

reported in its front page on Dec. 9 that, during the recent visit to India by Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wazed, this issue was very much on the agenda for discussion, and there are definite indications that Bangladesh is willing to be a part of this railroad system.

ESCAP's Trans-Asian railroad proposes connecting Calcutta to Kunming, China, through Dhaka, Bangladesh and Myitkina, Myanmar, over a difficult mountainous terrain of about 350 km. India has also proposed a railroad which would link the Bangladesh cities of Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna, on its way to Yangon, Myanmar. It seems that both countries are interested in developing this railroad, in order to cater to the trade with China, Nepal, Myanmar, and Iran. Myopic as it is, this proposal is an important effort to break down India's containment in the east, and will be a very positive step toward putting together the land-bridge to Europe.

Even the more difficult containment in the west, which exists in the form of a hostile Pakistan, is showing signs of softening. The absolute failure of the Pakistani elite, the land-based gentry who made Pakistan's trade entirely depen-

dent on the health of the annual cotton crop, in the political and economic sphere, and even in their ability to govern the nation, has given rise to a group of entrepreneurs, best exemplified by the Karachi Chamber of Commerce, who want to integrate Pakistan into regional as well as international trade for the country's future well-being.

Iran has played a useful role in this endeavor. Isolated by Saudi Arabia and the United States, Iran seeks an outlet into Europe, and access to Central Asia, India, and to the east of India. Iran's perseverance in its efforts to persuade Pakistan to allow a gas pipeline to be laid to India through its territory, is indicative of its sincerity. Moreover, Iran is in constant contact with India for the purpose of enhancing its and India's trade with the Central Asian nations.

These are positive signs, although New Delhi has been slow in taking note of them. At the same time, the developments in Afghanistan, with the Taliban in power in Kabul, create uncertainties. New Delhi looks at it as yet another attempt to break through the containment, and give a boost to those Pakistani elites who have been instrumental in preventing India from trading westward by land.

## LaRouches' role praised in Malaysian daily

The Kuala Lumpur daily *Sun* on Dec. 9, featured the leading role of Lyndon and Helga LaRouche in the fight for global development, in an article by well-known Islamic scholar Dr. Kassim Ahmad. Dr. Ahmad begins by summarizing the theme presented by Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, during a speech in Beijing in August, and again in Mahathir's keynote to the Third Pacific Dialogue in Kuala Lumpur on Nov. 22, where he called for "America and Asia and whosoever wishes, to join hands in a joint venture, to build a New World, a global commonwealth such as the world has never seen, worthy of the hopes of mankind and worthy of the twenty-first century."

Dr. Ahmad describes this as one of "two diametrically opposing views emerging on the future of the world": The oligarchical opposition being typified by Samuel ("Clash of Civilizations") Huntington, the Royal Institute for International Affairs, and the Bush-Kissinger Republican Party faction, who perpetrated genocide in the Gulf War.

Now, Dr. Ahmad argues, it is time for Asia to invoke the anti-colonial, republican, and humanist tradition of Americans like Washington, J.Q. Adams, Lincoln, McKinley, Franklin Roosevelt, and Kennedy. "Asia and the world need such an America to reshape the modern world.

Anti-colonial Asia, with rich philosophical-ethical traditions as are imbedded in the teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Islam, are in such a position to invoke this anti-colonial, humanist, and republican (not the Republican Party, to be sure!) America, and to partner with it to build the New World defined by Dr. Mahathir."

That tradition "is very much alive [in] the much-maligned LaRouche philosophical-political movement of nearly 30 years . . . and in its younger sister organization, the Schiller Institute, led by Helga Zepp LaRouche." He continues, "Mr. LaRouche himself, now 73 years old, and wrongfully jailed for five years . . . and now on parole, has visited many countries and called on many heads of state."

Dr. Ahmad reviews the international scope of the Schiller Institute's work, including participation in three conferences in Kuala Lumpur against the Iraq embargo, on human rights, and in support of Bosnia-Herzegovina. LaRouche's writings on the disintegration of the world financial system and ridding NATO of the Entente Cordiale have been discussed in capitals around the world, while Helga LaRouche led a Schiller Institute delegation to the International Symposium on Economic Development of the Regions in Beijing, organized in May by the Chinese government, and attended by over 460 experts from 34 countries. Dr. Ahmad quotes her, that "the reason why I am so optimistic is . . . because the genie of world development is already out of the bottle," as well as from Pakistani Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg's September 1996 speech in Beijing citing the LaRouches' work.