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# I. The Manhattan Project

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## INTERVIEW WITH DIANE SARE

### Mission to Manhattan

*Diane Sare is a member of the LaRouche PAC Policy Committee and the managing director of the Schiller Institute New York City Chorus. EIR interviewed her on July 24 on the ongoing choral work which the Schiller Institute is carrying out in New York City, leading into a series of concerts planned for the period around September 11 of this year, the fifteenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.*

**EIR:** The Schiller Institute will be participating in a series of concerts this September, concerts which are sponsored by the Foundation for the Revival of Classical Culture. These will be concerts of Mozart's *Requiem*, which will be held at four locations in the New York metropolitan area to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the attacks on 9/11. Diane, you have called this a *Living Memorial* to the victims of 9/11. What would you like to say, by way of introduction,

about the idea behind this initiative and how it came about?

**Diane Sare:** It first came about—there had been something under discussion as we came toward this fifteenth anniversary obviously—but a few months ago, one of our activists from Connecticut asked Mr. LaRouche about all those people who died on September 11 who have not,—that there has been no justice, because the truth of what occurred on that day has not fully come out (although I must say we are getting closer). Mr. LaRouche said that what we need is stronger than just a memorial, but a living memorial, that Americans have to face the humility of not having acted to secure justice after we had 3,000 people murdered on that day, September 11, 2001. I would just add that the recent release of the Chilcot Inquiry gets at some of this, but I have to say that because the truth was not told, what you have had since that date is a perpetuation of



EIRNS/Bob Wesser

*Diane Sare conducting a performance of the Schiller Institute's Manhattan chorus Feb. 14, 2015.*

murder, of injustice and murder.

We didn't go after Saudi Arabia; instead we invaded Iraq,— although I'm not proposing that war in any form would particularly be the solution to this. We overthrew Qaddafi in Libya. We have created a situation where we have 60 million refugees, and over 4,000 American soldiers have died in Iraq, Afghanistan, and these wars, not to mention that we have a staggering rate of soldier suicides. So part of the conception of the living memorial, at least in my mind, is that it is not

being done so people can listen to some beautiful music that they associate with someone dying and feel bad about it, but that by that time we should actually determine that we will have secured justice, which means not only the release of the 28 pages that we have just seen, but that we dramatically change the policy direction of the government of the United States, away from the British and Saudi Empires, and take a giant step toward creating a world where such things as what occurred on September 11, 2001, do not happen again.

## How It Started

**EIR:** I know it has been a long process leading up to this, and that the Schiller Institute now has three functioning choruses in New York City, one in Manhattan, one in Brooklyn, and one in Queens. Could you tell us a bit about the history of how these choruses came into existence and how they have developed over the recent months?

**Sare:** Sure. The Manhattan chorus is the senior chorus; I'll put it that way. That was created in,— it really came together in December 2014, shortly after Mr. LaRouche launched the Manhattan Project, and that began really in response to a situation which continues, unfortunately to this day. People may remember the case of Eric Garner, an African American man who was killed in a choke-hold, strangled in a choke-hold by a police officer, and the grand jury on Staten Island determined that there was no wrongdoing, there was no indictable offense—which, coming on the heels of what had happened in Ferguson, Missouri, caused a great deal of anger and rage.

It's clear that you have certain elements who would



EIRNS/Margaret Greenspan

*Diane Sare conducting a rehearsal of the Schiller Institute's Manhattan chorus, Sept. 9, 2015.*

like to see, particularly, Manhattan ripped apart, with various antagonistic groups feeling threatened by and threatening each other. Dennis Speed and I had a discussion around Christmas—I have always wanted to perform Handel's *Messiah* for any purpose—and we said, why don't we perform the *Messiah* in Manhattan, dedicated to the principle that all human life is sacred. If we are going to do something that is befitting for human beings, it has to come from a noble standpoint.

