

to the Chinese people on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, in which LaRouche, in view of the global financial and economic collapse, demanded that more intelligent people and political leaders participate in implementing a policy of reorganizing the financial system, and for economic reconstruction. Hellenbroich emphasized the importance of LaRouche's election campaign for President in America for overcoming the dramatic worldwide economic crisis, with which the Armenian population also has to struggle.

In view of the fighting in the Northern Caucasus, occurring only a few hundred kilometers from Armenia, and against the background of tensions with Azerbaijan, as well as the effects of the blockade against Armenia (initiated by Azerbaijan in 1993 and observed by Turkey), Hellenbroich severely criticized the reemergence of the 19th-century British geopolitical "Great Game" strategy, a concern shared by many in the audience in view of Armenia's geographic position. Hellenbroich's call for the establishment of a "New Bretton Woods" global financial system in the context of a Eurasian development strategy, originally a call to President Clinton which was initiated by the founder of the Schiller Institute, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, and a leading Ukrainian Presidential candidate, Natalia Vitrenko, was roundly applauded.

Most of the discussion concerned the social problems in the country, and many younger members of the party addressed the problem of the unbroken wave of emigration. In recent years, nearly 1 million people, out of what was once a population of 3.7 million, have left the country for, primarily, Russia, the United States, France, or Iran.

The final communiqué of the convention reflected these concerns, and criticized in particular the bad effects of the policy imposed by the IMF. Local elections will be held soon, and so the party issued a call for its members to work on expansion of the party base throughout the country.

Hellenbroich also had the opportunity to hold several other discussions with representatives of the government and Parliament.

Interview: Hrant Khachatryan

The oligarchy is trying to destroy our economy

Hrant Khachatryan is president of the Union of Constitutional Rights (UCR) in Armenia. The UCR is the leading political party within the Iravunk ev Miabautiun (Justice and Unity)

electoral slate, which included Khachatryan and his colleague Haik Baboookhanian, who were elected to Parliament on May 30. Both are longtime friends of the LaRouche movement. Mr. Khachatryan was interviewed on Oct. 10 by Anno Hellenbroich, who visited Armenia to attend the UCR party convention.

EIR: Mr. Khachatryan, I would like to congratulate you on your reelection as president of your party, and I would like to ask you, what are your thoughts now, after the May elections, being back in Parliament, and with the tenth anniversary of the formation of your party, today? What is foremost on your mind?

Khachatryan: These were party elections for the leadership, and the party itself is supported by 86,000 people, voters. We have two seats in the Armenian Parliament. The members of our party today confirmed their choice of leadership. This was an ordinary meeting of our party.

We now have 11 years of experience behind us, and we have a very concrete program, a very well-known style of activity. Our views on events and developments are based on the idea of self-determination of nations, the right of unification of separate nations, for peaceful solutions of different types of conflicts, for stability.

EIR: In the next weeks of your political campaign for local and regional elections, what role will the economic issue play? I understand that, in some speeches at the party convention, the conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund were strongly attacked. Will this be part of your campaign?

Khachatryan: The economic situation has a great influence on politics. There are some ideas, such as those coming from the oligarchy, to destroy the economic structures of sovereign countries, to have more control over these countries, and over the leadership of these countries. We have experienced this over the last seven or eight years.

We used to be a country with a potential to industrialize, but we have lost most of this potential. The electronics sector of our economy, which was quite powerful, has been destroyed, and this is also the case for chemicals and raw materials processing. The structure of our agricultural sector has also been destroyed. Armenia is now a net food importer. We also import tools.

And, this is so in all of the former Soviet countries, which are suffering the same problems.

According to our analyses, these are problems which come from the same geopolitical centers.

Now, unfortunately, the societies and populations of these countries cannot be organized to defend themselves, to win their rights to survive, to work. What Armenians need today is, first, to have the right to work, to gain some income.

EIR: Regarding the enormous crisis which has developed in Chechnya and Dagestan: What is your response to the voices

in Georgia, to the voices in Azerbaijan, who are asking for a NATO presence? Are you going to take this up in Parliament?

Khachatrian: This is the second stage of NATO expansion. In the beginning of the 1990s, these geopolitical centers were the ideological fetters of our countries. They brought extreme liberalism to our countries—they used the desires of people to be more liberal or free. And with these intentions, these countries accepted these ideas very readily, and there was no reevaluation of these ideas; the ideas themselves became too rigid.

