

Schiller Institute Webcast Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Will Campus Protests End the Military-Industrial-Financial Complex?

The following is an edited transcript of the May 1, 2024, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche. Embedded links have been added. The video is available [here](#).

Harley Schlanger: Hello and welcome to our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and chairwoman of the Schiller Institute. This is Wednesday, May 1, 2024. I'm Harley Schlanger and I'll be your host today. You can send questions or comments by email to questions@schillerinstitute.org.

Helga, we're witnessing a growing rebellion on college campuses across the United States, as students are expressing their opposition to the policies of the Biden administration and Congress for funding the Israeli attack on Gaza, which has so far killed more than 34,000 people. A CNN poll, released the other day, shows that more than 80% of young people between 18 and 34 oppose Biden's policy of support for Netanyahu. Yet, in the Congress and from leading figures, including Biden himself, there are calls for "silencing the opposition" that is being expressed by these campus demonstrations.

Our first question that came in is: "What are your thoughts on what's happening on the campuses? And can this make a difference?"

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: What we are experiencing is that the younger generation, students, but also others, obviously are not bought by a corrupt establishment, and they have kept their absolute sense of what is right and what is wrong. And I think it will be extremely im-

portant that there are some people in the so-called "establishment" who have the courage to do likewise and support the students, as some have done. But more is needed. Because we are in a strategic situation, where clearly the efforts to maintain the power structure of the unipolar world by promoting the Ukraine war, by promoting war in the Middle East, by trying to extend Global NATO: All of these are efforts to maintain and expand the existing order, which will not succeed.



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Campus protesters are being threatened, arrested, and sometimes beaten by law enforcement officers. Here, a protester is arrested at an orderly protest at the University of Texas at Austin, where more than 130 have been arrested in two weeks.

There is no way in this universe, how the effort [can succeed] to go back to a status quo, where the United States is the world policeman, and the European allies are just servile slaves, and that the world can be run by an assumed and imaginary moral superiority of the West. I think this is completely out.

And now the big question is, sure, the efforts to suppress the students by police, by threatening to suspend them from their education, by expelling them from even their dorms, so they cannot return to their sleep-

ing quarters, this is done under pressure from hedge funds and corporations that are threatening to cut off funding to universities, and naturally, some elements in the Congress. That will not succeed. What that will do, is that will increase the polarization. It will make it all the more difficult to find a diplomatic solution, to find a way of resolving this in a peaceful way. And I think it just furthers the danger of an absolute polarization. Because, if you look—in the time of social media, you can no longer control the media as you could a few years ago. So, the students and young people, and all the people in the Global South, they’re watching what is going on in the United States, and they’re watching what the German position is, and then they draw their own conclusions, and come to the conclusion that the governments of the so-called Global West are hopelessly lost, they have lost their morality. And for example, if you look at some pictures, where the German Ambassador [to the Palestinian Authority, Oliver Owczarowski during his visit to Birzeit University near Ramallah] in the West Bank, and also the [German] Ambassador to Pakistan [Alfred Grannas, at a conference in Lahore, Pakistan]—they were heckled and booed by students who absolutely denounced Germany for its support for the U.S.-Israeli policy.

So, I can only hope that there would be reasonable Americans, Americans like the different members of the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS)—there are many groups fighting for a peaceful resolution, like Pax Christi, and many other groups supporting a different solution—I would hope that that impacts the public debate in the United States and elsewhere, in such a way that more people put pressure on Israel to stop this, because it’s not stopping! Blinken, who is running around in the region right now, is pretending to insist that this is now the big chance for Hamas to agree to a compromise, while Netanyahu is meeting with his cabinet members, who are telling him, “No way.” And then Netanyahu says that the offensive in Rafah will occur no matter what the possible deal with Hamas will be. So, the whole thing looks like the

horror show is continuing. And since you mentioned 34,000 people dead, they just found that probably another 10,000 at least are buried under the rubble of the various destroyed houses in Gaza.

So, it is an unbelievable situation, and the more people stand up and give support to the students, the better it is, and I can only call on people to do exactly that.

