

Schiller Institute Weekly Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The Strategic Imperative for a Classical Renaissance

The following is an edited transcript of the July 31, 2024, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with Schiller Institute founder and leader 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, the founder and leader of the Schiller Institute. Today is Wednesday, July 31, 2024. I am Harley Schlanger and I'll be your host. You can send questions and comments by email to questions@schillerinstitute.org or send them to the YouTube chat.

Helga, we've had two very serious provocations in the last two days: The murder of a Hezbollah leader in Beirut, and then yesterday, the killing of Ismail Haniyeh, a leader of Hamas, in Tehran. These occur after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke at the U.S. Congress

and said that Israel is prepared to go to war against Iran and wants the United States to be a partner in that. Do you think this portends the spread into a larger regional war? And is there anything that can be done to stop Israel from continuing its rampage of killing?



Council.gov.ru

Was Hamas negotiator Ismail Haniyeh assassinated in Tehran to save Netanyahu's neck, or because he was supporting China's role in the Middle East?

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I think we are on the verge of a catastrophe if this course is not reversed, because, obviously, Netanyahu's visit in the United States had one main aim: to ensure that the United States would back up whatever Netanyahu would be doing, and, unfortunately, given the incredibly bad performance of the U.S. Congress, which applauded and interrupted Netanyahu 58 times—including several standing ovations—basically signaling

all the way that the United States is with Israel. And Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said, when he was asked what the position of the United States would be,



C-SPAN

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses an adoring, enraptured joint session of the U.S. Congress after the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court had asked the court for an arrest warrant for him on charges of war crimes.



DoD/Chad J. McNeeley

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin says the United States will stand with Israel and back up its defense. It is committing genocide nonetheless.



CC/Montecruz Foto

One of many Israeli settlements still being built in the West Bank area of Palestine, though finally ruled illegal, along with all such settlements, by the International Court of Justice.

he said—which was the only answer—that the United States would stand with Israel and be on the defense of Israel.

Now, this is an unbelievable situation. I think we are on the verge of not only a regional war but one step more and it becomes a regional war involving Lebanon, involving Israel, and possibly even Iran. And then the result is, if the United States backs Israel all the way, then obviously Iran, which has strengthened its relationships with Russia and China in the recent period very much, that we could be in a few moments, in a few blinks of an eye, we could be on the verge of a global nuclear war.

And this is so absolutely disgusting, I think the only thing that can be done which would be efficient, would be that the United States changes its attitude, and basically tells Israel to stop. Nothing else will function.

I think this is terrible. And it's one step more, showing the utter contempt of the Western system, if you like, or the collective West, or U.S.-NATO—that whole alliance—utter disrespect for legality, utter disrespect for anything. Just remind yourself

that the International Court of Justice not very long ago made two rulings. The International Criminal Court Prosecutor Karim Khan [requested an indictment of Netanyahu](#) as a war criminal, and then the [International Court of Justice ruled](#) that all the settlements by Israel in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem, and in Gaza and the Golan Heights, are all illegal, and therefore the whole settlers policy is illegal. This puts the world on the edge of the abyss, and it just demonstrates that the solution at this point, unfortunately, can only come from the United States. That does not look very promising, given that the Congress seems to be completely in the pocket of those who are financing the campaigns of Congressmen and Senators. And, given the fact that the Biden administration has

done nothing to restrain Netanyahu from what he is doing in Gaza— And what will be the policy of Trump, who is not yet anywhere close to the White House? It is still an open question. So, it looks really bleak.

Schlanger: We received a question from a regular listener, who asks, “Was the assassination of Haniyeh a calculated attempt to save Netanyahu’s own neck?” We have another question on the assassination of Haniyeh: “Was he supporting China’s role in Palestinian reconciliation? And could his assassination therefore be seen as a response to China’s role in the Middle East?”



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Chandra Muzaffar, on behalf of JUST, based in Malaysia, is supporting the campaign to get the UN General Assembly to supersede Security Council inaction on Gaza by invoking Resolution 377.