So we did that sing-along performance, and on very short notice; about a hundred people showed up to sing, and out of that we created a community chorus which has grown steadily over that last year and a half to be a very solid group, with ebbs and flows, I would say, but probably when you pull it together for a performance, you have sixty people or so. We did a *Messiah* around Christmas the following year. One of the performances was in Brooklyn, so it seemed a natural process to start another chorus in Brooklyn; there were many people who wanted to be part of this. So that chorus is coming along.

We have some collaborators, Chinese Americans in Flushing, Queens, who have wanted to collaborate with us on the question of classical music. They, interestingly, are very interested in learning African American spirituals and western classical music, so we now have a chorus in Flushing, Queens. Like the Manhattan one, the choruses tend to start off very slowly. I think the most important factor is that the choir director has to be absolutely consistent—whether three people show up or thirty people show up, whether they know how to read music and sing in tune, or they don't know how to read music and don't sing in tune—and at a certain point the group has to see itself as a group, and becomes

a real institution, which is where we are in Manhattan. We are getting close to that in Brooklyn, and I think the Queens one is going to take off soon. I wouldn't be surprised if, after the series of *Requiem* concerts, we might not also have a chorus that gets started in the Bronx.

**EIR:** All you need then is Staten Island! I know the choral work we've done in New York has also gone hand in hand with, and been a critical component of what Lyndon LaRouche initiated as the Manhattan Project. Now if you look at the totality of our work, the work of the Schiller Institute and the LaRouche movement in Manhattan and the greater New York City area, some people have described this as a *new paradigm* in organizing—one in which classical music, politics, and economics come together, where these are not separate things but a unified approach, and where music plays a critical role in the actual organizing. So in terms of this new paradigm, do you think that's true? And if so, what are your thoughts on that, and what are the deeper implications of that for the organizing process?

**Sare:** I do think it is true, and I will just stick for now to the choral aspect of this because it is multi-faceted. In terms of a paradigm, it would mean everything. On the question of the choral work *per se*, the Schiller Institute has a long history of musical work which is now coming together—from the *Manual on Tuning and Registration*, which John Sigerson, who is directing the chorus now, was involved in, which was a scientific proof of the necessity of the Verdi tuning, and the question of *bel canto*, to the kind of collaborators that we had over the years, such as Carlo Bergonzi on the tuning in particular and the Italian *bel canto* method, William Warfield, Sylvia Olden Lee, and Maestro [José] Briano who was there early on, who just passed away. We had some truly inspired collaborators, with the result that between John's dedication to the question of *bel canto* and proper placement, and the political organizing process that I've been involved in, what has occurred is that our chorus, although it is very young, or new relative to other choruses in the city, is quickly developing a reputation for itself because of the quality of the sound, and the quality of the warmth of the sound and the musicality.

The members of this chorus are aware that they have a particular mission in terms of the question of uplifting mankind, uplifting the culture of Manhattan and the United States, and it comes across in the singing. So, when we had done the *Messiah* last Easter—I guess it was the Easter performance—a singer who works with us who happens to rent out rehearsal spaces and has her

own newsletter, sent out a link to the video of just one of the choruses, to all of the singers who rehearse in her rehearsal spaces, and she got some pretty amazing feedback which she forwarded on to me. "This chorus has an exceptional sound," "you can hear the counterpoint," "I can't believe all the words are intelligible," comments like that, which I have to say are highly unusual, particularly for an amateur chorus. Ours is an amateur chorus, not a paid professional chorus; in fact, people contribute to paying for the rehearsal space, so they are actually paying to be in this chorus, and I think ultimately it will be setting a new standard for what goes on in this city in terms of choral music.

### Almost a Sacred Quality

**EIR:** In a conversation you and I had the other day, one of the ways you characterized how our chorus works was that, for many of the participants—and I may not be putting this in your words, so correct me if I'm wrong—for many of the participants, the chorus rehearsals have taken on almost the character of a haven, a place where people are able to relate to each other on a more profound level, and you also stated that many of the people who have become involved in our chorus have expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity to participate. Is there anything you would like to say about that?

