

EIR Strategic Studies

Germany's positive contribution to world development

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

EIR presents the third part of Helga Zepp-LaRouche's policy paper, subtitled "Foreign Policy Theses for the Federal Republic of Germany."

Parts 1 and 2 revealed the full depth of the life-and-death crisis in which the German nation finds itself today, and outlines the implications of the unjust division imposed by the cynical imperial politics of the 1945 Yalta Agreement, and the even greater threat of the Trilateral Commission's New Yalta deal to hand West Germany over to Soviet domination.

In this section, Mrs. LaRouche focuses on the crucial theoretical groundwork for any just solution of the "German question."

The positive definition of nationhood

When West German Chancellor Kohl can opine in one of the Yalta faction's leading press organs, the *Washington Post* (according to the Sept. 10 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*) that the nation-state has no future in Europe, and has no further bearing on the German question—this is more than just worrisome, even if Kohl was only repeating the assertions of his adviser Michael Stürmer.

It is quite apparent, then, that Helmut Kohl does not understand the most basic concepts of the oft-invoked "Western values" he is supposed to be defending.

The positive idea of nationhood must proceed from the concept of man, of the individual human being. Our Judeo-Christian civilization characteristically assigns primary importance to the value and role of the individual. Solon of

Athens, Socrates, and Plato already maintained that there was an inalienable right to life of every individual, based on natural law; but it was Christianity which first asserted the sacredness of each human life and the inviolability of human dignity itself. The incarnation of Jesus Christ, who was both God and man, made possible the *capax Dei*, the participation of each human being in the divine.

In the course of the debate over the *Filioque*—i.e., whether each individual carries within himself a divine spark, rendering inviolable his right to life and the development of his potentials—the Christian-humanist tradition came into clear opposition to the schismatic Greek and Russian Orthodox churches, who denied these simultaneous natures. In the Western Credo, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *and from the Son*, whereas the orthodox churches reject this *Filioque* (literally "and from the Son"). Augustine introduced the notion of the *imago Dei*, the individual in the image of God. Nicolaus of Cusa expanded this notion into the *imago viva Dei*, the living image of God—an image which not only reflects God's divine qualities, but which itself possesses these qualities in a living way.

Thus, man partakes of God's most excellent quality, namely his faculty as the Creator, and by developing his own creative faculties, he participates in the creation of the universe. Nicolaus of Cusa not only founded modern natural science and had a fully elaborated conception of a negentropic process of development of the universe; he also said that human reason, as a microcosm of that universe, was based on those same universal laws of development. And it is this

concordance between the lawfulness of human reason, and the lawfulness of the physical universe, which alone makes possible man's efficient intervention into the development of the universe.

For Nicolaus of Cusa, the individual human soul is the location where the further development of the universe takes place, and where scientific discoveries are made. "The soul devises the sciences—namely, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy—and in so doing, finds that they are contained within its own powers. For, these sciences have been devised and developed by men. And because they are eternal, and shall always remain so in the same way, the soul also truly sees that it is itself eternal, and true, and always in flower."

"For, the mathematical sciences are indeed contained only within it and its powers, and are developed through its powers—to such an extent, that, if this reasoning soul did not not exist, those powers could likewise not exist."

The human being's individual creativity, mediated through his ability to perfect himself and thus approach God, is the individual's inalienable right to perfect his mind. This right is what distinguishes the Christian-humanist world outlook from all others, particularly from the philosophy of the Russian Empire.

In the Augustinian-Cusan Christian tradition, the individual's self-perfection is his purpose of existence. Thus, Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa says: "The most fundamental evil of finite things, is that it forgets its finitude; it is the satanic pride of self-satisfaction, but it is also the lethargy which hinders the unfolding of all its gifts and of its discovery, within itself, of the promise of its own 'divine origins.'"

Pope Paul VI includes the same idea in the opening passages of his encyclical *On the Development of Peoples*, and all else flows from this single initial idea: "According to God's plan, every human being is summoned to *develop himself*; for life itself is a summons."