Zepp-LaRouche: I think the answer to both questions is yes. Because Netanyahu very obviously is aware, first of all, that there is a growing opposition inside Israel: Two days ago, there was almost a palace coup inside the cabinet, where elements of the government were backing up actions by the Israel Defense Forces. In any case, he has a mess on his hands inside his own coalition. The outside opposition is growing and, obviously, Netanyahu at this point is driving this thing forward, in large

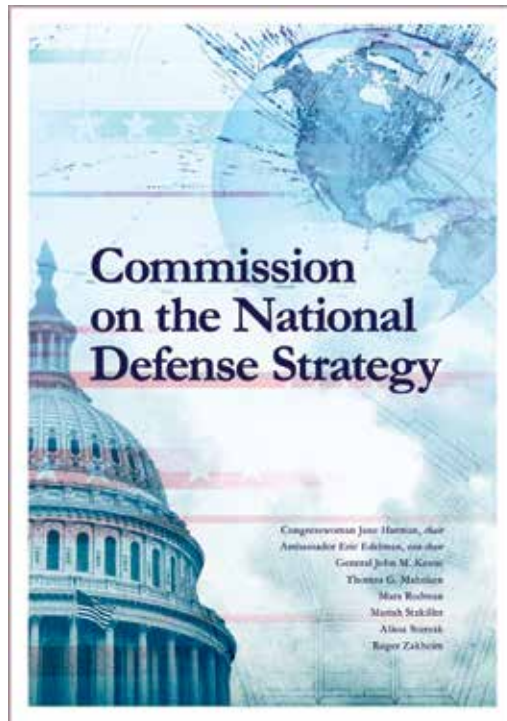
part to save his neck. Probably that's not the only motive, but that's a very strong motive.

Concerning Ismail Haniyeh, he was the main negotiator in the effort to get a deal on the hostages. So, to kill that counterpart means the hostage negotiation is now in, basically, in a hopeless situation. And, naturally, the effort by China to move in the direction to get some resolution of the entire conflict, by unifying all the Palestinian groups, that has been now targeted as well.

I think this is definitely bringing the world to the edge of a catastrophe and, therefore, I think an [initiative advocated by Chandra Muzaffar](#) of Malaysia is important. It proposes that UN Resolution 377 be used now to move the entire issue of what is happening in Gaza to the UN General Assembly, given the fact that there was a checkmate in the UN Security Council, I think this is now gaining utmost prominence and should be supported, really strongly, by anybody who not only cares about peace in the Middle East, but who cares about world peace.

Schlanger: You mentioned that this is something the United States could do, but it's highly unlikely, given the instability politically in the United States; what we saw from the Congress. But we have a question from an Austrian blogger, who covers Southwest Asia, and she said that she agrees with you that Netanyahu seems to have taken the reception he received in the Congress as a go-ahead to do whatever he wants. So, she asks, "Is there any other action that could be taken against them, short of war, for example, in the United Nations, expelling Israel from the UN?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I think the initiative promoted by Chandra Muzaffar to implement UN Resolution 377—I think that needs to be discussed internationally, because it's sort of the last resort, this "Uniting for Peace" clause, whereby if the UN Security Council is tied up—blocked, as it has been because of the con-



Commission on the National Defense Strategy
A new report says the United States is ill-prepared for a simultaneous war with Russia and China and calls for a major military build-up. The Pentagon budget already surpasses \$1 trillion.

tinuous veto of the United States—this is the last option to put the whole issue before the UN General Assembly, and I think that that should be done on an emergency basis, absolutely.

Schlanger: Now, we have a question from someone asking about the discussion from last week on the initiative of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán: Where does that stand? Is there still a move from EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the European Union to remove Orbán or to punish Hungary? And is there any motion toward his proposal for a peace conference on Ukraine?

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I'm sure that he is continuously organizing for that. As of now, I can only say, I think the Polish

government—I think it was even the Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski (I'm not entirely sure now)—made a proposal to kick Hungary out of the EU, saying that if Orbán dislikes the EU so much, why doesn't he leave? That may not be a bad idea, because the EU in its present form is utterly an instrument of NATO, and, in fact, there is no difference between what NATO is doing—with all the provocations with Global NATO and all that implies—and the EU. This was cemented by Ursula von der Leyen, I think it was almost two years ago, when there was the July 2022 NATO summit in Madrid. And then it was in January 2023, when von der Leyen and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg basically said that NATO and the EU are completely united.

And, obviously, this has incredible implications, because now that NATO is becoming Global NATO, there are right now maneuvers taking place—German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius is running around in Hawaii, and then in South Korea and the Philippines, where there is the ridiculous participation of two German warships in these maneuvers to show German strength in the Pacific! It's a joke; it's ridiculous. But it's not so ridiculous, because it's part

of trying to go into a real military build-up.

