

I. 75th Anniversary of the Independence of India

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Tribute to India on the 75th Anniversary of Indian Independence

On Saturday, August 20 the Schiller Institute Manhattan Project Dialogue focussed on the deeper significance and absolute importance of the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, Sam Pitroda, and Diane Sare all spoke on the subject and interacted with the host, Dennis Speed, who presented questions to the speakers from the live internet audience. The full webcast is available [here](#).

It is very urgent that we make that history come alive, and that we educate the people of the world about the significance of it. This is not a question of past history, but the ideas that went into the independence fight, and the victory over the British Empire mainly under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, are of an absolute actual urgency for the solutions of the problems of the world today.



Manoj

India celebrates its 75th year of independence from Britain in front of the Red Fort in Old Delhi, Aug. 15, 2022.

Good afternoon. It is actually a joy to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the independence of India on the 15th of August, 1947, which took place five days ago. Despite the fact that in the Western media there was to my knowledge absolutely not even a mentioning of it, this event is of extreme importance, because it occurred in one of the most important countries of the world. A country which has an extremely fascinating and rich culture.

The role of Mahatma Gandhi, who in the world in general is associated with the notion of nonviolence, is actually a much more rich conception than what most people know. It's not just not committing violence, but it is the opposite. It is the philosophy of love, it is a philosophy of including people; taking into the mind and heart the world, and in that way creating a harmony which creates peace.

Gandhi's thoughts were the most important influ-

ence on the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement, and basically what we see today—and that is also, interestingly enough, not known to most people in the West—is that we have a complete renaissance of the Non-Aligned Movement. That did not occur all by itself; it did occur in direct reaction to the attempt to insist on a unipolar world, which is what the so-called Western countries tried to impose after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Basically now the whole situation has escalated very far, and especially after the war in Ukraine, there is an effort to insist that the world has to be either in the camp of the so-called “democracies” or the so-called “autocracies,” against which the former are in a complete, mortal battle. decouple the United States, Britain, the EU, Japan, South Korea, Australia—because that is the only camp of the “democracies”—to completely cause a break from Russia, where it almost happened already entirely because of the brutal sanctions, but also to “reduce the dependency on China,” which is another word for economic break, and to somehow force everybody into a Global NATO.

That has led to a complete boomerang blowback, because the developing countries did not experience much good from the “democracies” and they have a vivid memory of what colonialism did and is doing to them. They refused to be drawn into geopolitical bloc building, because they know perfectly well that it is not a conflict between the so-called “democracies” and the so-called “autocracies”; but it is between those forces who want to keep the colonial system, and those forces who absolutely insist that there has to be a liberation from that. That what must come instead is the right of development for every nation on the planet. Thus, you have a complete re-emergence, a very powerful re-emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement.

To look at Gandhi’s conception of nonviolence, this is actually one of the most important ideas to avoid the nuclear annihilation of the human species right now. That is something one has to think about; it’s not

self-evident, and if people have questions, we should discuss it. But, people in the West must find out—and they know almost nothing about the deep philosophical outlook which goes along with that—is that the method with which Gandhi was able to defeat the British Empire, which is not a small thing, that method is extremely important to keep the peace in the world today.

If you remember back, the British Raj in India actually was a history of two centuries of crimes and genocide. A complete destruction of a relatively blossoming economy into poverty. Shashi Tharoor is an Indian parliamentarian whom I got to know at the first session of the Raisina Dialogue of the Indian government in 2016, where he shared my panel. Actually, he became world famous when he confronted the British in a 15-minute speech at Oxford Union which was very funny and hilarious. But he presented the audience, which was totally stunned, with the history of 200 years of British colonialism, of exploitation, suppression, utmost brutality against the people. He demanded reparations. He made it very clear that what was important for him was not the actual amount of money India should get, but that the British should



Mohandas K. Gandhi, London, 1931. Elliott & Fry

admit their guilt, which obviously has never happened. None of the colonial powers ever apologized to the victims which had to suffer their colonialism.

Tharoor wrote a book called *The Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India*, and we will hear much more from Sam Pitroda after I finish my comments. But Tharoor is writing in his book that when the British took over India, the Indian economy, according to him, represented 25% of the global economy. When the British left, it was only 3%. While the British Empire had grown into a huge empire where supposedly the sun never sets.