At the Council of Florence in 1439, Nicolaus of Cusa made a powerful attempt to end the schism over the *Filioque* question; and indeed, in the council's final declaration the Russian Patriarch Isidor gave his consent to this attempt. But already on his return voyage to Russia, his decision was overturned by Czar Vassily II, and Isidor imprisoned as a heretic.

Collectivist ideology—whether it appears in the garb of Czarist Russia, Marxism-Leninism, Maoism, or National Socialism—vigorously denies the existence and significance of the individual human soul, and instead puts emphasis on a "collective identity." This is precisely the degradation of the masses upon which every oligarchical and imperialistic system has been based—from the model of Lycurgus's Sparta, through the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and up to the collectivism of the Soviet Union today. In reality, this means nothing other than that a small, oligarchical elite ruling over a soulless, "collective mass."

Whenever the value of the individual is negated in this way by a ruling oligarchical elite, the nation ceases to play any role. Indeed, the elite will attempt to fragment the population into as many ethnic and regional subgroups as possible, fostering every form of separatism and regionalism, so that none of these squabbling satrapies might ever question the power of the ruling supranational, imperialist elite.

It is quite another matter with sovereign, republican nations. Historically, it was Nicolaus of Cusa who, proceeding from the inalienable rights of man as the *imago viva Dei*, actually created the basis for the modern nation-state and developed the idea of national sovereignty. If each human being has a God-given right to self-development, then it is the state's duty to make that development possible. Conversely, the individual enters into a reciprocal legal relationship with the state, and is obliged to act toward its maximum development.

But since this cannot occur in a pure democracy, its various interest groups must champion their interests in the form of a representative system, which serves to mediate interests between individuals and the state, and vice versa. Nicolaus of Cusa concretely shaped these ideas into a fraud-free electoral system, thus developing the idea of republicanism and anticipating the definition of human rights which later became politically efficient for the first time in the American Declaration of Independence. Interestingly enough, he also emphasizes that it ultimately makes no difference, whether these ideas are embedded in a constitutional monarchy, an aristocracy of wise men, or what Cusa calls a "polity" (i.e., a government of all citizens), so long as the representative system is preserved.

It is a little-known fact among today's academics—but no less true—that Nicolaus of Cusa was the first to formulate the principles of humanist republicanism and the nation-state based on popular sovereignty. He must therefore be justly considered the father of the German nation-state and of the very idea of national sovereignty.

His most fundamental ideas on this matter are developed in his major opus, the *Concordantia Catholica*, where he self-consciously speaks of the "dawning of a new epoch in human history." Even though many of his thoughts on this theme later turn up in Leibniz, Pufendorf, Thomas Paine, and especially Friedrich Schiller, it is certain that, had Nicolaus succeeded in realizing his concept of the nation-state and the associated supersession of Roman law, the history of Germany's national consciousness would have taken quite a different turn!

In the *Concordantia Catholica* Nicolaus uses the writings of Plato to investigate the origin of laws and governments in general. He says: "Human beings, blessed with reason above all other creatures, recognized from the very beginning that social life and community were beneficial, and indeed necessary for their sustenance and the achievement of their ends; together they therefore constructed towns and cities. How-

ever, had there not existed rules and laws for the preservation of social concord when challenged by the *degenerate desires of many*, this association would have been of little use. Thus there arose states, the unity of citizens through generally accepted laws for the preservation of social concord."

Nicolaus then proceeds to set forth an elaborated system for reform of the imperial courts: the idea of regional courts, the idea of an imperial diet in Frankfurt, and many other ideas which were only gradually implemented over succeeding centuries. But more important than all these concrete proposals, was the principle that in every case, natural law represents a break with positive law, and is superior to it.

He arrives at the idea of popular sovereignty by the following route. Every human being possesses certain God-given, inalienable rights according to natural law. Thus he accepts the postulate of the original equality of all before the law and nature, since every human being harbors the potential to become a "living image of God." Obviously, this does not automatically lead to actual equality—some sort of collectivism. "Within each human being there naturally resides a certain measure of reason, and it is his own fault, if he does not exercise it, giving up his original freedom for subservience under the rule of the wiser."