There was just a [new report published](#), by the U.S. Commission on the National Defense Strategy in Congress, saying the United States right now would not be prepared for a simultaneous war with Russia and China, and therefore, there must be an absolute build-up of military production. Good luck with that! They don't have much production left. But in any case, there is a tremendous war push: It's going on in Europe. Pistorius is totally in line with this NATO-U.S. policy. And I think the situation is really one where I do not exclude that the whole situation could go out of control, either in Ukraine, or now with the terribly dangerous situation in the Middle East. But, nevertheless, they're building for the *coming* war with Russia and China: Pistorius had said, without any backing of facts, that Russia would be prepared to attack NATO by 2029.

So, what you see is a war mania—a militaristic hysteria—building up in the countries of the West, to the extent, obviously, that they're losing out, because all they can offer is military alliances, military training—nothing else. While China is going in a completely different direction—in the BRICS and Belt and Road Initiative in general—offering economic cooperation, bringing economic benefits to the countries that cooperate. And, obviously, the only answer people find from the West, or the so-called “elites” in the West, to respond to that, is a military build-up. If that's not reversed, it's going to lead to the end of civilization: And I think that has to be gotten across to people, because these people are playing with nuclear war!

Schlanger: You mentioned Pistorius and the situation in Germany. Let me remind people, you're listening to Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder and leader of the Schiller Institute. She's been very active in building the [International Peace Coalition](#), and we'll be having the 61st consecutive weekly meeting coming up this Friday. And people can find out about that and participate in that, because it's urgent that there be a reaction from citizens.

Now, this question is from someone who's a citizen of Germany, who asks: “Why aren't the Greens in the German government protesting the placement in Germany of long-range, nuclear-capable missiles that can strike Russia? The Greens grew as a party in the 1980s,

due to their opposition to the placing of U.S. missiles in Germany. What happened?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I think the transformation of a supposedly pacifist party into the most war-hawkish, militaristic, aggressive party in all of Germany, really was instrumentalized by Green Party leader Joschka Fischer, who, in 1999, backed the illegitimate NATO war against Yugoslavia. And ever since, this tendency has grown. If you look at what Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock is saying these days, you cannot differentiate what she says from what U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken says, or any one of these war-hawks in



White House/Lawrence Jackson

Vice President Kamala Harris, “a little person,” now receiving the benefit of tremendous media hype. “Whenever she appears with [Secretary of State] Blinken in an international setting, it looks like they’re twins.”

the United States. Whenever she appears with Blinken in an international setting, it looks like they're twins, joined at the hips, because they say the same thing; they even look the same—they have the same dark look in their eyes. Watch out for it!

I think the Greens have become a completely bellicose, militaristic party. I think they have lost any character as a pacifist party. They are just now an adjunct of NATO.

Schlanger: We have a question on the U.S. political situation. John from Tennessee writes: “There are reports that Vice President Kamala Harris is more responsive to the idea of ending the suffering of Palestinians than President Biden. Is that possibly true? Or is that a

cover-story? Because she's a full supporter of the Ukraine war."

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I think Kamala Harris has been a very un-shining, little person for the last three-and-a-half years. She has not come up with any significant statement on her own. Now she has the benefit of a tremendous media hype, and, naturally, they're trying to appeal to certain layers, like young people, female voters, and so forth. I don't have any confidence that she would be anything different than those people who obviously have controlled the Biden administration from the very beginning: namely, what Ray McGovern calls the MICIMATT—the military-industrial-congressional-intelligence-media-academia-think-tank complex. And I can only say that, unfortunately, the only voices of reason are not in the presidential campaign. Independent presidential candidate Robert Kennedy has said things concerning the Middle East which don't give one much hope that he really does understand the whole matter. I think the only voices of reason are coming from two independent candidates from New York: One, the U.S. Senate candidate, Diane Sare, and the other is the candidate for U.S. Congress in the Bronx CD-15, Jose Vega. And I would only hope that a coalition of independent candidates is lining up with them, to become a strong voice in this situation.

Schlanger: Here's a question from Vancouver, British Columbia, in Canada, referring to the obscene spectacle at the Paris Olympics, of a flotilla of floats, which included a disgraceful portrayal of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* fresco, as a drag queen ceremony. This person writes: "Do you know if Macron had a hand in the blasphemous disgrace in the opening of the Paris Olympics? And is there a reaction in France, especially among religious Catholics, to this kind of disgraceful behavior?"