During the 1990s, using the example of Armenia, until 1993, people could not understand that they were losing the institutions that had protected them, their capabilities; and when they woke up, they saw that everything had been destroyed. Following this ideological attack, people woke up and they began to organize themselves.

And then, when the politics of economic collapse and extortion had run its course, they [NATO] began to use military force, to limit people's possibilities to be organized. They built internal forces, they imported mechanisms they called democratic, but these are not mechanisms by which these countries themselves govern. All that is there is the image, the face of democracy. The methods are actually dictatorial. When, in 1995-96, people came together and decided to win their right to survive in their own countries, then NATO began the next stage of attack, to expand their [the oligarchy's] influence in our regions. The first move was in Kosovo, at the center of Europe; and they want to organize this military expansion into the Northern Caucasus.

We know that our region is also affected, in view of the Karabakh problem. . . . But [despite attempts to resolve this crisis], this question is being kept open, to have the chance to bring NATO forces into this region.

Now we see the situation in Chechnya and Dagestan. Russia was asleep during these years, so these [separatist] forces were able to grow in Chechnya, under the name of sovereignty. Now, they [the Russians] are moving with force against these people.

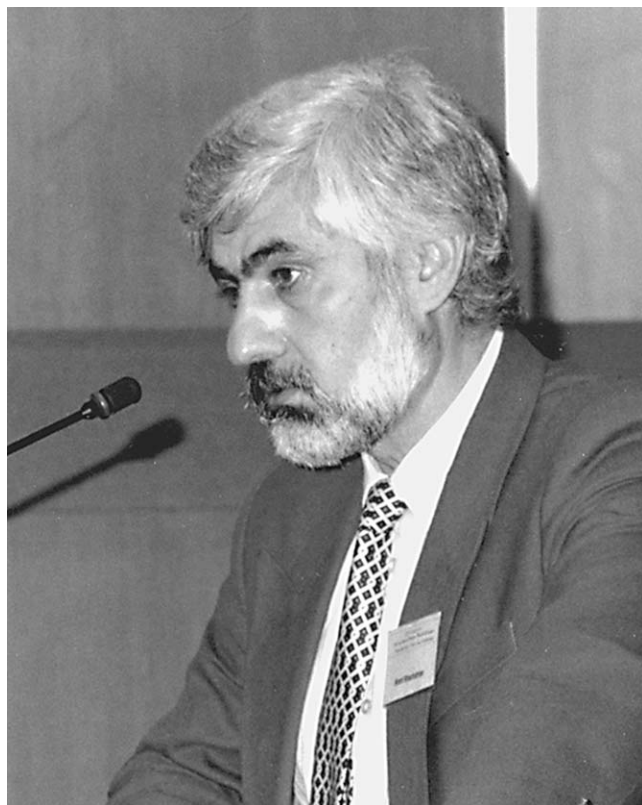
EIR: Do you intend to bring this issue up in a parliamentary discussion?

Khachatrian: Unfortunately, we cannot do that in the Armenian Parliament, but, we can address the issue that these situations are being used to prevent negotiations and cooperation among Asian countries; they want to prevent development in Central Asia.

This also involves cooperation among Russia, China, Iran, India, and other countries.

EIR: You just mentioned Iran. I understand that you have been invited to Iran to attend some celebrations.

Khachatrian: Yes, and there will be some interesting meetings. . . . I have been invited to the anniversary of the Islamic



Hrant Khachatrian relates how Armenia “used to be a country with a potential to industrialize, but we have lost most of this potential.” The once-proud electronics sector has been destroyed, and agriculture has been restructured to the point that now Armenia has to import food.

revolution. Iran wants to protect its population, and also protect the potentials for industrial development. For Iran, religion, Islam, is a consolidating factor, but it is not intended to be aggressive or dangerous. Iran has a very balanced policy concerning the Karabakh problem.

EIR: One final question. Do you know about the secret meeting that took place recently between the President of Azerbaijan and the President of Armenia?

Khachatrian: I know that there are no secrets in the world which anyone can expect to keep secret. Secrets are kept from the people, the simple citizens in these countries. I believe that those who want to know something about these discussions, are those who want to control the discussions. I mean the geopolitical centers, the governments of the superpowers; and I do not think that the people of Armenia or Azerbaijan have to be kept out of these discussions. No secret decisions are legitimate for the people of these countries. We are very optimistic. We do not know what they are discussing. If these discussions are not just, they will not be accepted by the Azerbaijani people, nor by the Armenian people.