The rule of the wiser is only justifiable, when their superiority consists in a particularly well-developed sense of justice. Only the wisest—and not the most pious or the most powerful—can be the legislator. But at the same time, laws must be made by all those to whom they are to apply, and they must therefore select representatives from among their ranks. Theoretically, Nicolaus says, a government by law, by absolute natural law, is preferable to a representative one, however well-meaning it may be.

But what is this supposed to look like in practice? It is necessary at this juncture to interject certain aspects of the modern viewpoint into Cusa's own treatment, specifically regarding the question: At what point does an individual become recognized as a true leadership figure, a true representative of his people? Or put another way: Is there something to the oft-cited phenomenon of "charisma," after all? Or, what is the difference between Peruvian President Alan García, who was elected with 50% of the votes and after only six weeks in office had 96% of the population behind him; and Chancellor Kohl, for instance, who is not only unable to inspire the population, but who after less than three years in office is giving an increasing number of constituent groups the feeling that he no longer represents them?

To begin with, the oft-evoked notion of charisma is completely inadequately defined, and is almost always misapplied. The principal difference we must consider at the very outset, is the question: Does the politician, the representative of the people, want to raise the population up to his own level, because he is wiser; and is he prepared to serve his people's interests because he has a "strong sense of justice"; or, does he want to dazzle the people with glitter and the aura of glory, so that he can abuse them for his own purposes?

The second case is unfortunately all too well-known in the history of Germany. It was the "rhetorical gift" of the "Austrian corporal" which moved the oligarchical circles of the Thule Society to build Hitler into a "leader." Further instruction in "rhetoric" was deliberately administered in order to expand his demagogic abilities. And when Hitler came to power with the help of his international backers, he unscrupulously deployed his dictatorial propaganda machine to portray his leadership qualities in the right light—from his infamous speeches in the Berlin Sport Palace, to the pompous spectacle of the 1936 Olympics, and the "big lie" campaigns later organized by Goebbels.

In this respect, Hitler definitely did have what many would describe as "charisma." But was he therefore a good representative of his people? What would have become of him, had he not been artificially puffed up by his oligarchical friends? A "good-for-nothing," probably.

An example from recent history is Jimmy Carter. This utterly boring and colorless spiritual dwarf, who as governor of Georgia had already demonstrated his talent for ruining states, was considered by the Trilateral Commission as an ideal tool for putting through their policies. And within a few weeks, a colossal effort by the controlled media turned this "Jimmy Who?" into the celebrated presidential candidate who swept all the primaries. The population's ire over this deception was expressed later in Reagan's two enormous electoral victories.

It is likewise instructive to imagine for a moment, the so-called film and TV stars, the Jet Setters, and the so-called leading public figures stripped of the usual hullabaloo the media creates around them, and in entirely normal situations of daily life. Deprived of the artificial ballyhoo which puts these people into the limelight, what remains is a very pathetic picture. If the citizens themselves had a fascinating and full intellectual life, what would they care if TV moderator So-and-so had tried a withdrawal cure for the 83rd time, or if Princess von Plitz und Plotz was seen again in the company of some wretched indicted drug dealers, etc.?

What is the common denominator binding all these diverse, ostensibly charismatic figures to one another? By having people "built up" as "stars"—on the stage, in politics, or by the scandal sheets—while the so-called "little man" and his little wife looks up at them in awe, all that is individual within them is being extinguished. And the more immoral these Jet Set role-models become, the more they appeal to the meaner and lower instincts of the population, which descends to the level of a dependent mass. When rock stars like Prince and Madonna are held up as role-models, what can we expect for the moral development of our own children?

If, however, popular representatives are selected according to the Cusan principle, whereby free citizens of the state choose from among themselves the wisest and most just, who will not only represent the population's right to development, but will also win the citizen over to collaborating toward the improvement of the state—then these representatives ema-

nate a power which many might mistake for "charisma." But this power is diametrically opposed to a capacity to use demagoguery in order to keep the population in a state of infantile dependency.