Zepp-LaRouche: I'm pretty sure Macron had a say in it; I don't know for sure, but I would assume it. Given the fact that he put so much emphasis on the Olympics, he even said—after the Parliament elections, where his party did so poorly, and the new government is likely to be extremely unstable, whatever it turns out to be—that we should forget everything; let's concentrate now on the Olympics. I think he has a big investment in the Olympics, and, unfortunately, this idea— There are now denials, saying it was not Leonardo da Vinci's *Last*

Supper, that it was some other painting that portrayed Dionysios in Greece, and so forth; there's a whole debate. But the point is, it was utterly disgusting. It was an assault on Christianity. The French Catholic Bishops Conference strongly protested against it. But even more strongly—and I think this is a sign of the times—was the government of Iran, basically saying that it was an attack on one of the leading prophets, Jesus Christ. They put out a stronger protest than anybody in France, from the Catholic Church, or even in Germany, where the Bishops there protested.

And probably, if we survive this present escalation of the situation in the Middle East—and Ukraine, which is no less dangerous—then this image of the absolute demonstration of ugliness and degeneracy as it was demonstrated around the opening ceremony of the Olympics, will be like the sign of a dying empire. This is like the last phase of the Roman Empire, where all kinds of perversions grew, and that is a sign that obviously the establishments have lost the sense, not only of artistic beauty, but of any kind of civilized behavior.

So, this is tragic, but we cannot make that the last word.

Let me just add something which I should have mentioned earlier, to the question from the person from Germany: You know, the decision of the United States, according to Chancellor Olaf Scholz, to put long-range missiles into Germany starting in 2026, must be prevented. And I think this would be not only a repetition of the middle-range missile crisis of the 1980s—the Pershing II and SS-20s crisis—but in the present constellation of things, where all nuclear arms treaties have practically been thrown out—starting with the United States' unilateral rejection of the ABM Treaty in 2002, and then the cancellation by Trump of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in 2019—Russian President Vladimir Putin answered to all of this by saying that if these missiles are installed in Germany, Russia will have a "mirror" response: That means, they will put in middle-range or long-range missiles which are nuclear-capable, and if it comes to any kind of escalation, they will make Germany and Europe the nuclear battlefield of the coming Third World War.

Given the fact that one of our contributors to many programs from East Germany, a military analyst, Professor Wilfried Schreiber, recently made the emphatic point that Germany is not war-capable—not war-ready as Pistorius is saying—meaning that if you have a heavily populated area, with heavily industrial-

ized regions, you cannot have a war! You are destroying everything! You are destroying the people, you are destroying the industry, the infrastructure. So the very existence of Germany would be at stake if it comes to that. And therefore, I think we have to—and I will ask the International Peace Coalition to take this up, emphatically—we have to make the people aware of what the implication of that is: Who in the United States has the right to make a decision which puts into jeopardy the very existence of the German state? And Scholz, when he says the United States made the decision to deploy missiles in Germany, and that it was a good decision, is he the chancellor of Germany, or is he the Chancellor of the 51st state of the United States?

I mean, this has to be answered with a very clear mobilization of the German people in the streets.

Schlanger: Now, on that, Helga, we have a question from someone who picked up on the discussion we had last week about the proposal for a Council of Reason. He writes that he hears now, that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to Kyiv. There’s been a series of initiatives taken by nations of the Global South and the BRICS, to intervene to stop the war policy from the West, and the fairly clear rejection of U.S.-NATO war policy. So, he asks: “Is there an effort being made to recruit heads of state from these countries, including Modi, and leaders of some of the African countries, to join the Council of Reason?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I would hope so. We are basically asking all our supporters, all our activists, all our institutional contacts, to help us to throw out a net, so to speak, to find those people who would fit that qualification. And I would not exclude the possibility of government leaders, because this is a question of

diplomacy, and governments have all kinds of diplomatic channels: Look at the interventions of China, of President Lula from Brazil, of Modi, of President Erdoğan from Türkiye; and you had repeatedly African leaders going to Kyiv, going to Moscow; you had the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, travelling to Kyiv on July 22.

So, I think that some of these governments and institutional representatives are already acting on that level. But I think this is still a very uphill organizing battle, to try to bring this together. There are, I would say, a half-dozen people who have already committed to being part of this Council of Reason, and who have the kind of institutional standing to be part of that. Others are still considering it. I can only ask you to help us find the people, because it takes a lot of networking. It basically means people have to have the kind of courage to step forward and say, “We are on the brink of the abyss of destruction of everything, and therefore we are offering a different set of policies.” And that takes courage.

