

Hope for Germany's Future Lies in Defeating the 'Clash of Civilizations'

Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche, chairwoman of the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo) in Germany, gave this speech to EIR's seminar in Berlin on March 2. It has been translated from German, and subheads added.

The seminar was titled "The Iran Crisis: The Danger of a Global Assymetric War Must Be Stopped." Other presentations, including the keynote by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., appeared in EIR on March 10 and March 17.

I am honored to have the opportunity to speak on an issue that concerns not only Iran, and the Iran crisis, but rather how the West and Islam will, together, get through the 21st Century. I shall now discuss this, from the standpoint of Germany's situation.

I think I should start rather as Colonel Hübschen¹ did. He said one should take a map, and stick a pin into the place where Germany lies, attach a 2,000-kilometer-long thread, and use it to draw a circle, to see how the crisis in the Near and Middle East will affect or involve Germany. Not, however, that we should look at this from a two-dimensional standpoint, but rather that we take into account the complexity, and the way events worldwide are interrelated.

May I urge your patience, as we shall first seem to digress from the theme of Iran. But one must take into account the entire picture, how everything ties in to everything else. And that means examining which way German economic policy will go; because should Germany's economy expand, should Germany deal with the critical issue of mass unemployment, to my mind, there will be no grounds whatsoever for a clash with Islamic or any other groups. But should Germany plunge into economic crisis any deeper than it has already, whether we can live together in peace, even within Germany's own borders, will be moot. So again, I urge your patience, as I shall now turn to economic matters.

Origins of Germany's Leadership Crisis

When I set out to think about Germany today, I recall Heinrich Heine's words—Heine, the 150th anniversary of whose death we have just celebrated, or rather, mourned. He

wrote: "Denk ich an Deutschland in der Nacht, dann bin ich um den Schlaf gebracht." ["I think of Germany at night, and then I'm robbed of my sleep."]

Our political elites are terribly fond of consensus, and in the current Great Coalition, they are proving, once again, how terribly democratic and consensus-oriented they are—which leads one straight to wonder whether the leadership that we now have in Germany is in any position to make the requisite changes. That is the selfsame question raised by Lyndon LaRouche at the outset of his new platform for the Democratic Party, the *Prolegomena* to such a platform. At a given historical moment, is there a political leadership able and willing to correct glaringly obvious flaws, able and willing to avoid catastrophe? Or must society stumble down some foreordained path, straight over the cliff to disaster? The economic problems facing this country are enormous. The official unemployment rate is 5 million. The Econometrics Institute at Halle, part of the German Institute for Economy, believes that the true figure is twice that—10 million! And this, without even taking into account what Lyndon LaRouche pointed out this morning: the collapse that looms before us, whether owing to the disappearance of the yen carry trade, to the blowing-up of the U.S. real-estate bubble or to some other imponderable in the financial system. The real problem is that no one in Berlin has a fallback option for what to do when the financial blowout actually occurs.

Everyone muddles along in a business-as-usual mode, as though the only problem were wobbly share prices here and there. The fact remains that we are now at a point very comparable to the financial collapse of the G.D.R. [the East German communist state—ed.] in November 1989, save for the small detail that this time, the collapse is worldwide.

In official documents that concern the reunification of Germany, our government acknowledged in 1997 that although it had long been clear that the Comecon was faltering, and that the G.D.R. was about to crumble, in November, no one had come up with a contingency plan, should the Wall come down and Germany be reunified. Apart, of course, from Lyndon LaRouche, who, as early as 1983, had declared that should the U.S.S.R. cleave to the Ogarkov strategy, that state would collapse within five years.

