

A Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Following her webcast speech on Aug. 21, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, candidate for Chancellor of Germany,¹ answered many questions. Here is a selection.

We Need the Energy Flux-Density of Nuclear Power

A labor leader from a nuclear power plant: We are in a tough situation at the nuclear plants. On the one hand, because of the general opposition to nuclear energy, we are constantly being exposed to hostility and our work is attacked; but on the other hand, we are expected to keep our plants operating safely. We would do this anyway, based on our own self-conception. But the slightest tiny mistake is hyped up into an election campaign controversy, and our very concept of our daily work, namely, to ensure the reliability of our plants, is questioned by our political opponents. We are having to dismantle our life's work prematurely, because of the anti-nuclear consensus. We don't think this is Germany's way to a promising future. Our doubts are all the more justified because of the worldwide economic crisis. Is there any reason to hope that nuclear power plants will ever be built in Germany again? What can we do?

Zepp-LaRouche: Looking at the so-called catastrophic accidents, one finds that the vast majority have absolutely nothing to do with nuclear energy, and are incredibly exaggerated, precisely to promote such negative propaganda. Of course, one has to realize that individual operating companies may sometimes economize at the expense of safety, since they exist in our current world.

Our answer to that is: We have to move as quickly as possible to inherently safe reactors. The high-temperature reactor, the Pebble Bed reactor, the "fourth generation" reactor, which is inherently safe, where nothing bad can happen, and which is the absolutely necessary

step toward nuclear fusion power. We certainly can't go back to the energy flux-density of solar energy and imagine that we could make the leap to fusion power from there. We need the energy-flux density of fission power to get to fusion power.

Just look at the maps on the Internet that show the distribution of nuclear power plants: You see that many countries are now massively investing in nuclear power: Russia has, I believe, 40 or 50 nuclear plants in the planning stage; India wants to develop the thorium cycle; Japan, the U.S.A.—all the countries around us are gearing up massive nuclear power programs. And Germany has to be clear: If we want to remain an industrial nation, with a relatively high standard of living, then [we cannot accept] the "greening" that exists at the moment—because the Greens are right, when they say that their "property rights have been stolen," since now everybody is green.

[Economics Minister Karl-Theodor zu] Guttenberg already has a black-green coalition² in mind, which naturally would mean that the CDU-CSU would have to distance itself from its somewhat pro-nuclear position. As for the SPD's new Steinmeier Program, the good thing is that [SPD Chancellor candidate Frank-Walter] Steinmeier has the idea of creating millions of jobs, but this program—and I read it very carefully—includes only green jobs.

Thus, it really goes in the opposite direction from what I have just discussed: that we have to raise productivity, that we have to raise energy flux-density. So, the Greens are green, the Left is green, the SPD is green, the CDU is green, and the FDP, which is a little

1. She represents the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo). Her opening remarks were published in *EIR*, Sept. 4, 2009. The elections are on Sept. 27.

2. The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Christian Social Union (CSU) are allied parties, designated "black"; the Social Democratic Party (SPD) is designated "red," and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) is designated "yellow." The Greens, of course, are green.

bit in favor of nuclear power, is unfortunately monetarist, which is also a problem.

Thus, there is no party in Germany, except for the *BüSo*, that really stands for safe nuclear energy that would ensure a promising future.

But I really think that in the coming storms, it will become clear that everything went wrong; that the green paradigm, the green, neoliberal paradigm of the last 40 years, was a failure. That will become as clear as the light of day.

We have no right to lose our machine-building capacities.

A Technological Revolution

Q from the audience: I am very happy about that, but I do have a slight impression that we're going to the other extreme. I mean, great projects can also be ineffective, if you look at a small region. And now, alternative technology is being treated somewhat negatively: I don't think that's a good idea; it would be better to combine the two, so that we would have the high technology—like nuclear technology—but a limited amount of solar energy or wind energy should not be disparaged, and they could complement one another. And the same is true for food or transportation, because we have the world's big highways, but we also have local traffic. And then there's the little electric car, which I would hook up to a train station, and which is still justified and should not be set aside.

Zepp-LaRouche: Okay, that is clear. But I didn't say anything about getting rid of little electric cars; I only said that freight transport should be taken off the roads and shifted onto these other systems. Of course, individual transportation is justified. But I would rather drive an electric car over a highway where the traffic is actually moving, than over one that is so congested that it takes two hours to make a round trip, every day.

But naturally we have to see: In an economy, the question is always, how can a process be maximized? If you look, for example, at how much taxpayers' money has flowed into subsidies for windmills and solar energy—naturally that is money that can no longer be spent for nuclear fission or fusion research.