Schlanger: We have some questions that demonstrate exactly what you are saying about the polarization and response internationally. Let me start with one that I received from a contact in Cameroon, who said: “We’ve seen videos of the New York Police Department riot police storming Hamilton Hall at Columbia



Official State Department photo by Chuck Kennedy

U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken meets with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, May 1, 2024.

University, breaking windows to get in and arresting more than 100. My colleagues and I would like to ask President Biden and all those calling for silencing the students, ‘Where’s this democracy you’re always yelling about?’ ”

Zepp-LaRouche: [laughs] Well, I think it shows its true face! You know, democracy, while it might be a nice concept and it was for sure in ancient Greece, even though, there, the Sophists started to give it a bad name, already then; but in reality, the democracy has vanished, step by step, for a long time, and we are really not in a rules-based order, but we are in [countries with] governments in the so-called collective West, who bend the rules as they find it necessary.

That’s what I’m trying to say: there should be adult

people, and they can be very young—you can be adult at a very young age—but there should be people who recognize that having such a hard line to use riot police against demonstrating students, who have not been violent—that’s a fact!—what you do with that, you are ruining the reputation of democracy, the reputation that there is such a thing as the rule of law, and human rights. And I think this causes potentially irreparable damage, which can only lead to a bloodbath or a revolution; it does not lead to a peaceful negotiation. And I think that more than ever before, diplomacy, nonviolence, and a dialogue to find a reasonable solution, is the demand of the hour.

Because the other dimension of this whole thing is that the hysteria for war is increasing around the globe—especially if you look at the different deployments around NATO. It’s absolutely time to step back and think hard. Because, if you escalate, escalate, escalate, you end up in World War III! And I think that is a dimension of the conflict. If democracy gets discredited in the eyes of the whole world—as it is being right now—it has strategic implications.

Schlanger: Now, on the question of what’s happening on campuses, there was a report on Fox News that last night, there was a counter-protest at UCLA in Los Angeles, and one of the students told Fox News that the counter-protesters were not students, but wanted to create a pretext to attract the police. Now, we have a question from Arnold in Michigan, who asks: “What operations have been put in place to make the demonstrations turn ugly, and even violent?”

Zepp-LaRouche: While I don’t have details concerning what happened in L.A., if you look at the history of conflicts, not only in the United States but internationally, false-flag operations, provocations, counter-gangs, gang/counter-gang, have been the repertoire of empires to keep control. So, I think this urgently requires vigilance by everybody, and the absolute demand not to deviate from nonviolence.

There is in Germany a video circulating now, where the journalists from the second channel TV were caught placing a guy with a poster in a peaceful demonstration of farmers, some weeks ago, when farmers were demonstrating against government and EU measures. They

were quite peaceful and going on with their demonstration: All of a sudden, a guy comes from the sidelines with a poster which reads “More Weapons to Ukraine,” maybe Taurus [missiles] or whatever. And all of a sudden TV crews turned their cameras on this guy, from such an angle that he looked as if he were part of the farmers’ demonstration. Then some farmers nearby recognized the swindle, and pointed out that this guy did not belong to them. And then you could see on the video, how the TV crew was carefully directing this guy [to move] behind some line, where he was protected from the anger expressed at him.



jstreet X page

Israeli Finance Minister Bezalet Smotrich calls for the “total annihilation” of cities in Gaza, including Rafah, citing a Biblical passage about Amalek, the enemy nation of the Israelites.

Now, this is *in flagrante* an effort to put provocateurs into a peaceful demonstration. And I think these tactics are well documented. It probably would be useful for people to put together a history of such provocations internationally, where all of a sudden peaceful demonstrations became violent because there was some *agent provocateur* or some other provocation. These historical examples—there are tons of them—should be circulated in order to inoculate people against such provocations.

