

‘Whom the Gods Would Destroy, They First Make Mad’

The following is an edited transcript of the August 21, 2024, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with Schiller Institute founder and leader Helga Zepp-LaRouche. Embedded links have been added. The video is available [here](#).

Stephan Ossenkopp: Hello, and welcome everyone to a new edition of our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder and leader of the Schiller Institute. Today is Wednesday, August 21, 2024. My name is Stephan Ossenkopp, and I’ll be your moderator for today. I’m standing in for Harley Schlanger, with whom you’re more familiar as the host of this show. If you would like to participate in the program, please email your questions or comments to questions@schillerinstitute.org.

Helga, it’s great to have you with us. Give us your assessment on the current strategic situation. We have two very dangerous flashpoints: One is the mercenary-led, mercenary-infested incursion into the Kursk region of Russia, and Volodymyr Zelensky, the President of Ukraine, calling for much more powerful weapons to be sent by NATO, in order for him to strike deep into Russian territory. And the other, of course, is the increasing shelling back and forth between Israel and Hezbollah and other forces in Southwest Asia. Can you give us a sense of what these flashpoints mean? Of course, we all know they’re not isolated—they’re part of a much larger conflict between a crumbling Western system, and another system on the ascent, which is the BRICS, to which most of the Global South countries are being drawn. What’s your insight into the current situation?

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I have said many times already that the next three-to-six months are probably the most dangerous in the history of mankind, basically,

until the new President of the United States is installed, because I think this is a period when certain forces may wish to make sure that the President is the right one, whatever that means in the present constellation in the United States.

I think the situation in Southwest Asia is absolutely horrible, because Secretary of State Antony Blinken’s so-called shuttle diplomacy expectedly led to nothing. He left and, basically, had capitulated to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who seems to



Benjamin Netanyahu Facebook page

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants no peace deal with Hamas. He wants no peace, so long as Palestinians continue to die.

be completely determined not to have any deal with Hamas—no ceasefire, no political solution—and to prolong the war as long as possible. Because every time there seems to be some hope for an agreement, this time mediated by Qatar and Egypt, he changes the goal posts, and now says that Israel—the IDF—under no circumstances will leave the gateway between Gaza and Egypt unattended, and even plans to split Gaza through the middle. That, naturally, is completely unacceptable to Hamas, so the slaughter continues. And it’s unbearable that this is going on and that the whole



CC/Unknown source

A house damaged in Ukraine's invasion of the Kursk Oblast. In the end, the incursion will have no significance for the course of the war.

world community seems to be watching, without an effective intervention, which I think is why this effort to bring into effect the [UN Resolution 377A \(V\)](#) is so important: meaning that if the UN Security Council cannot resolve the situation, then it has to be brought to the UN General Assembly. That motion, in my view, is more urgent than ever.

The situation concerning Ukraine and the invasion of the Kursk region, I think it's a short-term effort, as many commentators say, by Ukraine to demonstrate to the West that they're still capable of launching an offensive. It has no real significance. If you look at the map, it's just a tiny, minuscule territory at the border region of Russia. An Italian military analyst compared it to the 1944 offensive of the Wehrmacht, which I think is worth considering. That didn't lead to any victory of the Wehrmacht, but just prolonged the war for a very short period of time.

I think this short-term potential for an escalation does exist. Several British think tanks are saying we should not be afraid of escalation, basically pushing the line that there are no "red lines," that the fact that Putin has not yet responded by dropping nuclear weapons on Ukraine would be the proof that there are no red lines, and that the continuous worry about an escalation would just be a way of self-deterrence. I think this is typical British geopolitical thinking. I'm more concerned about the general condition of the world, Germany in particular.

