
II. The Threat of War

Only a New Paradigm for U.S.-China Relations Can Prevent War

by William Jones

July 10—The issue of a “new paradigm” in international relations was broached by representatives from the Schiller Institute and *Executive Intelligence Review* (EIR) at an international press conference in Washington on July 6. Participating in a press conference in which leading Chinese scholars and U.S. scholars were discussing the burgeoning crisis in the South China Sea, a region where the United States has provocatively deployed warships, including two aircraft carriers, as a “show of muscle,” Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder of the Schiller Institutes and William Jones, the EIR Washington Bureau Chief, put the issue of a “new paradigm” on the table in front of the assem-

bled Chinese and other media gathered for the event.

Speaking to the participants from the floor, Zepp-LaRouche addressed her comments to Brendan Mulvaney, a professor at the U.S. Naval Academy and one of the American speakers:

My question is ‘Can Mankind not rise to a higher level of cooperation and go for a New Paradigm where geopolitics is overcome and replaced by the commons aims of mankind?’ The world is in dire need for the United States and China to work together, because I think without these two countries joining hands, the world is in trouble.



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A press conference held in Washington, D.C. on July 6, 2016, sponsored by the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University of China and the National Institute of South Sea Studies. From left: Zhu Feng, Executive Director, China Center for Collaborative Studies of the South China Sea, Nanjing University; Huang Renwei, Vice President, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences; Wu Shicun, President, National Institute for South China Sea Studies; Wang Wen, Executive Dean, Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University; Brendan Mulvaney, a professor at the U.S. Naval Academy; and EIR Washington, D.C. Bureau Chief William Jones.



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Founder of the Schiller Institutes Helga Zepp-LaRouche spoke to the participants of the press conference.

So the question is: ‘Can the world move to a New Paradigm of peaceful cooperation for the future tasks of all of humanity?’

Mulvaney, so typical of the “mainstream” view of U.S. defense intellectuals since the Obama “pivot,” replied (not without a tint of cynicism) that he “was hopeful” that that might happen but that “the history of mankind of mankind doesn’t bear that out.” In response to Zepp-LaRouche’s warnings of the danger of war, Mulvaney replied, that even if a crisis were to erupt it would be “small” and could be “contained.” Such is that type of utopian thinking that has previously led us to two bloody wars in the last century.

Military Deployments Must Be Scaled Down

The press conference was the climax of an eleventh-hour mobilization by the Chinese side to ward off what could well become a major crisis when the Permanent Court of Arbitration on July 12 issues a ruling on a Philippine request regarding a number of issues related to the respective territorial claims of China and the Philippines in the South China Sea. Dai Bingguo, a former State Councilor in China’s highest body, who headed the delegation and who, during his time in office, played the key role in top-level negotiations with the United States, delivered a significant speech on the topic of the South China Sea at the Carnegie Endowment for Inter-



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Dai Bingguo, a former State Councilor and high-level diplomat, spoke July 5, 2016, at the U.S.-China Dialogue on the South China Sea in Washington, D.C., cosponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University, in coordination with the National Institute for South China Sea Studies and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

national Peace on July 5.

In his speech Dai warned about the “confrontational rhetoric” coming out of Washington and said that “heavy-handed intervention” of the United States in the South China Sea had to be “scaled down.” While the United States is not a party to any of the territorial claims, it has leaned heavily on the side of the Philippines and has supported the unilateral decision of the Philippine Government to submit its request to the arbitration court in spite of a written commitment by the Philippines in 2002 to resolve the crisis through negotiation.

In addition, the United States has doubled up on its own “freedom of navigation” patrols in the region to underline its overriding presence there.

“How would you feel if you were Chinese and read in the newspapers or watched on TV, reports and footage about U.S. aircraft carriers, naval ships, and fighter jets flexing muscles right at your doorstep,” Dai said, “and heard a senior U.S. military official telling the troops to be ready “to fight tonight”? “This is certainly not the way China and the United States should interact with each other,” he said.

Dai warned that China would not simply sit idly by while such provocations were ratcheted up, as many in Washington are now urging them to do. “We in China will not be intimidated by the U.S. actions, not even if the United States sent all ten aircraft carriers to the South China Sea,” Dai said. “Furthermore, U.S. intervention on the issue has led some countries to believe that the United States is on their side, and they stand to gain from the competition between major countries. As a result, we have seen more provocations from these countries, adding uncertainties and escalating tensions in the South China Sea.” “The risk for the United States,” Dai warned, “is that it may be dragged into trouble against its own will and pay an unexpectedly heavy price.”

Viewing United States-China Relations Through a Telescope

Dai Bingguo underlined, however, that China wanted to work together with the United States on maritime issues, as well as in other arenas. “Even though the South China Sea is clearly not an issue between China and the United States, China is willing to maintain communication with the United States on maritime issues and work with the United States and all other parties to keep the situation under control, considering our shared interest in peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific,” Dai said.