The wise republican popular representative wields a force which one might call "inspiration." He draws up the grand plan, the task of the state, and calls upon the citizenry in such manner that he draws forth their best qualities and brings them to fruition. By means of his own shining example, he sets free within the citizens who elected him, that latent power and creative gift. He encourages the full flowering of every human being's individuality: the scientist is spurred on to bold accomplishments, the artist's creativity can spread its wings, the specialist finds a ready situation favoring his own perfection, so that he can contribute all the more to the social weal.

In short, that salutary effect is achieved, which Plato ascribes to the philosopher king, and which throughout history was in effect—sporadically and under varying conditions—through such individuals as Plato, Augustine, Dante, Nicolaus of Cusa, Cosimo de' Medici, Leibniz, and Schiller. Varying approximations of this concept were realized in governments by Charlemagne, the Hohenstaufen Frederick II, Solon of Athens, Louis XI of France, the English Tudors, the Great Elector of Prussia, Frederick the Great, the founding fathers of the American republic, the Prussian reformers, Benito Juárez, and Abraham Lincoln.

In the twentieth century, despite some inadequacies, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Mexican President Alvaro Obregon, the Argentine President Juan Perón, Charles de Gaulle, Mexico's Luis Echeverría, and now Peru's President Alan García number among such leading figures, whose respective nations have felt themselves represented and have seen the state's welfare furthered through their efforts. These leaders radiated, or still radiate, a force which no artificial "packaging tricks" could ever reproduce, and which proceeds from an inner integrity possessed only by those who have never made compromises with their own sacred principles.

The true republican representative of his nation is loved by his people, because the people and all citizens sense and understand, that he loves his country for all the best it has accomplished, and that he is doing everything in his power to accelerate the development of his nation. In no other way is national sovereignty possible. Every citizen has the privilege of freedom of thought, and only those who make themselves into the clearest and most courageous representatives of natural law, should rule. Government and power should never be anything other than the exercise of justice, and political leadership must never be anything other than the wise, benevolent, and—if necessary—strict effectuation of the law.

Patriotism and world citizenship

Most of the better constitutions more or less adequately define what is and is not in the service of the welfare of a

nation and its citizens. The constitution guarantees the rights of all citizens—their right to life, freedom of speech, to worship as they see fit, to political association, to employment, economic support and health care in times of need—and conversely, they define the citizen's obligations toward the state. As Schiller said, the maximum development of the state, along with the greatest possible freedom and development of its citizens, is the goal, and the erection of political freedom is the greatest of all works of art.²⁰

But what is the task of the sovereign republican nation, since it certainly cannot be a purpose unto itself? What is the goal of the state? In addition to the factors mentioned above, this question of the apparent absence of a national goal, seemingly so murky to the minds of many in the Federal Republic, has contributed much to many citizens' feeling of frustration with the state.

As we discussed earlier, only the republican representative system can give the individual citizen a guarantee for his nation's sovereignty, and hence his own as well. That being the case, it is now necessary to find a more profound definition of the concept of nationhood. Why is the nation-state important? Why is it neither adequate to merely divide the world into nations, nor is it acceptable to have these ruled by one single world government?

In the first approximation, a nation is defined by a people's common history, tradition, and language. At almost the same time that Nicolaus of Cusa was becoming the first to ever state the principles of the sovereign nation-state, Louis XI was actually founding the first nation-state in France. The first constitutional democratic republic was spawned by the American Revolution. In Germany, however, the population's initial hopes during the Wars of Liberation, that the constitutional movement and the liberation from Napoleon's yoke would result in a unified German nation-state, were bitterly disappointed. But despite this, Freiherr vom Stein was still able to say: "I know only one fatherland, and that is Germany"—and said so, even though Germany did not formally exist.

The concepts of nationhood and fatherland are therefore closely bound to something which cannot be reduced to borders, passing forms of government, or indeed, even to written constitutions. Although these factors do play a role, the most crucial added element is a people's own subjective self-consciousness as a nation. Wherever this consciousness has never developed, as in the cases of a number of former colonial states—which their previous colonial lords treated as mere arbitrary divisions on a map—then such states cannot be described as nations in any real sense. It is the terrible misfortune of some developing countries, that these arbitrary policies have prevented their indigenous tribes from ever actually developing into a nation.

