are we dealing with a situation similar to that described by Lyndon LaRouche regarding the 9/11 attacks in 2001, that Lyn had forecast a 'Reichstag fire event' to allow for a change in the subject by the Bush administration?"

Zepp-LaRouche: That's a very interesting question, because there are a lot of unanswered questions in this respect. First of all, it now turns out that there was not just one warning to the Israeli government before Oct. 7, like the one from the Egyptian government, but apparently there were several voices inside Israel warning Netanyahu, and apparently also a report by the CIA warning that a major Hamas attack was being planned.



CC/Marius Arnesen

Among the many unanswered questions about Hamas, some relate to the extensive network of deep underground tunnels in Gaza. How did they get built? Why were they not spotted? Why were they never an issue, until now?

Nevertheless, the IDF security forces were pulled away from the Gaza fence; they were redeployed to the West Bank. That's one big thing.

There are many other questions. For example, this tunnel system under Gaza, supposedly 500 km worth of tunnels, 30 meters deep. That's not something that can just be built in a week! That takes years and years—so why was that not spotted? Why was that never an issue? How do you fortify such a tunnel system? You need an enormous amount of cement, of concrete: How was this transported? How did the very large number of missiles and other weaponry get into Gaza, which was completely (supposedly) surveilled to the last point? How did these weapons get into there?

There are many, many such questions, which really pose the question: Maybe everything Hamas did over many, many years, maybe 20 years, was that known to the Mossad? Was it known to the IDF? That would indeed, then bring us to the question of a 9/11 like event.

I cannot answer that right now, but I think question marks for sure can be raised, and an investigation—an international investigation—would be absolutely appropriate.

'No' to a Militarization of Germany, Again!

Schlanger: Here's a question, Helga, that is probably a little painful for you, but something you've been talking about quite a bit: "How much longer can the Scholz coalition in Germany survive, given

the terrible news with the economy, the continued commitment to war in Ukraine, and now the support for Israel?" What's your assessment?

Zepp-LaRouche: I think we are burdened with the worst government Germany ever had, at least in the post-war period. I have always thought that the Merkel government was strangulating the creativity of Germany by introducing a lot of mediocrity, but what is now governing in Berlin makes [the previous Chancellor Angela] Merkel look like a genius, by comparison.

This is really too much! This government is bungling, and you never know if they're bungling and incapable of running an economy, or is it the Green influence, which has the absolute intention to deindustrialize Germany? Because that has been the explicit program of the Greens for so long, I would not put it past them that what they are doing is in part deliberate, to dismantle the industry. They are ideologues and they would like to take Germany back to the Middle Ages, to some kind of feudalist totalitarian order, because that is also what's going on in Germany right now.

I don't know how long it will take. [Chancellor Olaf] Scholz, yesterday, gave a speech on the ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, which had basically ruled it unlawful to extend the previous emergency exemption from the "debt brake," which "debt brake" some stupid combination of people had voted into the *Grundgesetz*, the Constitution, before. You need

a two-thirds majority to change that. Now, there are some people, especially in the Greens and in the Social Democracy who are talking about how some change in the debt brake should be done; this was nixed immediately by the Free Democrats and the Christian Democrats.

Now, that government is so full of contradictions: You have parties that are in some points diametrically opposed to each other, but for the sake of clinging to



Bundeswehr

A plan is afoot in Germany to re-militarize, while the economy is in deep trouble. Here, Leopard 2 main battle tanks on maneuver.

power, they stick together. But obviously the result is abysmal. The chief of the Christian Social Union (CSU) who is the Minister President of Bavaria, Markus Söder, called for early elections, to have Federal elections simultaneously with the European Parliament elections in June of next year. I don't know if that will function; that would require some more action by the opposition. But the sooner this government is voted out the better, because they're running Germany into the ground, and it's terrible! They're ruining things which have been built up for generations after the postwar period. And when you talk to ordinary Germans, wherever you meet them, if you can scratch the surface, you'll find they're exploding with despair, with rage, with complete dismay.