LaRouche is doubtless the sole Western politician who foresaw, with any degree of precision, or even foresaw at all,

1. Jürgen Hübschen, who spoke earlier at the seminar, is an independent Consultant for Peace-Keeping and Security Policy. He is a retired colonel, and former military attaché at the German Embassy in Baghdad.

the collapse of the U.S.S.R.. On Oct. 12, 1988, at the Kempinski Hotel here in Berlin, he gave a historic press conference, in which he announced that the G.D.R. and Comecon were about to dissolve, and put forward a proposal for the reunification of Germany, with Berlin as its capital. At that very moment, many in the SPD [Social Democratic Party] and elsewhere blared that reunification was the “Lie of the Century.” So what LaRouche had to say there, was not exactly “consensual.”

And to make a long story short, what happened? Our then-Chancellor Helmut Kohl made a tiny step toward sovereignty on Nov. 28, with his ten-point program for a confederation of both German states, which certainly would not qualify as a proposal for reunification; but was a step forward, since it was from a sovereign standpoint, and had not been cleared with NATO, or even with the FDP [Free Democratic Party, his coalition partner].

Events moved on apace. On Nov. 30, the head of Deutsche Bank, Alfred Herrhausen, was murdered, the only banker who had ever entertained a vision for the development of the East bloc, or to be precise, Poland. Mitterrand wrote Kohl a blackmail note, stating that France would agree to reunification, only on condition that Germany relinquish the D-mark and agree to a European currency union. Upon which Kohl (doubtless the sole issue on which Herr Kohl and I have ever seen eye to eye), said that a currency union without political union would not be feasible. Margaret Thatcher thereupon launched her “Fourth Reich” campaign. As for Mitterrand’s blackmail, his advisor Jacques Attali, in a recently published work entitled *Mitterrand*, claims that Mitterrand actually threatened war against Germany, a new Triple Entente. Now, whether such a war could have gotten off the ground, is debatable, but certainly the blackmail pressure on Kohl was gigantic. That is what Kohl referred to, when he described the EU Summit on Dec. 8-9, 1989 at Strasburg as his “darkest hour.” Kohl caved in, and finally agreed, against his own conscience and will, to throw over the D-mark as the price for reunification.

The years went by, the euro was introduced, and it became clear, what should have been clear from the outset—namely that there was an incredible economic imbalance, because the currency security which had till then existed in the D-mark area alone, the D-mark being a hard currency, and international investors having been wont to invest in Germany, despite its high wages and high national insurance costs, because its currency was solid, and because the stabil-



EIRNS/Wolfgang Lillge

Helga Zepp-LaRouche addresses the Berlin seminar: “The question is whether we can place a vision squarely onto the agenda for the 21st Century, as civilized human beings.”

ity and high productivity of the labor force were positive factors for those investments. The moment the euro arrived, this currency security vanished—and the more backward countries like Greece, Portugal, Spain, Ireland, and so forth, were delighted, because international investors flitted over to those low-wage countries, where the national insurance system was cheap too. Those countries were caught up in a short-lived boom, which swiftly turned out to be a bubble, like the Spanish real-estate bubble.

This led to the referenda on the European Constitutional Treaty, where France and Holland, by then well-acquainted with the negative impact of the euro, voted “No,” and the political unity that might have come into existence, evaporated.

We have now reached the end of the rope. Although Germany may indeed, for the third time running, be the world’s biggest export nation, with a favorable balance of payments in excess of 160 billion euros, it’s of scant use to us, since this has no impact on the collapsed domestic market.

Nor has it helped France. France is the second major victim of the EU currency union; over the past decade, it has fallen into a huge export crisis. From a relatively favorable balance of payments, it now has a huge deficit. The domestic market is swamped with cheap imports; France’s economy is shredding; Italy is being dragged down as well, and so on and so forth.

In brief: The euro is a flop, and therefore, back to the question I posed at the outset. Does Germany have a political leadership that can right these glaring errors, or not? In France, the explosion in the so-called “suburbs” involves many more than the unemployed sons of North African immigrants, nor is it a “Muslim” issue as such. In Holland, when

the filmmaker van Gogh was murdered, the country nearly burst into flame. The question of where we go next, is the same as asking what strategic policy orientations our own nations will take.

