

Maglev Launch in China Revives Germans' Plans

by Rainer Apel

The spectacular maiden voyage of the Sino-German maglev train in Shanghai on Dec. 31 has created a positive shock of much-needed technological optimism in Germany, where the Transrapid super-high-speed train was developed. The Shanghai launch has had an immediate, visibly remoralizing impact on the movement for magnetic-levitation rail corridors, in German politics, industry, and science; plans for a number of corridors in Germany and from Germany to the East, all of which had been killed by budget austerity dictated by the European Union's Maastricht Treaty, have been revived with the lightning-fast construction, and success, of the world's first commercial line in China.

For example, leading politicians of all parties—except the ecologist Greens—in Hamburg and Berlin called for the revitalization of the original maglev project between the cities; it had been prepared for the start of construction work in the Spring of 2000, but was abandoned by the German government in February of that year. The chairman of the Christian Democrats' group in the Hamburg city-state parliament, Michael Freytag, has begun to work on the formation of an all-party appeal from Hamburg, for the reinstatement of the maglev project to Berlin. What makes this debate among Hamburg Social Democrats particularly interesting is that not only are these members of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's own party, but the national party manager of the Social Democrats, Olaf Scholz, supports that maglev initiative, as well.

Among the Christian Democrats, the other major party, Matthias Wissmann, who was German transport minister from 1993-98, issued a call for a "large-scale European maglev line," that should extend eastward from the Hamburg-Berlin project. Wissmann said that in view of the European Union's expansion to the East, and towards closer cooperation with Russia, "the most modern transport infrastructure" should be given a priority emphasis—therefore, maglev routes from Berlin should be built to Prague, Budapest, Warsaw, and Moscow. Wissmann's remarks indicate again, that the broader, Eurasian Land-Bridge scope of the LaRouche movement's proposals has had an impact on the thinking of some political leaders in Germany.

Adding to these calls, the minister of economics and transport of the state of Hesse, Dieter Posch, a Free

Democrat, called for the revival of the Hamburg-Berlin project and proposed in addition, a line between the airports at Frankfurt and Frankfurt Hahn, with an extension, later on, to Luxembourg and Brussels.

Federal Credits, Sino-German Cooperation

Along with other proposed lines, political support exists in Germany, already now, for about 1,200 kilometers of maglev railroads. They could be realized within a few years utilizing Lyndon LaRouche's concept for long-term, low-interest loans for infrastructure development, which Helga Zepp-LaRouche's recent campaign for the Bundestag (parliament) pushed into the national debate during the elections (see her *Commentary*). That will work, whereas other approaches to mobilize funds from private banks, or out of tax

FIGURE 1
Maglev 'Ring-Road' Around Germany



A map headed "German Magnetic Railroad" shows the "maglev ring-road" around Germany, made up of a number of proposed lines which were killed by budget-cutting before. They are being demanded again after the Shanghai breakthrough.

Land-Bridge Essential for Germany

Wahl said that he thinks that China will be a world leader in the construction and operation of high-speed maglev railways, noting: “If other countries—including Germany—want to build high-speed maglev railways, they may have to invite managers and engineers from China to undertake the projects.”

For Germany, intensified cooperation with China in pioneer areas of science and technology, such as maglev transportation systems, makes sense: China has surpassed Japan, historically the number-one importer of German high-tech goods, during 2002. For 2003, German industry expects exports to China to be 14 billion euros, visibly overtaking German exports to Japan, at 11 billion. Take into account, too, that new foreign markets are all the more important for the Germans, whose export dependence is now at 35% of GDP. This is far greater than the United States and Japan, with only 10% of GDP each; and it also leaves behind the other two major European exporting nations, France and Italy, with 28% of GDP each. Having access to the Asian growth markets via intensified cooperation with China, is a matter of life or death for the export-oriented German industry, and for Germany’s economy to break out of depression.

Commentary: Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Germany Must Build Eurasian Land-Bridge

Helga Zepp-LaRouche spoke to a forum in Peru on Dec. 27, 2002, on the promise of Lyndon LaRouche’s concept of the Eurasian Land-Bridge. We excerpt from the portion of her remarks, which are immediately relevant to the potential of Germany, as the first designer of the magnetic levitation train, in answering the question she began with: “Will the present historic crisis end up in a tragedy, or will this crisis be used as a chance?”