Tharoor made a joke; he said, “The reason why the sun never sets is, even God can’t trust the British in the dark.” What he described in this book, and what is generally known, is that the British imposed a brutal system



Starvation in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) in West Bengal, British India, in October 1943, at the peak of the great famine brought about by British policies, in which an estimated 4 million Bengalis perished from starvation.

of horrendous tax collection. They went for the destruction of existing industries such as textiles, steel, metalurgy, shipbuilding. On the other side, they imposed brutal tariffs for Indian products, so that India could not export into Great Britain, and other such free trade rules. India became poorer and poorer, and the British also imposed a law forbidding the manufacturing of locomotives in India. They deliberately worsened several famines, and during the Bengal Famine in 1943, Churchill openly said he hated the Indians. Four million died of starvation in the Bengal Famine alone. More than 35 million minimum starved in famines.

It was the personal direct experience of the British brutality during the riots in Kolkata in 1946, which had a big impact on Lyndon LaRouche, who was there as a soldier in the China-Burma-India theater in World War II. Seeing what the British did in these riots, the brutality with which they proceeded, completely shaped his outlook and understanding. It also underlined for him in a very direct way, the huge difference between what FDR had as a goal—namely, to end colonialism after the Second World War, and to increase the living standard of the developing sector, which never was implemented because unfortunately he died—and Truman and Churchill on the other side. The famous quote from Churchill, “I did not participate in World War II to end the British Empire,” he said in a discussion according to the son of Roosevelt.

If you think what a monster this British Empire was, the accomplishment of Mahatma Gandhi is enormous. Gandhi was—after having changed a lot in his life—he studied law in Britain, started out as a lawyer in Mumbai, then went to South Africa. More and more, he became convinced that only nonviolence, I think the Hindi word for it is *ahimsa*—rejection of violence—must become the law of our life, if mankind is supposed to survive. Albert Einstein had the absolute same idea. He was convinced that the world would only avoid war if there would be a substantially new manner of thinking. Gandhi also believed in the oneness of God, independent of the label of religion. It didn't matter to him if it was Christian, Farsi, Hindu, Muslim, or even the Untouchables. I think this Gandhi thought is extremely important for India today, where racial tensions are again increasing. He was also for the abo-

lition of the caste system, which was one of the heritages of British colonialism, because they turned a structural situation in India into an absolutely brutal division among the castes. Gandhi, in this spirit, created several mass movements, always based on the idea of nonviolence. The non-cooperation in 1922, the Salt March in 1930, and the fight for independence, Quit India, in 1942. He gave this emotional force the name of *Satyagraha*, which means the force of love and truth.

Friedrich Schiller in his *Philosophical Letters* expressed exactly the same idea, by saying that one gets richer by everything one loves, that it becomes part of one's self, and that one loses everything we hate. Martin Luther King, who had travelled to India to study the method of Gandhi and nonviolence, came to the same conclusion. He wrote,

The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that, only love can do that.

Lyndon LaRouche and I went to India for the first time in 1982, when we met with Indira Gandhi. We actually met with her twice. After she was assassinated, we continued to work with Rajiv Gandhi. But through many years, we also kept friendship with several members of her Cabinet, such as K.R. Ganesh, Ganesh Shukla, also the economist Arjun Kumar and Jayshree Sengupta. We met K.R. Narayanan, the President, in 2001, but we also met with Prime Minister Vajpayee, from the BJP. We met many other people throughout the years.

What we discussed with Indira Gandhi was a 40-year development plan, which had the basic idea that it would take about two generations to transform India into a modern state. You start with building basic infrastructure in all areas of India, because at the beginning of the 1980s, there were many areas of India where you only had dirt roads, and not even streets. Secondly, you need universal education of all children, because you saw these beautiful pictures of Lyn and the children before, but the problem is, many of these children could go to school only very briefly, because most of the time they would have to help their parents in the field with the harvest, so they would get no education.

Then, naturally, you need great projects, because in the beginning of the 1980s, the urban population which was educated on a European level was 50 million. But compared with 750 million rural people not so educated, there was a big gap. Now, Indira Gandhi liked that program, and she started to implement it immediately. She was an absolutely great leader, and I still



EIRNS

Lyndon and Helga LaRouche stand with Prof. Ghatage in front of the room in Pune where Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920), the first leader of the Indian independence movement, lived as a student at Deccan College. April 27, 1982.

cherish the discussions we had with her, because when you meet an outstanding person like that, it has an impact on you for your whole life. I was very happy to discuss with her Jeanne d’Arc [*The Maid of Orleans*] of Schiller, which she liked when she was a student in Paris. She took Joan of Arc as a role model, and I must admit that play by Schiller had a deep impact on my political life as well.