Conversely, it is equally true, that any nation whose citizens have lost sight of what unites them, will sooner or later cease to exist as a unified nation. For it is a sad historical fact, that not only civilizations and cultures, but nations, too,

can perish and disappear.

From the standpoint of international law, the German Reich continues to exist at its 1937 borders; nothing can be altered either positively or negatively in this respect, until the conclusion of a formal peace treaty. But what about Germans' subjective consciousness of being a nation? Here the most pressing question is emphatically not whether and how the people in Eastern and Central Germany conceive of themselves, since they are currently living in a dictatorship, and do not have the right to determine their future in free elections—a right which was even promised to them by the Yalta Agreement, but never kept. Nor have we any need to debate whether the people expelled from East Prussia should make an agreement with the Polish government-in-exile to annul Churchill's matchstick game, since the Russians and their proconsuls are sitting in all the regions in question, and they certainly do not give the impression that they will voluntarily clear out.

For the time being, all we can hope for, is that the efforts of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) to incorporate every positive historical figure into their own official GDR historiography, will boomerang back on them, since especially the publication of the original texts of the German classicists, and the elevation of the Prussian Reformers into German heroes, will keep the national consciousness alive, and simply on the strength of the contents of what they said, will have a certain immunizing effect against the official GDR propaganda. In the West, however, there is a much more pressing danger of losing our consciousness as a nation. Here, on the one hand, we have the tendency for which the Lafontaines and the von Bülowes have become the ugly, shameful figureheads. But what about the rest of our citizens? What has become of us as a cultural nation, what has become of the proud nation of poets and philosophers?

If it is true, that a nation is chiefly determined by the most beautiful productions in its own literary language, and thus, by the best pearls of poetry, where the new creation and further development of the language draws the population up to higher levels, while the poets' power over language refines and ennobles their emotions—how, then, do we stand today? The so-called "Spiegel style"²¹ is mercilessly deployed against the German language by that weekly's scribblers; the cultural-pessimistic effluvia of most authors today make one forget that there ever was such a thing as German grammar, and the stagings of the so-called state theaters are on about the same level as a laundry detergent ad.

Yes, it is true—we Germans have made infinite contributions to universal culture. The greater part of what human society possesses today by way of classical music, was created by German composers. It is an indisputable fact, that the humanist ideal of humanity which Schiller set up as a shining example in both his works and his own person, draws us a picture of the human individual unmatched to this day in its internal differentiation, its tender emotionality, the boldness of its vision of a future human society in the age of reason,



Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa

and in moral beauty.

It is likewise true, that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Leibnizian tradition favored the emergence of most sciences as clearly defined disciplines for the first time: such disciplines as cameralism, economics, philology, historical science, and the various faculties of the Göttingen school. It was German scientists who, in the second decade of this century, forged their bold dreams into a plan to use rocket propulsion to soar beyond the Earth's atmosphere and into outer space, and through the development of space travel, to settle the universe. And up to the present day, it has been upon the conceptual contribution of these German scientists, that the space programs of both superpowers have been based.

Yes, all this and more is true; but a people's culture is not something you acquire once, and then put on display in a glass case. No one has formulated this point more polemically and accurately than Schiller in his poem:

The Antiques in Paris

So? The Frank may well have crated
What the Grecians' art created
To the Seine with armor'd hand,
And in gall'ries high-reputed
Show off what the victor looted
To his gawking fatherland!

They'll be mute to him forever,
Frozen, lifeless, dancing never
Lightly from their silent throne.
Only he has seized the muses
Who their warmth in heart ne'er loses;
To the Vandal, they are stone.

Cannot we say the same of us Germans today? We can harken back to our great culture, only to the extent that we do so as proud patriots to whom this culture is alive, and to the extent we live out this culture every day, and make it into our way of life. Culture is not the occasional trip to a concert; it is our manner and attitude of living each day.