Dai also urged the new Philippine Government to withdraw its submission for arbitration. “What we need is not a microscope to enlarge our differences, but a telescope to look ahead and focus on cooperation,” Dai said. “Both Chinese and Americans are great nations with insight and vision. As long as the two sides work for common interests, respect each other, treat each other as equals, have candid dialogue, and expand common ground, China and the United States will be able to manage differences and find the key to turning those issues into opportunities of working together.”

United States Goads Its Allies

Dai’s speech was followed by a discussion between experts on both sides. The visit had been sponsored by the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies and the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, and their delegation included some of China’s leading experts on the South China Sea issue.

Billed as the chief respondent to State Councilor Dai at the Carnegie event, former Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte made his own remarks. While



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Former Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte spoke at the U.S.-China Dialogue on the South China Sea in Washington, D.C.

reiterating the U.S. mantra that the South China Sea dispute “is not a bilateral dispute between China and the United States,” he nevertheless supported the unilateral action by the Philippines to take the matter to the arbitration court rather than negotiate. “The United States has consistently encouraged participants to manage these issues “through negotiation and arbitration,” Negroponte said.

But truth be told, one cannot see too much pressure having been put on the Aquino Government to sit down with China, which it never effectively did, but what advice the United States may have given the Aquino Government with regard to arbitration is anybody’s guess.

Negroponte underlined, however, that the “United States considers a decision by the court a legally binding dispute resolution,” i.e. when the decisions comes, you’d better follow it. Many legal scholars and nations, however, disagree with Negroponte on the “binding nature” of such a decision, especially given the manner in which the arbitration court has been brought in to decide on issues that significantly impinge on territorial claims, over which the court has no jurisdiction.

In private discussion during the following two days, the Chinese scholars made it clear that China was not

prepared to back off from its territorial claims. “China doesn’t want to lose any of its assets,” one scholar commented. “Its two main concerns are safeguarding stability as well as safeguarding China’s legitimate rights.” Both of these have been subject to great misinterpretation in the U.S. media.

It was also clear in their discussions that freedom of navigation has never in a single instance been threatened, although the claim of such a “threat” has served the United States well in continuing its patrols to the “doorstep” of China.

Historical Claims Retain Their Relevance

The importance of China’s historical claims was also underlined by the Chinese scholars. While the general attitude of the United States seems to be to ignore these claims in practice if not in words, yet for the China they are very important. And while the evidence for Chinese presence and administration on some of these islands goes back to the Han Dynasty, the post-World War II agreements by which Japan was to turn over the islands they had occupied during the war to China, were the key element.

As one scholar commented. “If you don’t accept these historical rights, the Second World War becomes meaningless.” Dai Bingguo himself had noted that even Douglas MacArthur was supportive of the return of the islands to the Republic of China.

But when John Foster Dulles took over the running of the San Francisco Treaty conference, Chinese possession of these islands was conveniently taken off the table. China has continually reiterated that its new role in the world after the long period of the containment of the Cold War, includes insuring fulfillment of the promises made in the post-World War II settlements, of which they were deprived because of the Cold War.

In addition to the private gathering at Carnegie, the Chinese delegation also held discussions with a group of U.S. scholars and diplomats pulled together by the Schiller Institute, in which the focus was rather on finding ways to overcome this crisis and finding ways to develop a more fruitful and comprehensive relationship between the United States and China.



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EIR Washington correspondent William Jones (center) and Helga Zepp-LaRouche (right) being interviewed at the July 6 press conference.

At the press conference at the end of their visit on July 6, attended by some 50 or more press, the issue of creating a new paradigm in U.S.-China relations was put front and center. In addition to Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche’s exchange with Brendan Mulvaney, it was also raised in the presentation of *EIR*’s Bill Jones, who was the other American on the panel. While criticizing the U.S. policy of treating China “as a predator even in its own region,” he underlined the need for a new relationship, one that would greatly benefit the United States itself.

“The Belt and Road is the culmination of China’s ‘good neighbor policy’,” Jones said, “offering hope and development to nations in the regions which are still plagued by poverty and underdevelopment. The United States has generally seen this initiative as motivated by hostile intent, in spite of the fact that the United States has itself been invited to participate in the Belt and Road and to work with China in building the needed infrastructure here as well. But the United States has not responded. This clearly indicates that we need a new paradigm in our relations with China,” Jones said, “because if we continue with ‘geopolitics,’ it will inevitably lead to war.”

Most of the coverage of the Dai Bingguo visit, which was extensive in the Chinese press, also highlighted Jones’ comments on the war danger and the need for a new type of relationship with China.