What we are really proposing is that we launch a



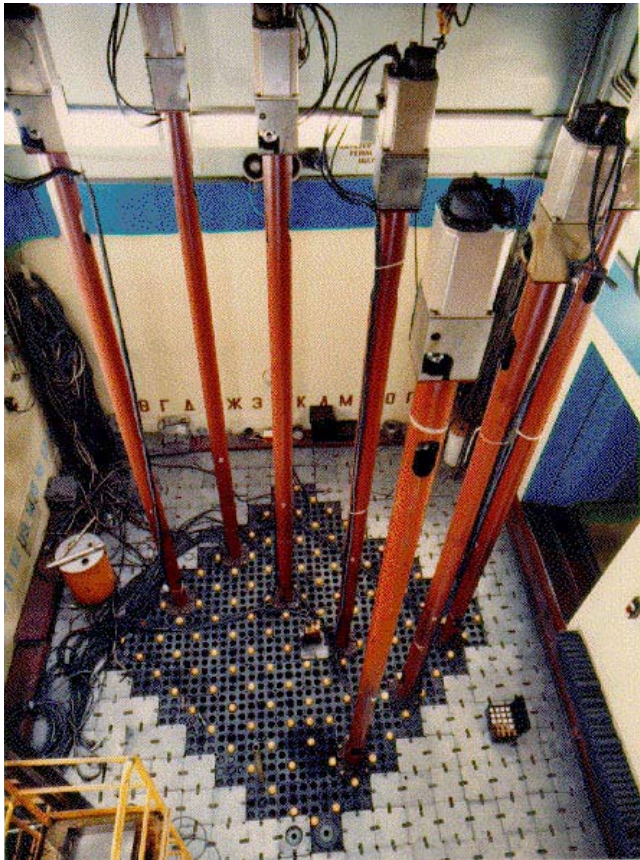
EIRNS/Helene Möller

Chancellor candidate Helga Zepp-LaRouche is interviewed on the campaign trail in Frankfurt on Aug. 17.

crash program, to really make a technological revolution—i.e., to achieve a breakthrough. In other words, for the last 40 years, we have had a false paradigm, with many aspects, such as the sex-drugs-rock counterculture, the destruction of the cognitive potential of several generations that goes along with that; and the shift toward speculation in the economy, the orientation away from production. Thus, there are many factors involved.

All the factors that generated this paradigm, which contributed to the crisis that we are now in, have led to the fact that, from the standpoint of the physical economy, the industrial and agricultural capacities required to adequately feed the world's current population, no longer exist. If this were not so, we would not have a billion hungry people, and another billion who are poor. We don't have overproduction, but rather an enormous dearth of the goods that these people require. And we also have a collapse of the real economy—a collapse of 50% in some sectors. That is utter madness! I provided documentation of this in my last webcast, and the situation has gotten worse.

The only way we can reverse or overcome this, is with technological innovation. We've got to raise productivity in the production process. That is Germany's only chance, because we have a demographic problem: Our population is aging. There are many reasons for



Kurchatov Institute

A test facility in Moscow for study of the high-temperature gas-cooled reactor of the Pebble Bed type. This is the “inherently safe” design that should come on line immediately throughout the world.

that, but the fact is that it is so. There is no problem, if we have a high rate of technological innovation, so that productivity will increase in the production process. Growth has to be at least 3%, and should be even more, to mean real growth, in the sense of increased productivity. Then we would be able to afford a hospital system for an aging population, a good educational system, and all these things.

We have boundary conditions that we have to consider, when we’re talking about the physical economy. Every country has such boundary conditions, and they are different in each country. For example, China has the boundary condition that its population equals fully one-sixth of the entire human population, so every sixth person is Chinese. But only 7% of China’s territory is arable land. This is a geographic boundary condition. China has, for example, fantastic mountains. You can look at these wonderful wall drawings, with fantastic mountains—a gorgeous landscape. But these moun-

tains cannot be used for agriculture; they are simply too steep and impassable.

So China has to consider what to do. China has the same demographic problem as Germany, only on a much larger scale, because of its disastrous one-child policy. When China introduced that policy, we totally opposed it, saying that China would at some point become a country of 1.4 billion old people. Because, of course, if only one child is allowed per couple, and many couples have none, it is natural that the population pyramid at some point will shift, so that there are more elderly people than youth. And that is a catastrophe, since China’s population already consists of just a bit more than 20% urban, skilled people, while 80% is still living at the level of the Stone Age, farming, in part, without any equipment, without animals, working the rice paddies with just their hands.

And since a catastrophe is now looming, there is only one way out: China has to urgently raise the technological level of its production process, so as to produce more and be able to feed more people. It is really very, very important, that we take responsibility for the world population as a whole. Of course we have to protect our own population first, but it would be shortsighted not to deal with the entire world population.