There is one new development which I

think we need to reflect on, and that is, according to the *New York Times*, Biden, maybe already in March, signed on to a new U.S. Nuclear Strategic Doctrine, which is top secret: It's so secret it does not even exist electronically; only, supposedly, a few printed copies have been given to some of the most trusted national security experts and personnel. But it assumes, according to what these very limited reports are saying, that the United States has to be prepared, and prepare itself actively, for a simultaneous nuclear confrontation with Russia, China, and North Korea. Supposedly, the reason is that they expect that the Chinese nuclear arsenal will, in a few years, match that of Russia, and that the U.S. has to counter that.

I think this is coupled with another interesting reflection of what the strategic debate is inside the United States: *Foreign Affairs*, a magazine associated with the Council on Foreign Relations, has an article, "A Post-American Europe," published on August 9, saying that the United States should withdraw from Europe, that hard words have to be used to convince the Europeans that they have to finance the upgrading of their military power on their own, and that there is no danger that Russia has any intention to take over European countries—which is a refreshing admission of the truth. So, I think that that all reflects the question that, what does it mean if the United States has, apparently, since



U.S. Army

A Patriot Missile launch. Putting medium-range missiles in Germany will simply make Germany a target.

March, a nuclear doctrine which assumes that soon, in a few years, a nuclear confrontation with Russia, China and North Korea simultaneously is likely, and that the United States has to prepare for this?

Now, that document was signed in March, already. That puts the decision, or the making known of the decision, of Chancellor Olaf Scholz, that he accepted the U.S. decision to put medium-range missiles into Germany from 2026 onward, in a slightly different light: Because, obviously, that is then part of a preparation for an upcoming nuclear war. And there is a very interesting article in *Berliner Zeitung* today, which says, maybe these medium-range missiles are the preparation for a decapitation strike against Russia.

I think that this all requires much more analysis, but I think these long-range or medium-range missiles should not be placed in Germany, because it puts Germany in the position of becoming a target. I think we really have to have a serious strategy discussion in every country on the planet, and it should start with the idea of an indivisible security; that you cannot secure part of the world and put other parts of the world at risk, not in a time of thermonuclear weapons. So, my conclusion from all of this is that we urgently need a discussion: What are actually the real national security interests of every country? And I can only tell you what my overall conclusion is: I have proposed this a long time ago, with the idea of [a new global security and development architecture](#) which takes into account the interests of every single country on the planet. I think we are too close to an accidental nuclear war, or things going utterly wrong—look at these continuous provocations. Just today it was reported that there was the largest number of drone attacks aimed at Moscow. Apparently, they were all fought back and none of them did any damage. But there is, step by step, one escalation after the other, and I think we urgently need to go into a different direction.

Ossenkopp: Infrastructure, and especially energy infrastructure is, of course, part of a national security interest, and this brings us to a question from a regular viewer, who says: “Mrs. LaRouche, what do you make of the latest story on the Nord Stream pipelines? It



Danish Defence Command

A gas leak from the Nord Stream 2 pipeline off Bornholm Island. The German authorities have put out a cover story about a Ukrainian diving from a yacht to plant the explosives.

sounds like another fairytale. Is Germany really going to cut back funds to the NATO operation in Ukraine?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, not with this present “streetlight coalition” government, which seems to be just a mouthpiece for Washington and London. They don’t have any will of their own, it seems. There is a growing rebellion among the population against this government. Even *Bildzeitung*, the German tabloid, today has several pages giving voice that this government has to go, whatever that means. You know, the *Bildzeitung* normally only puts out such lines if it’s in the interest of one faction of the Atlantic powers or another.

I think the Nord Stream story is getting very interesting, because whatever the reason was, the German authorities put out this story about the so-called Ukrainian diving trainer, who supposedly did it all from a sports yacht. A normal diver cannot dive into an 80-meter-deep sea and put explosives on these pipelines. You need a pressure chamber; you need completely different equipment. So, I think that story is not very believable.