Then, you have German collapse: I can only tell you, the “German economic miracle,” which used to be world-famous, it is about to disintegrate. Many old firms, which took 100 years or more to build—over six, seven generations—are just vanishing! It is unbelievable how quickly the economic collapse in Germany is taking place.

Now, that has created a very interesting situation. Because, the present Schröder government only was voted in on Sept. 22, and he won the election because he made a shift in the last months, on two issues. He totally, 100%, opposed

German participation in any war against Iraq. And that expressed exactly the sentiment of the German population, who do not want to have this war. And, he took one important element of the BüSo program—that is the program of the party I represent—namely, to use a German national bank, called the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, or the Credit Bank for Reconstruction, which played a crucial role in the post-war reconstruction in Germany; to use that to fight unemployment today, which is exactly what we have been campaigning on for a long time.

Unfortunately, when he came into the government, because of the “Red-Green” coalition [of the Social Democrats and the Green Party], the finance minister announced a very dramatic, brutal austerity package. And then, one other leading former Social Democrat accused the Schröder government of having the same policy as the Chancellor Brüning, who was the third-to-last Chancellor in the Weimar Republic, before the National Socialists took over; or Hitler got appointed, and then basically made a “cold coup,” with the Reichstag Fire. Now, to accuse the present Social Democratic government of making the same brutal austerity program, which everybody associates with that that is what led to Hitler—because the unemployment then was 6 million, and that made it very easy for the Nazis to capitalize out of the situation—that has caused a complete freakout in Germany, especially among the Social Democrats, but, you know, it’s unfortunately also true! Because austerity under conditions of mass unemployment and depression, is the worst you can do.

It is very interesting, because the other major thing which happened, is, that an economics professor, who used to be a complete liberal, picked up one of our arguments: Namely, that if you would have changed the economic policy in the ’30s in time, you would have eliminated the social conditions which allowed Hitler to come to power.

The Lessons of German History

Now, I want to tell you very briefly this historical background, which you may not know, because it’s from German history. In the early ’30s, between 1930-31, there was a group of economists, both from the trade unions, from the General German Trade Union Association—a guy called Woytinsky, who, when the unemployment, because of Brüning’s austerity measures, became worse and worse and worse, demanded in a very elaborated, beautiful program, an international program to combat the Depression, through the increase of the buying power of the population. And, he said, the way to do that, is we have to have a European-wide infrastructure program, to create more productive jobs, and increase the buying power of the population; and that way, we can get out of this crisis [see *EIR*, April 11, 1997]. . . . There is presently a debate in Germany, saying, “If these policies would have been followed, then Hitler would not have come to power.”

On the so-called “conservative” side, there was also a group of people, among them, Wilhelm Lautenbach, and oth-

ers—Wagemann, Dräger, and so forth—especially Lautenbach, who in September 1931, presented a proposal to the Friedrich List Society (named after the famous German economist Friedrich List), in which he said, “The worst thing you can do, when you have a depression and a financial crisis, is to have austerity. On the contrary, the state must invest in those categories, in which one would also invest if the economy would be in good shape. And then you eliminate unemployment, because unemployment is the biggest cost-factor for a national economy. And you create real wealth, because, if you follow clearly scientific principles in these investments, you will realize, that the tax revenue you will get after you re-start the economy is bigger than the initial credits given, simply because of the increase of the productivity of the whole economy. And therefore, this is the only way that you can get out of this crisis.”

Now, this program is absolutely important today. Unfortunately, in 1932, the Social Democratic leadership rejected it. And, when von Schleicher, who was the last Chancellor before Hitler, came into office in December 1932, and he tried to get a very broad coalition—from trade unions, social groups, business groups—to put this program through, it was too late. And the SPD [Social Democratic Party] leadership rejected it. And, then through a whole, real nasty operation, including Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler was brought into power, in January 1933, and then it was too late.

In the recent [German parliament] election campaign—the BüSo campaign—I had made that issue, one of *the* leading issues: That, since we are, again, in an economic crisis, we must learn the lessons from history; go with the Lautenbach Plan today. And so, as a result of it, one of the leading newspapers had an article by this economics professor Giersch, who picked up exactly that argument, saying, that if these economic programs would have been implemented in the '30s, the whole history would have gone differently.