So, the best way to support such an effort is that the more people become involved in helping to organize it, the more likely it will succeed.

Schlanger: I have a final question that has to do with your significant intervention last weekend in a [presentation at the Orvieto Forum](#) in Italy, where you issued a call for a new Classical renaissance, to counter the organized degeneration of culture in the West. As I see it, your presentation was an elaboration of the theme that underlies your “Ten Principles of a New International Security and Development Architecture.” As you wrote in the [Tenth Principle](#): “The basic assumption for the new paradigm is, that man is fundamentally good and capable to infinitely perfect the cre-



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Helga Zepp-LaRouche participated in a forum sponsored by the new Italian political party Indipendenza! held in Orvieto, whose narrow streets are seen here.

ativity of his mind and the beauty of his soul,” and that that is what gives mankind the capability to overcome evil.

Now, given that, your call for a Classical renaissance was well received in Orvieto. There’s a question for you from someone who read about this in our *EIR Daily Alert*. He asks: “Do you think it’s still possible to save civilization, given the degeneration of the accepted cultural norms advanced by the dominant media culture?”

And if you want to say something about the conference, I think that would be very helpful.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, what you are quoting there is my response to the organization which invited me to participate in this conference, which is a new party in Italy. It’s called *Indipendenza!* (Independence!). And I was very impressed, because of what some of the leading people there were saying, who organized this conference, in the beautiful, actually medieval town of Orvieto, situated on the top of a hill. It has a very famous cathedral from the 14th Century—incredibly beautiful. And the roads are too narrow for cars to drive through. It has the incredible charm of the time when it was built.

In any case, at this conference, the organizers of *Indipendenza!* made the point that this is the second wave of trying to create sovereignist movements, shedding the control of supranational bureaucracies like the EU, and that they do not want to repeat the mistakes of the first sovereignist movement, which was to follow neoliberal economic policies and allow Islamophobic tendencies. They also called for a revival of Greek-Roman-Christian culture.

So, I felt very, very encouraged by that: to point to the fact that we have to go back and revive the best traditions of European civilization, which is the ancient Greek tradition of Socrates and Plato; of the great tragedians; some of the great sculptors; the very idea of the Good, the Beautiful, and Truth as one—which was one of the core ideas of that period. And how that idea was revived in the Italian Renaissance—the Golden Renaissance of the 15th Century—which overcame the Dark Ages of the 14th Century, and which was one of the gigantic contributions that really laid the foundations for European civilization for the following 600 years.

The idea is to go back to the greatest ideas: of Dante, of Petrarca, Brunelleschi—the architect who created the Duomo of the Cathedral of Florence—and many other beautiful ideas coming out of the Golden Renaissance, not least of which was the idea of the sovereign nation-state, which resulted from the combination of the increase of urbanization of that period, with especially the concept of Nicolaus of Cusa, who developed, for the first time, the idea that government is only legitimate if it has the consent of the governed; that you need a representative, reciprocal system between the government and the governed, mediated by the representatives who are elected, as the absolute stepping stone to create the foundation of national sovereignty. That concept has nothing to do with chauvinism or imperialism.

Because people always say, “Yeah, but two world wars were created by exaggerated nationalism.” That’s not true! Two world wars were created by empires; by imperialisms. And the nation-state—the sovereign nation-state—was one of the great accomplishments of European civilization, which is relevant today: If we want to have any kind of peaceful order today, it has to start with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence; it has to start with the concept of the absolute sovereignty of all, as the foundation of any kind of peaceful coexistence.

So, I think this was a very important conference, and I’m sure these ideas will resonate in the coming period a lot.

Schlanger: Well, I think I saw your responses up on the Schiller Institute website today. If they’re not there, they should be, but people can go there and read your responses, because it really does exemplify the kind of beautiful intervention that’s necessary if we’re going to change the world. So, Helga, I’ve run out of questions. Any closing words from you?

Zepp-LaRouche: Stay tuned, because this situation in Southwest Asia is on the edge. It could escalate into a big war in no time, so please join the International Peace Coalition meeting on Friday, at 17:00 in Europe or at 11:00 in the Eastern U.S., because I’m 100% sure that will be one of the major, if not *the* major topic at that meeting, and what to do about it.