More interesting is that the *Wall Street Journal* had the story of a party where the former head of Ukraine

military, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, was drinking, and that he and a few officers, they decided to bomb the pipeline, and that Zelensky agreed with it. Then the Dutch secret service found out about it and told the CIA. The CIA told Zelensky to stop it; Zelensky told Zaluzhnyi, who did not agree to stop. I think this all sounds very unlikely. But the fact is that August Hanning, the former head of German foreign intelligence, the BND, then came out and said this was decided at the highest levels between Polish President Andrzej Duda and Zelensky. That is now causing all kinds of interesting reactions.

One of them is that Alice Weidel, a chairwoman of the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland) party, is demanding that if that's the case, then Ukraine must pay reparations to Germany for the enormous economic damage from the pipelines' destruction. The German economy is in a free fall, so the damage is not just the actual cost of the lack of gas from the pipeline, but the geostrategic shift that was the result of it—namely, separating Germany from Russia, which one could argue is the long-term geostrategic interest of the United States. That has caused a free fall of the entire German economy, so the cost is actually much, much higher.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov demanded that there should now be a serious investigation, because obviously Russian property was also damaged. So, in my view, I think the minimum is we need a real investigation. Sahra Wagenknecht, from the BSW (Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht) party, has now demanded an official parliamentary investigation. She is a Member of Parliament, so I think it will happen. And that will be very good, because all infrastructure in the whole world is at risk if this is not being investigated, which was an argument made many times by China, because these pipelines in



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MP Sarah Wagenknecht has now demanded a parliamentary investigation of the pipeline bombings.

the Baltics are just a few of many around the globe.

So, for me, the argument of [Seymour Hersh](#) is still the most likely, because he has given so many technical details, and I have not heard from any other of the so-called revelations [anything] to match that.

Ossenkopp: We have more questions coming in, and one is a very interesting—basic question on intelligence and truth. It's from a blogger with a military background, and the questioner says: "I have great admiration for the work of The LaRouche Organization.

My question is, how do you analyze major strategic shifts and developments? For example, the Ukraine attack on the Kursk region. There is much conflicting information about it. How do you decide what is real and what is disinformation? And do you think this is a serious breakthrough in NATO's war to bring down Putin?"

Zepp-LaRouche: On the last part of the question, I don't think so, because Russia has so far, even if the Ukraine war is now more than two years old, and bloody and horrible, but they have not gone with full force. I think that Putin has shown a clear intention not to let this conflict get out of control. I think they recognize the effort to entrap Russia into something which could be blamed on Russia, to then alienate many countries of the Global South that are sympathizing with Russia. So,

I don't see that possibility at all.

I think there is another very interesting thing: Several Americans—I think Prof. John Mearsheimer is the most interesting recently—have been going into the reasons why the Ukraine war happened. Now, in Germany, you're not allowed to even think that. If you say there is any pre-history before the Ukraine war, you



John Mearsheimer facebook page

Prof. John Mearsheimer

risk being punished in all kinds of ways. But I think it's so far not yet forbidden to quote an American professor, namely Prof. Mearsheimer. And I don't want to repeat his argument for the reasons I just said, but I would like to point the attention of our viewers and listeners, namely you, to go to [Mearsheimer's blog](#) yourself, and look at the lengthy pre-history he gives for the reasons for this war: the NATO expansions, the security interests of Russia, being just the obvious ones. But go to this [Mearsheimer article](#) and look at it yourself.

When you look at the intention of a country, if you want to know what the intention is of the present government, you have to take into account the history, the self-identity of a nation and also the efforts to contain, to restrict that nation, economically, militarily, politically, and culturally. Then you can make a prognosis. Typical, for example, is what my late husband, Lyndon LaRouche, did in the 1960s, which still impresses me, still today, where he recognized that the emergence of the rock-drug-sex counterculture would be the long-term erosion of the productivity of the American economy.

Now, please, if you look at the 1960s, there are not any people, to my knowledge, who had a similar analysis, because that was the time when "flower power," hippies, that was all extremely "cool," as one would say today. People just didn't think there was any particular danger to it; it looked very sympathetic. You know, "flower power," people with flowers in their hair, what could be so damaging about that? But I think Lyndon LaRouche recognized the combination of drugs, naturally, very terrible impact on people's cognitive potential, rock music being the bestialization of culture, stupefaction of the mind, the sexual so-called revolution, changing the identity of what human relationships mean—and he recognized that that would be a very corrosive impact on the long-term productivity of the economy, because it would tend to lower the cognitive potential of the population.