Lautenbach Then, and Land-Bridge Today

Now, here we are, at the point: Have we learned the lessons of history? Because, today, we have a very concrete framework for the Lautenbach Plan. It exists in the form of the Eurasian Land-Bridge. The Eurasian Land-Bridge is, basically, the idea to integrate the entire Eurasian continent through infrastructure, so-called “development corridors,” and so forth. Just to show you that this is not an abstract idea, but that the LaRouche movement *is identical* with the development of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, let me very briefly tell you about this. Please take the slide with the “Paris-Berlin-Vienna Productive Triangle” from 1990. When the [Berlin] Wall between East and West came down, in November '89, you all remember—some of you remember, who are old enough—that this was the end of the G.D.R. [East Germany], the end of the Soviet Union later on, and there was no more division—no more Iron Curtain, dividing Eastern and Western Europe.

Through the collaboration of Lyn and myself, we proposed, at that time, to develop the East, which had just gone bankrupt. As a matter of fact, the whole global financial system of today, of the free market economy, is as bankrupt as the G.D.R. communist system was in October '89. So, there was a tremendous chance, because, for the first time in the 20th Century, one could put the East-West relationship on a completely new basis. So, we proposed to take this area, between Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, which has the size of Japan, and still represents the largest concentration of industrial capacity, and beef it up through investment in high technology, Transrapid [maglev], high-temperature reactors [for nuclear energy production], and similar things; and then, develop so-called “corridors” into the East, to Warsaw, to Kiev, to Moscow, to the Balkans. And, if that policy would have been followed, there would have been a completely different development: A peaceful relation between East and West.

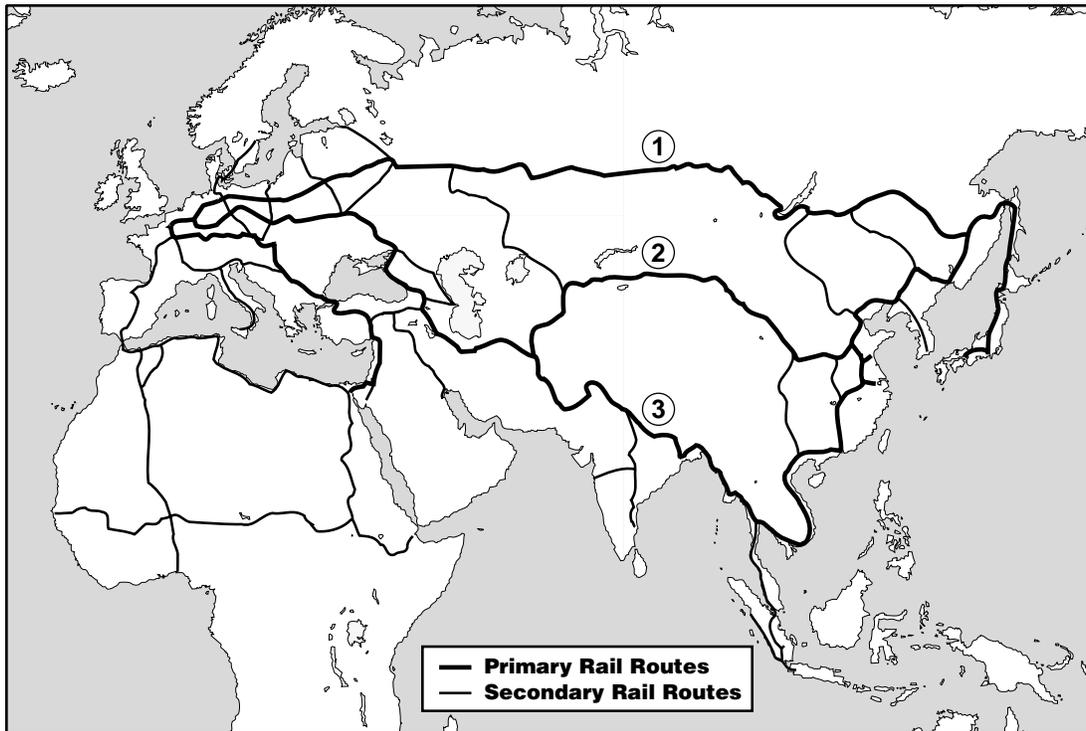
Now, we know, that this was, unfortunately, not done, at the time. But, in '91, when the Soviet Union disintegrated—take the next slide, with the 1-2-3 infrastructure lines (see **Figure 1**): We proposed, then, to immediately expand these corridors, all the way from Western Europe, to China, to Indonesia, to India, and basically integrate the entire European-Eurasian continent, into one economic zone.