**Sare:** Yes, and I think that this also gets at the questions of what the problems are and the difficulties are in keeping a chorus together, because we are in a society which is disintegrating, and the so-called average American life—whatever that means—is filled with economic hardship and chaos. I can give one example of many. We had a wonderful alto singer who had actually sung in an opera company in her native country before she came to the United States, and she was working in the United States for a family as an *aupair*; taking care of children, cooking, cleaning, and so on. That is very grueling, hard work, and she would come into the rehearsal every night,— at this point we were working on Bach's *Jesu Meine Freude*, and she would get there late, just having rushed over from this very difficult job, and the family would often come home late, and she would be late, and she would sit down and say, "I'm so happy to be here. I'm so happy to be singing Bach after this day I've been through."

I definitely have the sense that for many people in the chorus, the ability to do beautiful music,— there is almost a sacred quality to it, where they can get away from all the conflicts and the hardships of their day-to-





*LaRouche PAC Policy Committee member Diane Sare organizing at Columbus Circle, Manhattan, July 21, 2016, for a new paradigm in which classical music, politics, and economics come together.*

day lives, and come and participate in something which is really beautiful and uplifting and nourishing to the soul. And I would say that is also the difficulty, because you may have guessed from my earlier comments, if I were to count up all of the people who have been at *one* rehearsal it would be well over a hundred, maybe a couple of hundred people by now.

It takes a lot to recruit the people who stay. Even with people who stay for several months, things come up, they change jobs, there is a conflict at work, or they can't afford the subway fare to get to the rehearsal. There is just so much disruption in people's lives that the most difficult thing is to get a core group and have the same people show up, week-in and week-out, and that is obviously something that tends to slow down the progress of the chorus. It's a bigger factor now in the smaller, newer ones in Brooklyn and Flushing, because you might have the same number of people every week, but if they are different people, you don't make the progress you would like to. So at least Manhattan is a bit more stabilized, but we do still have that challenge of the migrant choral singers, I'll call it. I don't think it's from their lack of interest. To do this requires a lot of work and concentration, and people are leading really difficult and hectic lives, so it is hard for them to be consistent.

**EIR:** I think that covers it fairly well. Is there anything more you would like to say in summing up, in particular in regard to the upcoming performances of the *Requiem* and the work going into that, or any other final comments you would like to make?

**Sare:** Yes, there are a few things I'd like to add.

One of the performances in Brooklyn is going to be at a church which is part of a district where the entire fire brigade, I think it was forty-two men, rushed to their deaths on September 11. From Brooklyn it is a short trip to lower Manhattan; they rushed over there and were inside one of the towers when it collapsed. Every year this church has a service, a special mass, on September 11.

This year, since it is the fifteenth anniversary, and it also happens to fall on a Sunday, the Monsignor expressed an interest in performing the Mozart *Requiem* as part of this particular mass. And I think that is going to be an extremely moving and powerful performance. The other perfor-

mances will be in the Bronx, there will be one in a major church in midtown Manhattan, and there will be one in Morristown, New Jersey, in which we will be collaborating with family members of the 9/11 victims. So each one of these will have a specific dimension to it, relating to what happened and where our country needs to go.

I would like to close by saying that, in my mind, I am thinking of a certain parallel—but perhaps it will be even more significant if we can bring about a victory in this case—to what Putin did in Palmyra, where the city was in ruins; it had been taken over by ISIS, a city that was 2,000 years old with that beautiful amphitheater which ISIS had desecrated by executing people on the stage. When Russia had worked with the Syrian government forces to liberate this city from ISIS, they held a concert, beginning with an incredible Bach *Chaconne* on that very stage in that amphitheater, by the Mariinsky Theater Orchestra conducted by Putin's friend, Valery Gergiev.

I think the reason why this was so powerful, is that it is an example of what is meant by victory. That is, the point is not just to crush ISIS because it is evil, but the point is to actually engage mankind in doing the good, and to demonstrate that the principle of human civilization is a principle of beauty of the human race as a beautiful creative species. That really is the idea of the 9/11 concerts, and I think it is very urgent right now to remind Americans of it. As Americans are reminded of this, I think that their necessary courage in defeating what has led our nation into this mess will be greater.

**EIR:** Very good. Thank you.