Schlanger: Helga, there was an incident on Monday night, where the Finance Minister of Israel, Bezalet Smotrich, called for the “total annihilation” of cities in Gaza, including Rafah, citing a Biblical passage about

Amalek, about the wiping out of the people of Amalek, that the attack did not leave a man or woman alive. A question came in from Texas, in which the person writes: “This statement violates the provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice. Will they act before more people die?” Let me just add that the Israeli paper *Haaretz* carried an editorial today calling for Smotrich to be removed from the cabinet for his repeated calls for genocide.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, I think that that is very clear, and if the International Court of Justice—I don’t know what the procedures are—if they can respond on the spot on their own, or if they need some government, like the South African government or Nicaraguan government, to demand action, but I think this is so absolutely, one-hundred-percent obvious that there is no margin for doubt. This reference to Amalek is the proof, and that has been documented before.

I think the international community should really make this an issue, because it’s very clear that Netanyahu is trying to prolong the war, because if there were new elections, he would be out, and then he may face legal trouble. So, I think it’s definitely a situation which does require an urgent, urgent intervention from the outside. And Netanyahu said that no matter what, these so-called negotiations with Hamas right now are—I think they’re taking place in Egypt, in Cairo right now—that no matter what, he will make the attack on Rafah.

And all the plans, the ridiculous behavior that some governments are throwing food and other humanitarian aid from airplanes into Palestine, in many cases even killing people, because they get hit by accident, or they’re so desperate to get the little food. And at the same time, there are more weapons deliveries to Israel to continue the killing! That definitely has to stop, and I think the demand internationally, it’s very clear that it can only come from the outside. And there has been a tremendous failure, because the United States is backing Israel, that’s very clear.



Szjijártó Facebook page
 Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjártó has warned of the danger of a nuclear war.

Schlanger: You had mentioned before the ongoing NATO military exercises and war provocations from the West. We have a question from Ireland; the person writes: “There seems to be no caution in NATO governments about the language they’re using about war with Russia. The Russian response has mostly been measured. But aren’t those speaking of war, worried that moving from talk about being ‘war ready’ to sending troops could be one provocation too far?”



NATO
 NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg wants to “guarantee” continuing weapons and funds to Ukraine for the next ten years.

Zepp-LaRouche: I think obviously not, otherwise, they wouldn’t be so irresponsible in talking up all of this stuff. When you hear some of these politicians, I am absolutely convinced that they have a screw loose in their mind. Because how can you talk about nuclear war? The Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto was just in Dushanbe, where he made an absolutely clear-cut warning that all this hysteria about war against Russia—

the use of nuclear weapons—is creating such a frenzy and such a hype, that *it could lead to that* in the very short term! Or, look at NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who just said that one should make sure

that the weapons supply to Ukraine is guaranteed, no matter what the domestic policies will be of the different NATO countries, because that can obviously change in elections and so forth. So, he proposed that NATO should take over the coordination of weapons deliveries to Ukraine, and he talks about five years. I mean, have you ever thought that democracy may still be an issue? That's what German Foreign Minister Baerbock said—she said, “I will make sure that weapons will be delivered to Ukraine, no matter what my voters think at home.” I mean, are we a democracy? Obviously not!

I think it's really important that we start collecting these kinds of statements, because pretty much it will become clear to even the most unthinking person that we are about to lose democracy. So, I can only say, we need a much stronger peace movement. I think we need a lot more people to engage in the kind of efforts of the Schiller Institute and the International Peace Coalition, by trying to put solutions on the table which change the geometry. Because if this kind of talk is allowed to continue—or just take another thing that just was reported: The U.S. Naval War College just hosted [war games](#), between U.S. Strategic Command and other entities, which exercised a multilevel, multi-faceted war involving several nuclear powers, obviously, Russia, China, possibly Iran, possibly North Korea. But having war games, which go through a multi-connected plan of such wars—You can say, “OK, it's just a war game,” but war games are the preparation for what could become reality very quickly.

And I think this danger of an escalation of warmongers—take for example, the German politician who chairs the Bundestag Defense Committee, Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, the leading candidate for the liberal party (FDP) to the EU Parliament in June—and now, a court in Düsseldorf decided that it is legitimate to say she is a warmonger, because she is. Now, would you vote for a warmonger? Obviously, we have to get people to really—when you are disconnected from the consequences of your deeds, when you are disconnected from



European Union

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock promises the delivery of weapons to Ukraine, “no matter what my voters think at home.”

reality, you are clinically insane. And I think that that is a discussion that is urgently needed. And the more people who participate, the better, but even more important is to participate in our efforts to change the agenda to [an international security and development architecture](#), in the tradition of the Peace of Westphalia. Because we have to change the general direction, we have to go back to diplomacy and negotiation, and leave behind the idea that the outcome of war will be decided on the battlefield, or weapons may decide the outcome on the battlefield, because that may be the end of it very soon.