This was a very important conception, because these were not just transport lines—railways, high-speed trains, waterways, and so forth—but it was the idea to use these transport arteries, around an integrated transport system of highways, waterways, high-speed railways, energy production and distribution, and communications—to then use these infrastructure arteries to develop so-called “corridors” of 100-kilometer width: To build new cities; to build new agriculture; to industrialize the agriculture; to have new industrial investment (**Figure 2**). Because, the idea was not to build infrastructure as during the colonial times, when you just would build these railways to extract raw materials, like you have in Latin America, where, if you have transport lines, they normally from the raw materials to the coast, to be exploited, but there is no integrated infrastructure grid, connecting all of Latin America. And, the same problem exists in Eurasia. So, the idea was, to bring in this infrastructure to industrialize the areas, to uplift the populations, to increase the productivity of the people in these countries, and in this way, for the first time in history, give the so-called “land-locked areas” of the world—those areas which have no access to the oceans or to rivers—the same geographical advantages, as if you have a nation which is sitting on the sea, or connected through large river systems.

Now, this was projected to be 25 years. So, you have to say, totally, goodbye to the idea of quick money and shareholder values, because there is no way you can get profit out of this in a month. Because it takes about 25 years, before a baby is developed to be educated, a skilled laborer, or engineer, or doctor, or something like that. So, you have to have

FIGURE 1

1992: Schiller Institute Eurasian Rail Network Plan



The LaRouches' original 1992 outline conception of the Eurasian Land-Bridges, which has become the potential reality of productive investments to pull the global economy out of depression.

long-term thinking, as it always was the case, when there was positive economic development.

Schiller Institute at Chinese International Conference

So, we proposed to the Chinese government, to conduct a conference on this, with all participating countries, which finally took place in 1996, with 34 nations participating, including myself and another member from the Schiller Institute as speakers. And, this was actually a very powerful conference, in which the Chinese government committed itself to making this conception the long-term perspective until the year 2010 for China.

But, there was also opposition from the British. Then, in '97, the Asia crisis came. You remember, this was the beginning of the global crisis, with South Korea, Indonesia, Japan. Then, in '98, you had the Russian state bankruptcy. But, we kept organizing, despite all of these difficulties. We made interventions into India—India, which had no idea about these conceptions in the beginning. We organized for a strategic alliance of China, Russia, and India. So, for a long time, this went along very slowly, and was put on the back burner many times. But, now, with the financial collapse, and China is realizing, that it is losing its U.S. export markets—all of Asia is losing the United States as export markets: *This is now the hottest issue on the agenda.*

Now, many countries started to react to the question of a new Roman Empire, coming from the Anglo-Americans, and they started to organize all kinds of alliances among themselves. One of these alliances was the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; then, there was just recently the ASEAN Plus Four summit in Phnom Penh, and they discussed to have one gigantic project along the Eurasian Land-Bridge, namely, the development of the Mekong Delta, which is a very power water region, which has tremendous potentials. Then, President Putin of Russia just recently went to China and to India, and consolidated the idea of a Russia-China-India Productive Triangle, as a peace perspective for Eurasia.

Now, South Korea, which has *no* interest to have North Korea as part of the “axis of evil,” and have nuclear bombs flying around the Korean Peninsula, is pushing very, very actively, the idea of an Iron Silk Road, as a peace policy, between South and West. And there are very, very active steps being taken by South Korea, North Korea, Japan, China, and Russia, to have this total development of the Trans-Siberian Railway from Pusan in South Korea, through North Korea, China, Siberia—all the way to Rotterdam; to have that as a gigantic development-and-peace perspective. . . .

Now, a lot of conferences are taking place on this. Just over the [Dec. 28-29] weekend, now, there were many conferences in Central Asia, in Iran, in Russia. And, all of these countries are working, working, working, on this perspective.

China's Maglev, the 'Beautiful Technology'

Now, Schröder, the Chancellor from Germany, is just now going to China, to Shanghai, with a gigantic delegation from German industry. And the reason why they are going there is, because, on Dec. 31—three days from now, the first part of the Transrapid maglev train is being completed from the Pudong airport to the city of Shanghai, which is a line of 30 kilometers, and, they did this in 22 months.