Now, today, we can see how this has completely played out. You look at the suicide rates of young peo-

ple, drug addiction, the general collapse of excellence in education and knowledge. Then you look at the continuation of that paradigm, which was set into motion in the 1960s, which today is the complete, everything goes, no standard, no rules any more in the social fabric; the more crazy the better, the more genders the better. I think that the effect of the totality of the culture on a society, therefore, can be evaluated by whether a certain tendency is unleashing the creative potential of the population, or diminishing it—holding it back. There are other factors, but I think the key, really, is always such a comprehensive, cultural evaluation, by which you can actually determine the directionality of certain developments.



PRNewsFoto

The Woodstock Music Festival, an example of the rock-drugs-sex counterculture, which Lyndon LaRouche said would cause the long-term erosion of the American economy's productivity.

Ossenkopp: You can also go to the [website](#) of our news service, which Helga and I work on daily, and you can have a complimentary copy in digital form, and then you can stay on top.

We have a question from a U.S. contact, who says, "The last two [International Peace Coalition meetings](#) have been inspiring. How can we increase the reach of the crucial work you're doing? I believe the suppression of the freedom of speech, through censorship and disinformation, is the greatest threat to America, and undercuts the work you are doing. How do we fight this?"

Zepp-LaRouche: I think the more organizers and the more volunteers who are responding to what you are saying, the better. Because, while it's quite true that our work is being suppressed—we have many, many examples of that—I think the easiest thing is that everybody who is watching this program and other things we are doing, like the IPC meeting every Friday, that you share this with all your social media contacts and lists. I think that would help a great deal. Because if you would put it on all the different platforms, if everybody would do that, I think we could create quite a snowball effect.

Now, maybe there are other possibilities. You can make a donation so we can buy advertisements (we

haven't tried that, yet). But I think you should become an organizer—if you think the work we are doing is essential, then join it! That is my best advice. And we can find many joint activities.

Ossenkopp: There's one person who actually identifies himself as a former 1960s peacenik, since, you just talked about the hipsters and the "flower power" generation. And he says, "I didn't agree with LaRouche on everything, but he at least never pulled his punches, when exposing the evil intent of the oligarchy. I'm hearing more and more talk today about the oligarchy and the billionaires than ever. It seems LaRouche's message about the British Empire and its commitment to Malthusian population-reduction is getting through."

Zepp-LaRouche: I think so, too. I had, just in the last few days and weeks, several experiences, where I would talk to some institutional contact or political contact, and they would bring up on their own the fact that LaRouche was absolutely on the mark; that he looked and sounded very off at the time, but that he just had an extremely prophetic view, both on the disintegration of the neoliberal, Western system—which is clearly showing many signs of distress—but also that his ideas are being picked up quite visibly, and recognizably by the BRICS countries—by the countries of the Global Majority in their effort to build a new economic system.

So I can only say, the best thing you can do for your own sake, is go to the [EIR website](#), go to the [LaRouche Legacy Foundation](#) and its [LaRouche Library](#), and read some of the articles yourself, or look at the videos of speeches he made. Some of them are so absolutely, breathtakingly prophetic, that you would almost think that he made them yesterday, by describing the problems of today.

So, I think given the fact that he has provided solutions which still are the most obvious ones for how to remedy the war danger, the economic depression, the danger of a financial blowout—And just today, the [Wall Street on Parade](#) website of Russ and Pam Martens, quite interestingly comes up again with the idea that the only way you can stop the derivatives bubble from exploding is to go back to the original Glass-Steagall Act—banking separation—of Franklin D. Roosevelt. That happens to be the first of the [Four Laws of Lyndon LaRouche](#), and these Four Laws are absolutely



Kamala Harris Facebook page

Democratic nominees Kamala Harris and Tim Walz at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Aug. 19. Part of the Circus Maximus to hype the Harris candidacy.

urgent if we want to prevent a blowout from occurring. But more fundamentally, *read* LaRouche: It is so rich, in terms of the historical, philosophical, strategic, cultural wisdom—you will not regret it.