If my husband and others in America succeed in getting Dick Cheney out (and we shall hear more about the U.S. situation this afternoon), and assuming that we succeed in pulling together a cross-party coalition of Democrats and moderate Republicans to adopt a fresh economic policy, then here in Germany, we can sweep aside the failed euro-model, return to sovereignty in currency matters, and issue credit to employ the entire labor force, productively. Those are the premises. And there are two alternatives before Germany.

Geopolitics of the ‘Iran Crisis’

Now to the Iran crisis proper. Again this morning, we have heard that the crisis has little or nothing to do with that nation’s nuclear program, and rather more to do with the founding of an empire, to which end political events are being orchestrated. Let us recall that following the events of Sept. 11, 2001, there was a great hue and cry about Saddam Hussein as the quintessence of evil and so on, about weapons of mass destruction, etc. And what remains, is a handful of dust.

Or again, how the background to the First World War was presented at the Versailles Treaty, where Germany was stigmatized as the sole culprit. In the meantime, since Versailles, historians have scrutinized the 30-year run-up to that war, and the historical truth now appears in all its complexity. My plea to you, is to let that ability to deal with complexity carry over to current events.

Now, where does the present policy actually come from? When, in 1989-91, the U.S.S.R. dissolved, the occasion arose to place East-West relations onto an entirely new footing. The “Enemy” was gone, and a new peaceful order could have been established. But at that very moment the neo-conservatives in the first Bush Administration (Cheney, Rumsfeld, Perle, Wolfowitz) popped up with their so-called New American Century doctrine.

What they wanted, in 1990, was that the United States, which had so great a tradition behind her as a republic, become an empire. At the time, the proposal seemed so radical that the more temperate in the first Bush Administration, those around Scowcroft and Eagleburger, said, “Whoa Boy! Things just do not work that way!” But the neo-conservatives nonetheless pulled off the first Gulf War. You will recall how, at the time, the U.S. Ambassador [to Iraq] had told Saddam Hussein that the business with Kuwait was an inter-Arab affair, and that Iraq could do what it pleased. And Saddam Hussein was fool enough to fall into the trap.

Nevertheless, forces within the United States then moved to head off an out-and-out imperial policy. Clinton won the Presidential elections (as James Carville said, “It’s the economy, stupid”—and George Bush, Sr. did lose, precisely be-

cause of the economic crisis). The neo-conservatives did not go away and hibernate during Clinton’s eight-year term as President, though. In 1996, Richard Perle, for example, harshly condemned the peace plan promoted by Clinton at Oslo, and proposed the radical, so-called “Clean Break,”² allegedly to guarantee Israel’s security.

The real purpose behind the Clean Break scheme, was not to ensure peace between Israel and Palestine, but to effect regime change in every state hostile to Israel, throughout the region. A mere two days later, the Clean Break was endorsed by Netanyahu, then Israeli Prime Minister, as official policy. In so doing, Israel endorsed a policy of regime change in Syria, Iraq, Iran—her opponents in the region.

On Jan. 3, 2001, Lyndon LaRouche held a webcast in Washington, and warned that the Administration of Bush, Jr. would be faced with overwhelming, uncontrollable financial difficulties, and that, on that account, there existed a very real risk that someone would touch off a new Reichstag Fire, in order to ram through the policy of dictatorship and empire. LaRouche said this three weeks before Bush, Jr. was inaugurated, and only nine months before Sept. 11, 2001.

We know what happened on the latter date. The following day, Dick Cheney held a press conference, and—without adducing the slightest proof—pointed the finger at Saddam Hussein. This led directly to war, first against Afghanistan and then against Iraq. The Reichstag Fire had taken place. James Woolsey, formerly head of the CIA, said that the agenda was a Hundred Years’ War against terrorism. The idea of total war, permanent warfare.