Now, this has blown the minds of everybody in Germany, because, in Germany for 10, 15, 20 years, they have not been able to get permission for this, studies for that; and the Chinese bought this technology, in a joint-venture, built this 30 km long line, in just 22 months. So, they are completely shocked, that the Chinese today display virtues, which the Germans obviously lost: industriousness, efficiency, and so forth. And the Chinese saved that beautiful technology. And, I can say "beautiful technology," because Lyn and I were travelling with the maglev train about a year ago, in a test area in Germany, and it is absolutely beautiful, because it accelerates from 0 to 450 kilometers per hour in a very brief period of time (I don't know exactly, maybe a minute or two minutes); and then it goes smoothly. And you don't feel any acceleration at all. It goes smoothly at the speed of 450 kph—you can show, now, the slide of the Transrapid—and, this can be not only for passenger transport, but for goods as well. And, when the Land-Bridge is built, and all these new cities—we are planning to build 1,000 new cities along these corridor lines—then the Transrapid will be the obvious way to save money for both transport of people and goods.

So, watch reports about the opening of the Transrapid in Shanghai; and German-Chinese cooperation *is* actually a very important breaking point. And, *if* there is a chance for Germany to get out of its present crisis, it can only be through these kinds of agreements with other countries. Because Germany has almost no raw materials at all. And, it only functions when it concentrates on export—Germany only functions when it exports up to 40% of its production. And the obvious places for Germany to export to, are areas with large populations, like China, India, but obviously, also Latin America.

So, I am very happy about this Transrapid, because I claim it, also, as *our* victory; because, for many, many years, we were the only ones campaigning for this, especially in China, in Russia, in India. So, it is also our victory, that this is actually happening. And, it gives you a taste, you know, that things which look difficult for a long time, can, all of a sudden, come to a point of fruition.

From South Africa to Chile by Train

Now, this is actually, as I said, not a program only for Eurasia. If you look at the polar map of the Eurasian Land-Bridge (see **Figure 2**), then you can actually see, that near the Bering Strait, the Eurasian Land-Bridge is supposed to be connected to North America, Central America, all the way down to Chile. And that, basically, through Egypt, and also Tunisia and Gibraltar, we will build this Eurasian Land-



The Shanghai-Pudong maglev leaves Shanghai station Dec. 31 on its first run, reaching over 430 kilometers per hour. "And you don't feel any acceleration at all. . . . And when the Land-Bridge is built, and all these new cities . . . the Transrapid will be the obvious way to save money for both transport of people and goods."

Bridge all the way to South Africa. So that, hopefully, sometime soon, you can travel by the Transrapid, all the way from South Africa to Chile. (I mean, you may not want to do it, because you may want to go by plane, but, it's an important idea, in order to connect the economies of the world in this way.)

So, you actually see, that we are really talking about a global reconstruction of the world economy.

'Best of All Possible Worlds'

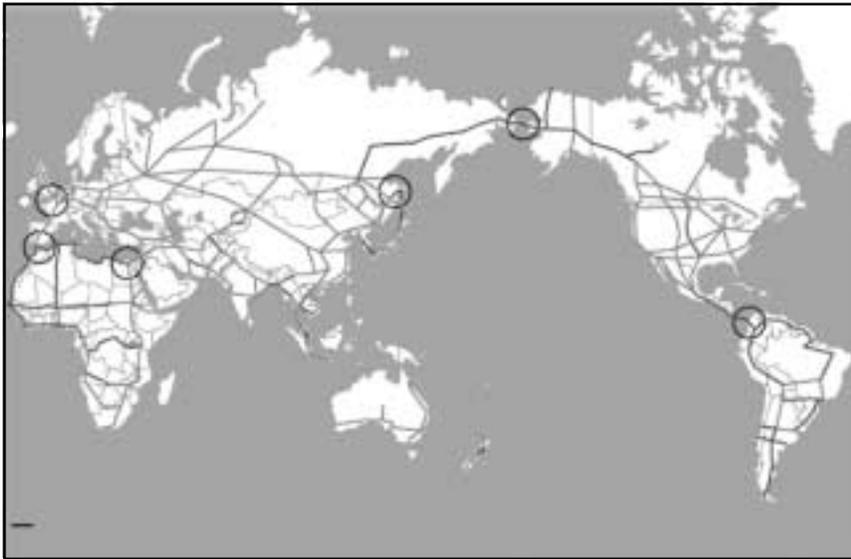
Now, that brings me back to the question of the Sublime, and should we act out the tragedy of the present world crisis, by just staying within the framework of the existing parameters; or, can we elevate ourselves, and do—even if it's a little bit difficult, and requires some mental and emotional development and steps—shall we elevate ourselves to the level of the Sublime, and go for that solution, which is so clearly on the horizon?