And it is obvious that the world’s ability to develop depends, among other things, on what industrial capacities there are. Imagine that you’re looking at a map: Where are the machine-building capacities? Not very many countries have them. Germany is at the top, along with Japan and Korea; the U.S.A. has a little, mostly for the military; then there is also Switzerland—these are the ones that have a “full-set economy”—i.e., an economy that has all the necessary components.

In any case, if we now lose half of our machine-building capacities, this will have enormous consequences for the world economy. It is not only our problem. Such capacities are also not something that one can pull out of a hat overnight, as the magician pulls out the rabbit. An enormous amount of knowledge goes into it, as well as training, teamwork on the part of engineers, coordinated groups—and if you destroy that, you have to realize that this means a reduction of the population potential of the world economy. Therefore, we have no right to lose our machine-building capacities. That would be a crime against humanity.

One has to completely rethink what the real economy is all about, and I can only advise you to study my husband’s writings, since he is the best economist alive

today. Every day he writes pages and pages of important concepts, and I can only recommend: Whoever really wants to deal with the inherent flaws of this system, and master the fundamentals of how a competent system of physical economy must be approached, should take on his holiday a suitcase packed full of my husband's books, and study them as quickly as possible. That is, by the way, what many people in Russia are doing, as well as in China, in India, in other countries; the interest in these ideas is really very widespread. And, if anyone thinks they don't apply to Germany, then I can only say: Stupidity and arrogance go hand in hand.



EIRNS/James Rea

Organizers for the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo) in Potsdam, Aug. 20. They are famous for singing Classical music and political canons, on street corners throughout the country. The slogan reads: "Chancellor candidate Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I have the solution. Bankruptcy proceedings for the banks, state credits for production."

Hartz-4 Is a Derivative of the Monetary System

Moderator: We come now to a gloomy subject here in Germany, known as Hartz-4,³ and we have several questions about it. I will quote extensively from one of them, since it vividly portrays the horrible conditions that exist.

One introductory remark: There is growing poverty in Germany, and it doesn't help at all when politicians say, "Keep quiet, you're still better off than in Bangladesh." That may be true, but poverty is growing. Poverty is relative; i.e., from the point of view of a child who wants to grow up, there are many quite obvious requirements that cannot at all be taken for granted, and that naturally affect the child's development.

Many of these children are growing up in households with single mothers, and Berlin, our national cap-

ital, is on the way to becoming the capital city of poverty. The latest statistic was that, of those lucky enough to find part-time jobs or mini-jobs, or other such overwhelmingly service-sector employment, 116,000 people in Berlin alone are not making enough to feed themselves, but have to rely on assistance from the State. That is the first thing.

Now we have Hartz-4. Someone writes to us: "I am a student of public administration and I also work as a security guard." Security guards are poorly paid; they might be working in the supermarket, for a maximum of EU5 per hour, to make sure that nobody takes canned goods home with them without paying, and whatnot. This student, participating in the election campaign's discussion of unemployment, sent questions to the various parties about the minimum wage, which, he said, should be at least EU10, and about Hartz-4, which should be raised to EU500. The CDU, he reports, didn't answer; the SPD wants to raise the minimum wage only to EU7.50, and the Left Party, of course, agreed.

The real question is whether raising the Hartz-4 payments and the minimum wage is not also a measure to stabilize the economic crisis and to stimulate domestic demand, which in turn would lead to greater tax rev-

3. Hartz-4, which took effect on Jan. 1, 2005, during a Social Democratic-led government, is part of a series of "labor market reforms" that became part of the government's Agenda 2010. Hartz-4 significantly lowered benefits for those unemployed more than 12 months; it specified that *any* job offered through state and public job agencies must be accepted, regardless of the qualifications of the applicant or the pay scale. For Helga Zepp-LaRouche's leaflet against it, issued Aug. 4, 2004, see *EIR*, Aug. 13, 2004. The leaflet was titled "Get Rid of Hartz-4! Germany Needs 8 Million New Jobs."

enues and makes it possible to finance the health-care system again.

That was the first question. The other describes the horrible conditions that the Hartz-4 recipient confronts, if he gets retrained by one of these privately managed work associations—under the threat that if this retraining doesn't satisfy somebody, the recipient can be stuck into a low-wage job.

The questioner is a model-maker, and had also worked as a painter in his father's business for a year, up to and including management of construction jobs: "I taught myself everything: project costing, measurement, mass data collection, project analysis, etc. One would certainly think that I had learned a thing or two in my father's business." The idea being, that he could be hired in one of these areas. But that didn't happen, and here's what did.