Schlanger: We have a few more questions here, Helga. Menashe, who's a regular participant, asks:

“Why is the U.S. threatening the International Criminal Court over its possible Israeli arrest warrant? What would be the impact of this action?” I assume he means, if the ICC issued an arrest warrant, why is the U.S. responding against it?

Zepp-LaRouche: I think the U.S. did not sign the ICC treaty, so they don't feel they have anything to do with it, but it's—again: if you veto all the time in the UN Security Council; if you do not listen to resolutions decided by the UN Security Council; if you say, whatever the UN Security Council decides is “non-binding,” which was the reaction after the last UN resolution in respect to Gaza, what you are actually saying is that international law does not exist, [that] the might of the most powerful is the only thing which rules. And this idea, coming from certain Congressional forces to retaliate against the ICC—The ICC, I should say it doesn't have a good reputation, because they used to be known as the court which only prosecutes African leaders. And indeed, in their record, they have not ever prosecuted anybody who belongs to the establishment of the West, so to speak. Now, the situation is such that an arrest warrant—they did issue one against [Russian President Vladimir] Putin, and nobody protested against that—so just the potential that they could do that against Israeli figures is too much for some people who obviously

have ruled out of their mind the idea that there is an international law which would be superior to national law. And they say, “No, we are the police, and we are going to retaliate against the judges.”

Now, I don’t know what caused the International Court of Justice, which is not the ICC—the ICJ is a UN agency, and they are two different courts. Yesterday, the ICJ made a ruling rejecting immediate measures against the German government in the case which was brought by

Nicaragua [against Germany] for weapons deliveries [to Israel] and therefore aiding the genocide against Gaza. The ICJ did not make a ruling forbidding Germany to do that; however, they did not throw the case out. And it will now be investigated, and that may take many months or even years, so it will not immediately impact the present catastrophe. I don’t know why they did that; have they been leaned on? I don’t know; it’s a very good question. There is very clearly the strategy of the German government whereby they changed their tactic: Before they were arrogantly refusing any such insinuation, and more recently they shifted, by saying, we are already reducing weapons sales, and we’re only selling things which are not really weapons, they are only helmets and other things.

So, they are trying to sweet-talk their own support, but I don’t think it will hold, because the moral world is so upset about what is happening that it will just contribute more and more to the alienation of the Global South, which is watching all of this. It’s very bad, but my hope is still—and I’m not giving up this hope—that we can find a way of getting the countries of the Global South, and countries of the so-called collective West to cooperate, because that’s the only way!

But the more such actions, like threatening to retaliate against the ICC or trying to somehow influence the situation otherwise [are taken,] it will just lead to more polarization, and it’s detrimental to the idea of a peaceful resolution.

Schlanger: Here’s a question that delves into politi-



ICJ

The International Court of Justice has rejected immediate measures against the German government in the case brought by Nicaragua against Germany for weapons deliveries to Israel, deliveries that indicate complicity in the genocide. Here, the Nicaraguan team at the court.

cal philosophy. The questioner writes: “There’s a lot of confusion over the word ‘democracy,’ but technically, the United States is a republic, which elects its officials through democracy. But it is a republic. There was a lot of discussion among the Founding Fathers about this. Can you say something about that?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes. Democracy, while it is the sacred cow of the people who are fighting for a unipolar world, is actually historically not so well-regarded. For example, Plato—and Thucydides, by the way—both of them concluded that democracy is only the other side of the coin of tyranny. They say that democracy does not function, because you have the rule of the many, which you cannot do. For example, if you rule in a basic democratic way on every topic, you get nowhere. Because every lamppost you put in the street, every person you appoint, every little detail would have to have a majority vote—and obviously that does not function. So, I think the democracy is really the nice side of what is in reality a tyranny. You can find many examples. For example, is the United States still a democracy, or has it become a plutocracy? If it takes so many millions of dollars to get a seat in the Congress; if it takes so many double-digit millions for a Senate seat, if it takes really a lot of money to become President—I don’t know if “democracy” is really the right term to characterize that. And for very good reasons, the idea that America was founded as a republic is a superior concept. It was Nicholas of Cusa, the great German philosopher and