What we discussed with her was the great Gupta period, where great beautiful dramas were written. And the importance of Pānini, the great philologist who lived about 700 B.C. As a matter of fact, we had such an interest in Sanskrit and Pānini, that we then went to see Professor Dandekar, who was one of the leading philologists of Sanskrit in India, in Pune. Pānini insisted that in terms of language, all terms of language—the structure of expression is derived from the transitive verb. With that idea is associated a whole tradition of scientists like Cusa, Kepler, Leibniz, Gauss, who defined the elementary phenomena in terms of the

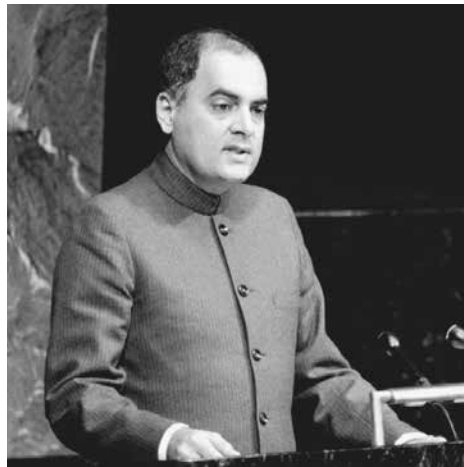


Office of Indian President

Kocheril Raman Narayanan, President of India, with Ramtanu Maitra, Lyndon LaRouche, and Helga Zepp-LaRouche, 2001.



UN/John Isaac



UN/Saw Lwin

Prime ministers Indira Gandhi and her son, Rajiv Gandhi—both were assassinated.

the constellation Orion. Tilak, in *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*, which was written in 1903, described how the astronomical statement found in the Vedic literature provides very accurate data concerning the ages of the different periods of the Vedic writings. It also reveals that the beginning of the Aryan civilization must date thousands of years before the oldest Vedic period, and that it must have been both glacial and inter-glacial. That means it antedates all Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations

form of the transitive verb. This is as opposed to those who emphasize the noun, which is the tradition of the empiricists and nominalists like Bacon, Descartes, Newton—who, as everybody knows also rejected the existence of hypothesis. The first tradition has the idea that we are living in a negentropically developing universe, while the second group is guided by the idea that the universe is entropic, sort of winding down.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, who was a very famous philologist in Germany at the beginning of the 19th Century and a good friend of Friedrich Schiller, actually spoke 40 languages. He came to the conclusion that Sanskrit is the richest language, and that essentially all Indo-European languages derive from it. Lyn was very interested, in this context, in the study of the roots of early scientific thinking, since Sanskrit did transmit the Vedic hymns, first only orally, but then later in writing. One extremely interesting clue of this, are the writings of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who wrote such books as *The Orion*, and *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*. In these books, he showed that the earliest Vedic hymns, which contained very important calendar information, must be dated to earlier than 4,000 B.C. One could conclude that, because the vernal equinox then coincided with

by several thousand years.

That is not the official history writing of the British, but they always try to make history look shorter than it is, and they try to suppress the contributions of other civilizations. But in the same direction pointed the discovery of a sunken city found in 2001 in the Gulf of Cambay. This sunken city, which is about 40 meters



F. Oldermann lithograph after painting by F. Krüger

Wilhelm von Humboldt, the 19th Century philologist (left), and Bal Gangadhar Tilak (right), who dated the beginning of Aryan civilization to before the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations by several thousand years.



under the sea, is estimated to be 9,500 years old. It is located about 30 km west of Gujarat, and archaeologists found under the water human bones, stone tools, pieces of ceramics, and pieces of sculpture. With the radiocarbon dating, they could identify that these artifacts were 9,500 years old, and that that city existed at

the end of the last Ice Age. It is 36 meters below the ocean, and it was huge. It had an area of 7.5 km by 3.5 km. It was a gigantic city, and it is 5,000 years older than all other known cities in Mesopotamia and other locations.