Ossenkopp: If you don't know where to start, then pick up his book, *There Are No Limits to Growth*, in his *Collected Works, Vol. I*, which I think is a good starting point, especially for former representatives of the 1960s flower-power.

We have somebody writing in the chat who asks: "What are your thoughts about Kamala Harris in terms of dealing with challenges of peace and the military-industrial complex? Will she yield to the U.S. war economy?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, Kamala Harris was pretty much a wallflower for the last three-and-a-half years. You couldn't hear anything from her; you didn't see much. Now, all of a sudden, because of Biden's condition, or rather the fact that the string-pullers in the back decided to get rid of him, she is, all of a sudden, the bright star on the horizon. You find Kamala Harris everywhere: on billboards, videos, and just an enormous amount. You have the Circus Maximus going on in Chi-

ago right now. Let's see if this momentum can be kept. But, I think it is very clear that it was the decision of the big donors—of Wall Street, of the military-industrial complex—to dump Biden and to pull her up and push her into the foreground. So, the possibilities that she would do much different from the Biden administration did before, I don't have any hope in that at all.

I have more hope that there are independent candidates right now, who have quite a growing force: One is [Diane Sare](#), who is running for U.S. Senate in New York, and [Jose Vega](#), who is running for Congress in the Bronx CD-15. I think these are voices, which in the present conjunctural crisis, are much, much more important, because they are idea-givers in terms of how to get out of this crisis. I think it's also quite interesting that [Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.](#), who obviously does not think he has a chance to win the Presidency, however, he made a statement that if he would be President, he would immediately call for a New Bretton Woods conference, which would organize a new Bretton Woods, giving equal advantages to all nations, not like the first one, which only favored the so-called industrialized nations, to the disadvantage of the so-called developing nations.

Now, this is useful that he brings that up, because that is a topic, which so far only we and LaRouche were talking about, and now I read that he is considering to join with Trump—that could be a significant marginal shift. I think this is very interesting. However, on the Middle East, I think all of these candidates need some urgent improvement.

But, I think, the United States—it does require that a lot of people in the United States remind themselves that the United States was founded as a republic, and not as an empire. What [Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson](#) had said at the August 9 International Peace Coalition meeting, still resonates in my mind and my ear, when he said that all empires eventually go under. But, he said that the United States is the first one which has the potential to end with it the whole world. And that was

a shocking, very strong statement. So, I think the need for people in the United States to think back about their origin as a republic is more urgent than ever.

Ossenkopp: So, if you want to escape Circus Maximus, as Helga just described the Democratic Party clown show, then you can go to the X accounts for [Diane Sare](#) or [Jose Vega](#). I think Diane has nearly 15,000 followers, and Jose Vega is nearing the 80,000 mark. Let's increase the number of followers. There are lots of very interesting intervention videos to watch.

Now we have another question; we can manage one or two more questions. One is coming in from Hungary, and it says, "With the economy of many of the EU countries continuing downward, and government coalitions increasingly unpopular, do you see a shift away from unanimity in the European Union? Will citizens in Europe continue to tolerate funding a war which cannot be won? Do you expect an escalation to punish Hungary and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, coming from the EU?"



Schiller Institute

Col. Lawrence Wilkerson said on a Schiller Institute webcast that all empires eventually go under. But, he said, the U.S. is the first with the potential to take the whole world with it.