A Manipulated Clash of Civilizations

Now let us look at another factor—cultural manipulation. In 1993, Samuel Huntington first spoke of a “Clash of Civilizations” in *Foreign Affairs*. In 1996, he wrote a book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Read it! And you will see that Mr. Huntington is quite astonishingly unaware, indeed ignorant of our own culture, Western, Christian culture, just as he hasn’t the faintest idea of Confucianism, Islam, or Hinduism. It’s a barefaced scenario for how to manipulate a crisis. Recall now, how Kissinger in 1974, wrote in NSM 200, that the United States must move to prevent “excess” population growth in the Third World; his thesis being that there are too many people, because raw materials should be in U.S. hands, and that accordingly, birth control must be imposed to keep down the numbers! That is also the meaning of Zbigniew Brzezinski’s Great Game—i.e., war for raw materials in Central Asia, or again, the Arc of Crisis theories pushed by Bernard Lewis.

Just this past September, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published the now notorious cartoons. We have

2. “A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm,” issued for incoming Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies in Jerusalem.

looked into this. *Jyllands-Posten* had asked 22 former ambassadors to the Arab world, whether they thought such cartoons could be published. All 22 said, “Out of the question! Sheer provocation! Their culture is totally different. Hands off!” Arabists too were asked for their opinion, as were experts in Islam. But they went ahead and published anyway, and for a month or so the crisis smouldered away in the background, until finally it exploded.

As it happens, we discovered that *Jyllands-Posten* has founded a think-tank, called CEPOS, and who do you think sits on its Board? None other than the neo-cons’ mentor, George Shultz, *éminence grise*, in person. Richard Pipes too is closely tied to that think-tank.

Clearly, this is conscious manipulation. Then you had a couple of hundred fundamentalists burning down Danish and other Scandinavian embassies, isolated incidents perhaps, but one should think back to how the British Empire operated in the region, how France operated, and how the two divided up the region into zones of influence, with the Sykes-Picot Treaty. How easy, then, to charge up a few fundamentalists, and talk them into running into a brick wall!

One could call this Inverse Diplomacy. Diplomacy discovers what the sensitive areas are, and avoids them, seeking out other avenues and solutions. The Clash of Civilizations faction weasles out the sensitive areas, and hammers on them, until they get an explosion: sensitive areas, such as a portrayal

that, to someone in the Middle East, might be blasphemy, but to a Westerner, might not be, but are considered as “freedom of the press.” It’s a chessboard, and it’s easy to see how such conflicts can be driven to escalate.

Cusa’s Vision of a Dialogue of Cultures

What’s the counterpole to this? What can we do, to shift everything in another direction?

We must give up our pragmatism. Although it may not seem that obvious, we are faced with a systemic financial breakdown, whereby the “globalized” system is as likely to go bust as the G.D.R. and then U.S.S.R. did between 1989 and 1991.

The question is whether we can place a vision squarely onto the agenda for the 21st Century, as civilized human beings. That same question that was posed in the *Federalist Papers* by Alexander Hamilton, and by others who founded the Republic of the United States: Can mankind adopt an order, a civilized order, whereby we can govern ourselves and live together in peace? I am an optimist and believe that we can. The vision that we need for this century is the interlocking of the whole Eurasian continent, now that the Iron Curtain is gone, and there is no reason not to pick up where developments just before World War I left off.

We should build the Trans-Siberian Railway, the Berlin-Baghdad Railway. Over the next quarter to half century, integrate the whole of Eurasia as one economy, and create a peaceful order that will allow us to overcome long-festering conflicts—thanks to joint economic interest, and expressing common goals for mankind.

To that end, we have put forward the proposal for a Eurasian Land-Bridge, with the idea of integrating all Eurasia’s infrastructure; but the idea is not restricted to Eurasia. Eurasia may be the focus for the momentum, but this must sweep over the Bering Strait to the Americas, and via Egypt to Africa.

Finally, let me turn to the cultural factors in Eurasian integration. This morning, doubts were expressed as to whether there do exist universal principles. The question was whether such principles do not constantly undergo change. To which I would say that if there exist no universal principles, then there is no basis for dialogue among cultures.