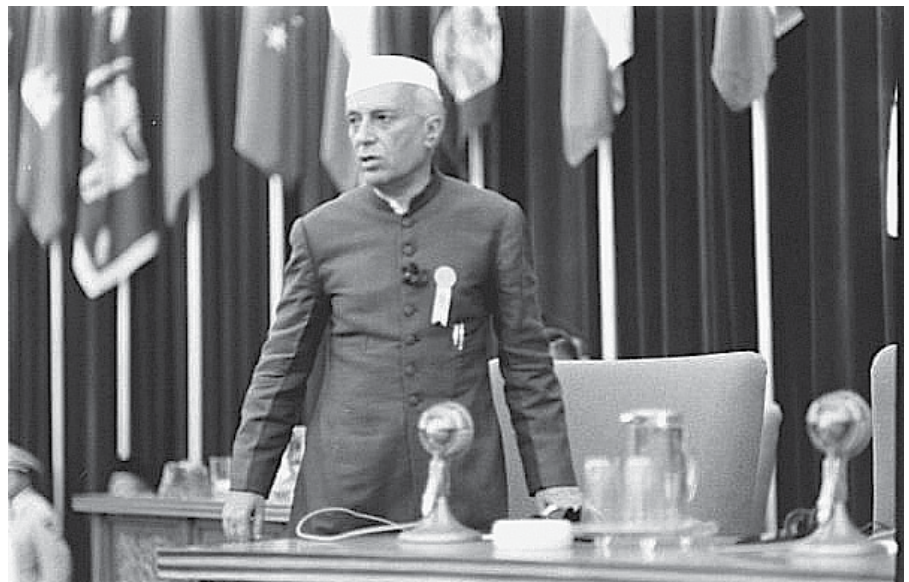
The *Rigveda*, one of the earliest testimonies of human civilization, mentions a river called Sarasvati. This river was supposed to flow from the Himalayas to the Arab Sea, through that area where now this city was found. For a long time, traces of this river were not visible anymore, and people thought this was just an invention. But only a few years ago, it was possible to make pictures from space with NASA, and that could indeed identify that such a riverbed did exist exactly where the writings said it was. It had just disappeared because of tectonic movements that eliminated these traces. But the *Rigveda* speaks about developed civilizations, among them the so-called Harappan cities in India, Pakistan, and maybe even in Afghanistan.

All of that means the significance of this region of the world as one of cradles of mankind has to be researched a lot more, and that we are much more part of the one universal human culture than people are generally aware.

So, to return to the beginning, the question I raised about the urgency of Gandhi's philosophy, let me restate. We are confronted with an unbelievable situation with the threat of nuclear war, which, if it happens, would lead to the annihilation of mankind. We are witnessing with increasing speed the blow-out of the financial system through hyperinflation. We are looking at a world famine, and even Kissinger at the age of 99, is warning of the imminence of World War III. Even so, one has to say that he contributed a lot to the development of the world as it is today. So, therefore, we have right now, two completely different situations. We have the Western world, which seeks to remain a dominant factor, and we have the renaissance of the Non-Aligned Movement, the BRICS countries, the Belt and Road Initiative, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; and much of the Global

South, is indeed trying to create a new world economic order. They are also working very actively on a new credit system, like the New Bretton Woods, which Lyndon LaRouche defined as the absolutely necessary solution many years ago. We made the proposal to avoid World War III by creating a global international security and development architecture, which is the same idea as the global security initiative and the global development initiative proposed by Xi Jinping.

In this, the *Panchsheel*, which was in harmony with the thought of Mahatma Gandhi, the five principles of peaceful coexistence, is an absolutely impor-



India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, at the Bandung Conference in 1955.

tant and non-negotiable part. Therefore, even if it looks sometimes very difficult, because how do you stop a war machine? An ongoing war which is right now in great danger to get out of control over Ukraine? Tensions are building up over Taiwan. Is the method of Gandhi, of nonviolence, still the tool to bring about peace?

I would like to end my remarks with the answer Nehru gave when he was asked by a journalist named [Rustom Khurshedji] Karangia in 1960. Nehru said, "His [Gandhi's] thoughts, methods, and solutions have helped to bridge the gap between the industrial revolution and the atomic era.... [A]fter all, the only possible answer to the atom bomb is non-violence, isn't it?" I fully agree with that.