In this work association, he had to agree to take a three-month course, in which, for example, he had to paint pictures on boards with poster paint, 30 by 30 cm, with motifs such as hares, cats, flowers in an Andy Warhol style, but for children up to three years of age. In another multi-week course, grown men, 20 in number, had to toss tennis balls around in a circle for three or four hours. Afterwards there was a discussion of why this person or that person was unable to catch the ball. "It was explained to us that they wanted us to get into more of a community spirit. From riddles to the game of 'City, Country, River,' nothing was left out, even 'walking training'—walking, because many of the subjects had to be gotten into shape for the one- to two-hour tours of factories, which some of them can't even manage." The participants in such seminars complained, and were threatened: "Shut up, we can place you in a low-wage job, too."

Zepp-LaRouche: Of course, Hartz-4 is an absolute catastrophe, which must be abolished immediately. [applause] The whole Hartz-4/Agenda 2010 program is inhuman treatment of human beings.

When it was first introduced, we organized the Monday Demonstrations against it; we were the initia-



EIRNS/Helene Möller

Berlin's industrial collapse. The city is on the way to becoming "the capital city of poverty." Since the reunification of Germany in 1990, the city's industry was dismantled by free-market fanatics, and unemployment has risen sharply.

tors, but due to all sorts of infiltration and takeovers, the demonstrations were deliberately stopped. But anyway, at the high point in September 2004, over 100,000 people took part, coming right off the street, and that was also highly important.

But we also know what kind of pressure there was against [then-Chancellor Gerhard] Schröder. The currency was under speculative attack—it was practically a war. And at the time, certain financial experts in London and elsewhere said that if more than a million people were out on the streets, they still would not be able to stop the reform.

I am now no admirer of [Finance Minister Peer] Steinbrück, because I don't think he dealt with the matter well, but even so, he and Steinmeier understood where the problem lay: in the City of London. Mr. Steinbrück recently had an election campaign event in Wiesbaden, where people intervened and asked why all the financial toxic waste is not simply written off, and he replied: "If I were to propose that, they would declare me insane in London and Washington." And he said again, later on, that London is the problem. Steinmeier has said the same thing. And I think that is really an important point.

One aspect of this whole debate is naturally that as long as we in Europe accept living inside an empire—the empire is not the British Empire of Great Britain



EIRNS/Wolfgang Lillge

The BüSo initiated the Monday Demonstrations against the Hartz-4 austerity program. Shown is one in Berlin on Oct. 2, 2004. Among the slogans are: “The BüSo is the solvent against a hardened [verhartzte] future,” “Peace through development,” and “We are still the people!” The last is a reference to the slogan, “We are the people,” used in the 1989 East German demonstrations that led to the collapse of communism.

itself or the City of London, but the monetary system. The City of London is the dominant location, but the empire is this monetary system, which is based on maximization of profit, on this whole scale of values of “creative financial instruments.”

And as long as we subject ourselves to this system, the politicians are simply impotent—I mean, politically impotent, in that they simply do as they are told. And Hartz-4 is a derivative of this policy. Therefore I think, if we grasp the fact that we have to do away with this empire, with globalization, with the monetary system, and replace it with a credit system, then such things as Hartz-4, which are absolutely inhumane, will just disappear.

Because a State that is rational and has an idea of how to run the economy, understands that the sole source of social wealth is the creativity of its citizens. And it would do everything so that all citizens, from children to youth, students, middle-aged people, and the elderly, can become better and better qualified, to have better jobs.

What this unemployment costs us! I once calculated it. I don’t have the exact current figures, but if we had 5

million unemployed, that alone would cost EU100 billion in unemployment benefits. That is money that could just as well be invested in productive job-creation.

And all this junk about retraining, which this last question described—or, there are cases in which people have to take a six-week course to learn how to fill out a job application; but there’s a quota, so that 32 applicants apply for just one job, or, in the East, as many as 110 people apply; in other words, you study for six weeks, only for 110 people to be rejected: That is insane!

Whoever came up with that idea really had a screw loose! Not only was he clueless about economics, but he is also an inhuman bureaucrat. And these bureaucratic underlings are also a problem, and always

have been, since under Depression conditions, they quickly become fascists. You’ve also got to keep that in mind. There are people who derive all their authority from their office, and forget what it means to be human.

So what we need is a population that says, “This has got to stop!” Hartz-4 is inhuman, and we should get rid of it. And of course, in the transition period, before we have reorganized the economy in the way that we are proposing, the minimum wage should be increased, it can’t function the way it is. These cynics, such as the former Financial Senator [Thilo Sarrazin of Berlin] who now works at the Bundesbank, can calculate how a person can live perfectly well on EU2 per day—I would not like to know how many rolls with caviar this man has already consumed! It certainly must be a large number. And that is simply cynicism.

And I think we really need a civil rights movement, to make sure that things change. That is the only chance. And therefore, I really entreat you to give your full support to the BüSo’s election campaign in the next few weeks, as if your life depended upon it—because it does.