Now we have arrived at the heart of the matter. For the Federal Republic of Germany, the question of national identity will never be solved unless we indivisibly fuse both our patriotism with our world citizenship, and the question of the nation with that of the nation's goal. It is one thing to overcome our own past, stick to our claims to the entire German nation, and demand a peace treaty; it is another, to find a positive determination of the peace aims which were never defined following World War II.

We as Germans in the Federal Republic will only fulfill the positive role world history has assigned to us, if today, in the face of the world's life-and-death crises—famine, plagues, and wars kindled by a lack of development—we do everything in our power to intervene into the strategic situation in order to put through a new and just world economic order. As Schiller demonstrates in his essay "On the Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon," no national interest is justifiable, if it stands in contradiction with the interests of the world community as a whole. It is therefore in the fundamental self-interests of the Federal Republic of Germany, *for moral reasons*—and not merely because we are an export-dependent nation—to act toward the most rapid possible development and industrialization of the developing countries.

Nicolaus of Cusa, whom I would like to call the actual father of the German nation-state, went so far as to say, that no nation which has just produced a scientific discovery, has any right to keep that advance to itself; rather, every discovery in every nation must be simultaneously made available, so as not to senselessly hinder their development. For Nicolaus, the peaceful world order, *concordantia*, is only possible when national republics respect their mutual sovereignty, while at the same time reciprocally regarding the maximum development of other republics as being in their own vital interests.

True concordance cannot be founded upon an alignment of heterogeneous elements, even if these be mutually complementary. In terms of our own situation, this means that peace will be impossible, so long as some nations are denied the right to develop, such as when they are restricted to the role of raw materials suppliers. Concordance will only be possible when every nation in the world excels in one or more fields of science or technology. Only in this way is the *coincidentia oppositorum* possible: a unified world, within its

division of labor developing as a whole, thus becoming ever more differentiated in the process.

Leibniz drew out the implications of Cusa's ideas by assigning to each of the various developed European states, one less-developed region of the world. Thus, France was to concern itself with the development Africa, Germany with the East, and so forth. Leibniz's concept of permanent exhibitions and trade fairs was not only supposed to be for the population's edification, but also for the most rapid possible dissemination of all scientific discoveries.

This philosophy must actually become the normal basis for the actions of every Christian, and especially for Catholics in the Federal Republic. Let us cite two pertinent passages from two papal encyclicals. First, Pope John Paul II in *Laborem Exercens*: "This society—even when it has not yet taken on the mature form of a nation [!]
—is not only the great 'educator' of every man, even though an indirect one (because each individual absorbs within the family the contents and values that go to make up a culture of a given nation); it is also a great historical and social incarnation of the work of all generations. All of this brings it about that man combines his deepest human identity with membership of a nation, and intends his work also to increase the common good developed together with his compatriots, thus realizing that in this way work serves to add to the heritage of the whole human family, of all the people living in the world."

Thus the transmission of the individual's creative contribution to world development occurs through nations; and the goal of a nation is to increase the well-being of all humanity.

Next, we cite a document whose relevance is greater than ever before, the encyclical "On the Development of Peoples." In it, Pope Paul VI writes: "What must be brought about, therefore, is a system of cooperation freely undertaken, an effective and mutual sharing, carried out with equal dignity on either side, for the construction of a more human world."

"The task might seem impossible in those regions where the cares of day-to-day survival fill the entire existence of families incapable of planning the kind of work which would open the way to a future that is less desperate. . . . But let everyone be convinced of this: The very life of the poor nations, civil peace, and world peace itself are at stake."

Pope Paul VI wrote that warning in 1967, and in the same spirit Pope John Paul II has called for a "constructive theoretical and practical revision of the legal code," especially in the relationship between the industrialized nations and the "countries of the so-called Third World"—a "reform which takes human rights into account."

To be continued.

Notes

20. Friedrich Schiller, "On the Aesthetic Education of Man," Second Letter, in *Friedrich Schiller: Poet of Freedom*, New York: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1985.
21. *Der Spiegel* (The Mirror), run by convicted marijuana user Rudolf Augstein, is West Germany's leading newsweekly, and makes even *Time* magazine look like a masterpiece of classical literacy.