In 1453, as Nicholas of Cusa wrote *De pace fidei* (*On the Peace of Faith*), Sultan Mohammed II had overrun Constantinople, and there erupted something very like a war of civilizations. News got out to the Western world on the fall of Constantinople—rape, murder, blasphemous deeds—and the world was on the verge of a clash of civilizations.

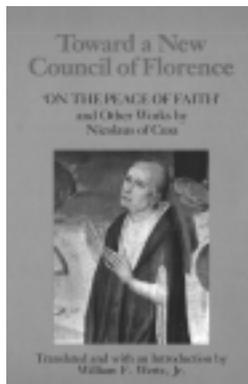
Nicholas of Cusa, a humanist, responded by stating that a way must be sought to prevent the outbreak of out-and-out religious warfare. And he wrote a magnificent Socratic dialogue, in which 17 sages of the various religions and nations come before God, before the Divine Word, the *divinum verbum*, and say, “We are killing each other in Thy Name. We each of us say ‘I represent Thee, Oh God.’ Surely it cannot

Toward a New Council of Florence

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be Thy will, that we thus wage war upon one another? We crave Thy aid."

And God replies, "You are come as representatives of your religions and cultures, in religion, and in philosophy. And as philosophers, you must know that there is but one truth. To which they replied, "As philosophers, we agree, but Thou must help us. We kill in Thy Name, and what is to be done?" And God replies, "You have taken the words of the Prophets for Truth. You have taken the traditions, for God's message." To which the sages reply, "Yes, *but*. How shall we now return to our peoples, and to those who have spilt so much blood on account of their belief, and tell them, 'Take a new religion'? Never will they consent." To which God replies, "Where have I spoken of a new religion? I have spoken of but one true religion, over and above all interpretations. There is but one God, over and above the idea of religion. And that there can be but one God, surely you will agree." To which the Sages reply, "That we can see. And we shall now turn back to our peoples, and report this Truth."

After the events of Sept. 11, 2001, as a new clash of civilizations loomed, what was uppermost in my mind was whether it can really be so, that all religions concern one and the same idea. I looked at the early Vedic writings, and what appears, is precisely that there is but one truth, understood differently by different souls. The same idea existed. That, to my mind, is what is essential for there to be dialogue. What makes dialogue between cultures feasible, is that there are indeed universal principles, uniting the whole of mankind. And once one has found those universal ideas, one can rejoice in their multiplicity. It is a marvellous thing that there exist so many cultures, because they all rest upon a single underlying universal principle.

And if one reviews real history, universal history, one sees how these universal ideas course through the centuries. European civilization is a product of Ancient Greece, and the Greeks themselves looked to the Egyptians. Plato lived on in the Arab and other Islamic philosophers—al-Farabi, al-Kindi, Ibn Sina. The achievements of the Abbasid dynasty, of the Baghdad Caliph Harun al-Rashid, al-Mansur, al-Mamun, who had, in essence, saved science for European culture after the Roman Empire had collapsed. Harun al-Rashid sent emissaries to Greece, Spain, and Egypt, and had them collect knowledge, showering the finders with gold, so much did he value knowledge. On which basis sprang up the Islamic Renaissance. And it was through the contacts between Harun al-Rashid and Charlemagne, that we in Europe rediscovered our roots in Ancient Greece.

A true dialogue of cultures is not something for the present alone, but rather something that must reappear from one generation, from one century, to the next, and thanks to such ideas, we see ourselves as human beings. Just as Leibniz wrote that the fact that the Emperor of China had discovered the same geometrical figures as he, proves that we are all a part of the same human race.

This is the way forward out of the present crisis. We must all rediscover the high points of our own cultures, because there will be a dialogue of cultures only if we actually have a culture. If we be "culture-less," part of a so-called globalized uniform "culture," there will be no basis for dialogue. If we do intend to bring to life the best in our own traditions, the Classical tradition, and discuss it on that basis with one another, the One and the Many, and the Many within the One is absolutely possible. I believe that this cultural dimension must be introduced, urgently, into the debate.