thinker of the 15th Century, who was the first one to develop the concept of a representative system, whereby the elected representative is in a reciprocal, legal relationship whereby he both represents the interests of the state, of the government, towards the voters, towards the people; but at the same time, he represents the interests of his constituency towards the government. So, he is in this representative, reciprocal position, and that was really what republicanism means. And that was what was established with the American Revolution and the U.S. Constitution.

So, the problem, naturally, is that you have representatives who have this reciprocal responsibility, but they are basically following a different code, because in order to be re-elected you have to follow the rules of the club, or you will be kicked out. And that's the same in Germany, where many MPs [Members of Parliament] have told me, over the years, "What you say is so interesting, but I cannot bring it up in my faction, because I would never get nominated for my election district again, if I would even mention this." So, they may say in private these are nice ideas, but if it comes to the question of [publicly expressing such ideas], many of them don't have the backbone. Because they say, "If I lose my job, I can't do good." But if they have the job, they're prevented from doing good, so what is this argument worth?

I think the problem is that you can blame the government, and you can blame Congress, but my late husband Lyndon LaRouche would always say it's the fault of the people. Because if you keep electing people who are absolutely unfit for office, and who are clearly following different interests than the people who vote for them, then it is in large part the fault of the population who allow this to happen. And it is obvious, the entire game is to keep people from thinking straight, from having the kind of knowledge they need to judge these things. There is an enormous apparatus in motion to prevent people from thinking clearly. One of them is the drug plague, with deregulation for dope. In Germany they now have basically made legal the use of cannabis. If people are constantly entertained and their mental faculties are confused by various substances, that makes the ruling much easier. Because the only remedy for that is to have state citizens, citizens who take responsibility for their lives, for that of the nation and for humanity as a whole seriously enough that they qualify themselves to be called upon to be President,

or hold cabinet posts, be an economic minister, health minister, or a secretary of education. But most people would prefer to take a smaller view and enjoy a barbeque and other kinds of entertainment, harmless admittedly, but at the expense of making sure the republic is kept. It was Benjamin Franklin, who responded to a question about the Constitution: "I gave you a Republic, if you can keep it."

Schlanger: One of the best critiques of democracy came from William Shakespeare, who, in addition to Plato, also had influence on the Founding Fathers. In his play *Julius Caesar*, in the scene after the assassination of Caesar, first, Brutus addresses the crowd, and the crowd is cheering for Brutus, but then Mark Antony comes up, mocks the argument of Brutus, and the crowd is now calling for the head of Brutus! It's clear that the idea of "democracy," as you hear it from Blinken and from Chatham House and the Atlantic Council is what Shakespeare was warning against.

So, Helga, we've come to the end. Do you have any closing remarks for people?

Zepp-LaRouche: I just would like you to join the [Schiller Institute](#), to join the [International Peace Coalition](#), which meets every Friday. If you write to us, we will tell you how you can participate. Because we are in a situation where the upheaval by the students, especially in the United States—but it's also happening in several European countries—I think that is a hopeful change: It's an expression that there is a significant section of the population who are standing up for what is right. But obviously, the forces that are making a lot of profit from the war don't want to quell these conflicts, they want to keep them going.

I think [Pope Francis](#) just made a new statement, where he completely condemned making money by the sale of weapons. He said this is the most disgusting and greatest sin of all. And I think people should listen to that, and we have to get the war machine retooled. We have to find a way to stop this idea that more and more of the real economy needs to be militarized, and in order for that to sustain the debt bubble, the interest rates and all of this require you to have this permanent war, one war coming after the other. That cycle is going to lead to the destruction of humanity in the short term, if we don't change it. So, join our efforts, and that's the best I can tell you.