Now, when Schiller discussed the Sublime, he actually wrote two beautiful treatises about it: He said, what it means is, that you cannot have your identity only in the physical existence. Because your physical existence is a weak one; you are afraid of all dangers, and so forth, and fear is the biggest enemy of man, because it turns him into a slave. Only if man elevates himself, and connects himself, puts his identity on universal principles, that he can have an identity, which is not subject to the fear of dangers.

Leibniz, another of the absolute greatest thinkers of our known human history, made the famous remark, that we are living in the "best of all possible worlds." Now, if you look at the misery in the world today, I mean, people sometimes wonder: How could Leibniz have said such a thing, and maybe, he didn't anticipate how severe the crisis would become. But, if you think about it, that the world is not a linear extension of space and time, but that it is actually an ever-

FIGURE 2

The World Land-Bridge Corridors



Source: Cooper Consulting Co., EIRNS.

“Not a program only for Eurasia,” as Zepp-LaRouche says, the Land-Bridge concept is to link the world with modern transport-and-development corridors.

enlarging manifold of degrees of freedom, in which human cognition is that which drives the development further, then you can actually see, that the good thing is, that man is made in such a way, that a very great evil provokes an even greater good in him.

Now, I can see that, right now. Because, if you remember, when it became clear, that this present American administration was preparing to go for war against Iraq, for a very long time, it was actually our movement—and Lyn, in particular—who said, “This war must be prevented, and it must not happen. And it is not inevitable, because we can move forces in the diplomatic process in the United Nations, but especially in the United States itself, and get forces together to stop this war.” Now, over Christmas, the Pope came out with a very, very powerful statement, which today is in the headlines of all the European papers, saying, “This war must be prevented, at all costs.” And, all the international church leaders are now picking up, what, for a long time, was said by Lyn, alone: Namely, that this war is a war of aggression; it must not happen.

Now, I think the world is shaken up, because, everybody knows, we are looking at the potential abyss of mankind. And, we witness, right now, exactly such a situation, where the view of a very big danger is evoking a much larger good in people. And therefore, I believe, that the same mobilization, which now went into the effort to not have this war, could lead to assigning the solution of reason—namely, the New Bretton Woods system and the Eurasian Land-Bridge.

What we have to do, in addition: We have to connect the

perspective of economic cooperation, as it is presented in the Eurasian Land-Bridge, with the idea of the Dialogue of Cultures. Because, all the many different cultures in the world have produced their best traditions. Now, for example, you cannot think about European culture—which had, obviously, a very big influence in Ibero-America—without thinking, for example, about Dante and the *Divine Comedy*. And, it is very interesting for the changing spirit of the time, that the last part, the last [Canto] of the *Paradise* section of the *Comedy*, was presented over Christmas, in front of a viewership of 11 million people on Italian TV, causing a complete excitement in the population. And, the way this last Canto ends, is that Dante is able to reach Paradise and is looking for one moment into God’s face. And, when he looks in God’s face, he sees the whole eternity, and that way, is uplifted to be more than just a man.

And, this is very beautiful, because this is exactly the quality of the Sublime,

which is needed. Now, Dante was an absolute stepping-stone and founding father for the Italian Renaissance, which obviously also went back to Plato, and was triggered by a revival of Plato.

If you look at all the other, beautiful high points in civilization—Andalusia in Spain, which brought the best of the Arab Renaissance to Europe; you had, then, Cervantes, Goya. Then, if you want to emphasize the best traditions in Germany, you have to go and make Schiller one of the most important spearheads of this. And especially the idea of the Sublime, the “beautiful soul,” which Schiller identifies as being only the genius, because it’s only the genius, who is truly free, and creates new degrees of freedom, through his creative action.

Now, I’m absolutely convinced, that not only is it absolutely possible to pull this world out of this mess, of the economic crisis, by having a just, new world economic order based on a global reconstruction—based on the Eurasian Land-Bridge; but, I also think, that especially with the youth movement which Lyn has catalyzed in many countries of the world, there are young people who say, “We reject these axioms, which have led to this crisis. And we look in the best traditions of the whole of universal history, and we make that our own. And, then we create a new Renaissance through the connection of these different cultures.”

So, I’m absolutely optimistic, that we are in a very good situation. And I think, that, therefore, we have a very good possibility, that the next year can really become the turnaround for mankind to go into a better direction.