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I think that there is justice in the system, such that each of these policies, which are obviously detrimental and nasty, normally will cause a very healthy blow-

back effect. So, I think the effort by the EU—EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in particular—to punish Prime Minister Orbán, I think this will cause one of these blowback effects: Namely, that it shows all the other countries, like Slovakia, even Georgia (which is not in the EU, but is part of Eastern Europe), Bulgaria, but also in Italy and other countries—people are watching this, and I think it is eroding the cohesion of the EU. And when you see that the EU Commission is so clearly using its supposed power in order to punish the EU's own members, I think this is not democracy; this is not furthering the cohesion of the EU. It's doing the exact opposite.

I think France is still in chaos. They have not yet been able to form a government. I think Jean-Luc

Mélenchon is seeking the impeachment of President Macron. I don't think it will function, but it shows you that France is in chaos.

The German government is so unpopular, you cannot believe it. People have really had it with this government. And in less than two weeks, we will have elections in three East German states, where the "Street Light" coalition parties [SPD, FDP, and Greens] are expected to completely crash against the wall. And you will have the AfD and the Wagenknecht party probably gaining significantly. So, that will have an impact, not only in those three states, because it will make any government impossible without including either the AfD (which they say they don't want to do), or with the Wagenknecht party. And Sahra Wagenknecht has made it a condition to change the policy toward Ukraine and Russia. So, I think this is becoming very, very interesting, and I expect a shift to occur with those elections.

And I think the EU is not going to be like this for very long, because there will be centrifugal tendencies of people who think that it is not in the interest of the EU to just be the adjunct of the Anglosphere.

Ossenkopp: The last question I want to throw in is from a contact in Lebanon, who asks: "Is Pakistan in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization or the BRICS? I'm convinced the overthrow of Imran Khan was a State Department-CIA-MI6 regime change. Why is there still so little exposure of this?"

Zepp-LaRouche: I think you are right with that analysis. As a matter of fact, there are several international voices who have said that, actually putting the coup in Pakistan in the same category as the coup against Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh. And what we see on the strategic level right now is an unbelievable effort to move against the countries of the BRICS, the countries that want to become part of the BRICS. You have actual financial warfare and color revolution kinds of destabilizations against these countries. But I don't think that will change the trend of the times, because like every such movement, every such step will be recognized by a growing number of countries. I give you the example that Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali just protested to the United Nations about Ukraine supporting terrorists in their own countries! Now, that is a new development, and I think the public awareness

about such geostrategic maneuvers will become more obvious.

I would not be telling you my deepest conviction, however, if I wouldn't say that we are in the most dangerous period in the history of mankind, ever. I think we could annihilate ourselves through a nuclear war, and that is why we have to keep building a peace movement. We have to unite the peace movement: Come to our International Peace Coalition weekly discussion on Friday, at 5 p.m. CET, 11 a.m. U.S. Eastern Time, and join that. Help us to make that grow, because there is where we are discussing alternatives and what to do, to really prevent the greatest catastrophe which could occur, which is a thermonuclear Third World War.

We should keep our optimism. I think the human species is essentially good. I think the potential for us to find a solution on the level of creativity and reason is definitely there, but it does require a lot of people of good will; people who will become organizers and join our forces. That's what I want to ask you to do.

Ossenkopp: And details on how you can join the IPC are available in the video description below. In the meantime, you can also check out the video from last week's IPC meeting: "[On the Eve of World War, We Speak Out Without Fear.](#)" There were many powerful voices, including Scott Ritter and others. That's it for today. Do you want to give us an outlook on the next IPC meeting, which will take place on Friday, Aug. 23?

Zepp-LaRouche: We will have several peace activists from Southwest Asia, both Palestinian and Israeli. We will for sure discuss the danger to the First and Fourth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. I think Scott Ritter will be on again. I think we have a similar problem with freedom of speech in European countries, where freedom of thought and freedom of the press and opinion are under attack. So, there will be very interesting speakers this time, as well.

Ossenkopp: Thank you very much for joining us, and thank you, Helga. And I'll see you all on Friday, at 11 a.m. U.S. Eastern Time and 5 p.m. Central European Time.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, and I hope you all suffered through the two German accents well!