So, I think we are in a very bad situation in Germany. And it's very clear that all of Europe is in a very difficult situation. There was just a big meeting in France addressed by "fake

sovereignists," as Jacques Cheminade, our collaborator in France and a former presidential candidate, called them. These are people who pretend that they are for a sovereign France, but they stick to mostly neoliberal economic policies, followers of the Austrian school of economics, and are for the most part now being drawn into a geopolitical game. They look like the "Plan B" of the oligarchy. There are similar formations in many countries.



German Federal Govt./Johannssen

To get around the "debt brake," German Chancellor Olaf Scholz adopted a supplementary to the federal budget to fund the transformation of Germany, once again, into a military state.

So, I think we are in great danger, because history is never repeating itself exactly, but there are many people who see parallels to what is happening in Europe right now to the beginning of the 1930s.

The way they're trying to eliminate free speech, and other freedoms, it is clear that the real totalitarian danger is in these governments in the West themselves, not from Russia or China. You cannot call those countries totalitarian. They come from a completely different tradition, a different culture. But the West is always trying to name countries which have a different social system, which is what Biden said with his really provocative statement about [China's President] Xi Jinping after they met in San Francisco. Biden was asked by a reporter in a clear provocation, if he thought that President Xi Jinping was a dictator, and he said, "Sure, he comes from a completely different system than our own." As if to come from another system automatically would mean to be a dictator!

That is just terminology which comes from the Cold War, and it has always been used by the secret services to blame an enemy—this was the language of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Look at the terminology. It's the same! Even if Russia is no longer a communist system, even if China is very much appreciated by 150 nations from the Global South. When you look at all of these things a little more deeply, you come to the conclusion that these labels really don't say a lot.

Coming back to your question, I hope this [current German] government can be replaced by better parties. There are many efforts to create new parties at this point. We are also promoting our own party, the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (*Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität, or BüSo*), and I can only say, we need an alternative to this present effort by the German government to remilitarize Germany in ways which can only make your hair stand on end.

The Diane Sare Campaign for U.S. Senate

Schlanger: The final question, which actually flows from that one, that several people are asking about the upcoming U.S. presidential election in 2024. Don, for example, says: "The way to solve this is the



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Diane Sare, independent candidate for U.S. Senate from New York.

removal of the U.S. Democratic Party." A number of people are trying to blame the Democrats for that.

Zepp-LaRouche: The present combination of presidential candidates really leaves room for improvement. Obviously, Biden is not so fit any more to run for President. Former President Trump—I have not looked at his program recently—is clearly not in line with the trend of the times, which is what the Global Majority is expressing, namely, the wish for cooperation rather than a continuation of the geopolitical game. The other candidates are also not without problems. One would hope that there is a recognition

of the need for cooperation.

Whole-heartedly, I can only endorse the candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, Diane Sare. I have been told that there is now a big movement of grassroots support for her. There are "Friends of Sare" circles forming in many states. I think there is the hope that in every one of the 50 states plus Washington, D.C., there would be a "Friends of Sare" circle created, and that around that, hopefully a new presidential slate, not a presidential candidate, but maybe candidates who would really represent an alternative, seems to be forming.

I can only hope that such an effort will succeed. The whole world is longing for a better America. People hope, around the world, that America will return to the tradition of its Founding Fathers, of Lincoln, of John Quincy Adams, naturally, in terms of foreign policy, of Franklin D. Roosevelt in terms of economic policy, of [John F.] Kennedy in terms of peace policy; and that that tradition of America would come to the fore.

That is what the whole world wishes, and I can only encourage people in America to rethink their history very quickly.

Schlanger: You can find out more about Diane Sare and her campaign on her [website](#), Sare for Senate. So, Helga, thanks for joining us. Again, people should be aware of the IPC meeting coming up on Friday, Dec. 1. Write to us, call us, let us know if you're interested, and we'll get back to you. You can send us your comments and questions to questions@schillerinstitute.org.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, till Friday.