

Schiller Institute Weekly Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The LaRouche Plan for Peace and Prosperity

The following is an edited transcript of the March 26, 2025, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with Schiller Institute founder and leader Helga Zepp-LaRouche. Embedded links and subheads have been added. The video is available [here](#).

Harley Schlanger: Welcome to our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and leader of the Schiller Institute. Today is Wednesday, March 26, 2025. I'm Harley Schlanger and I'll be your host. You can send questions and comments by email to Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche at questions@schillerinstitute.org or post them on the chat page.

We've got a lot to cover today, Helga. There are talks continuing between the United States and Russia, toward achieving peace in Ukraine, and conferences going on throughout Europe, trying to keep the war going in Ukraine. But I think we shouldn't make the mistake of ignoring developments in Southwest Asia, so let me start with several questions about the heightened danger of a regional war breaking out, and possibly world war from there.

The first comes from a peace activist from the United Kingdom, who writes: "With demonstrations of 100,000 people in Israel on Saturday against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and anger over his firing of the head of Shin Bet, his refusal to meet with the families of hostages, and his decision to



White House/Daniel Torok

President Donald Trump. His provocative letter to Iran's Supreme Leader disregards Iran's sovereignty—and the fatwa against building nuclear weapons.

break the ceasefire agreement, is there a chance that he may be removed by the people of Israel?"

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I think that is not to be excluded, because apparently the demonstrations are gathering steam. But the immediate danger really is that the whole conflict could go into a wider Middle East war, triggered by the U.S. attacks on the Houthis in Yemen; the Houthis' own rocket attacks are a reaction to what the Israelis are doing in Gaza. But it seems that the Iran policy is what is the most worrisome. It seems that there is a certain influence on United States President Donald Trump's policy toward Iran. The letter which Trump wrote to Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran, was mixed. It had a lot



CC/khamenei.ir

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran.

of provocative tones which did not go over well in Iran, given the fact that there is still this *fatwa* that Iran does not intend to build any nuclear weapons, because doing so is against the Islamic religion. Nevertheless, there is an accusation where Trump seems to make an ultimatum that Iran has to get rid of all nuclear technology. It's not totally clear if this implies the civilian aspect, which would completely violate the sovereignty of Iran.

But I think the most worrisome right now is that according to open source intelligence, there is a deployment of B-2 stealth bombers from the United States and various U.S. bases around the world to the Indian Ocean base of Diego Garcia, and also two U.S. aircraft carriers are in the region. Now, if it would be in the direction of what some sources are mooted—intelligence sources, analysts from the region who are experts on the region—then this is pointing in the direction of a decapitation strike against Iran.

I'm only saying these are scenarios being put out, but the military deployment to Diego Garcia seems to be real. If this blows up, it could completely ruin everything positive that Trump has been doing so far with Russia—because if there would be such a U.S., maybe Israeli-U.S. attack on Iran, then that would completely ruin the steps taken in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where certain positive signs have been made that the conflict around the Black Sea can be settled peacefully, and Ukrainians, Russians, and Americans seem to be making little steps toward progress. But I can only voice the utmost alarm about what is going on in the Middle East. We're sitting on a complete powder keg, and this is really extremely dangerous, because one more little incident, like some terrorist attack, some Reichstag Fire kind of event, and we could, indeed, have an escalation of no return.

British Subterfuge

Schlanger: Well, we do have a question on that. Someone asks: "If Trump openly supports an Israeli attack on Iran, what would that do to the normalization of ties between Russia and the United States? Is it possible this is the strategy coming from London, to turn

Russian President Vladimir Putin against Trump, and break the cooperation?"

Zepp-LaRouche: That question is already the answer. Yes, I think that's it, because you can see very clearly, with the very promising steps in the direction of cooling down and hopefully settling the Ukraine crisis, there are clear signs that the British—Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Secretary of Defense John Healey—French President Emmanuel Macron, and others in Europe, are not agreeing to this settlement. And they form what they call a "coalition of the willing," with the doublespeak, saying that they will continue to send weapons and equipment to Ukraine, to secure Ukraine even after the end of the war, always with the idea of keeping the conflict going. So, this "coalition of the



U.S. Navy/Caine Storino

U.S. Air Force KC-10A Extenders and C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at the U.S. Navy Support Facility on Diego Garcia atoll, in the Indian Ocean.

willing" is clearly designed *not* to support the peace efforts between Trump and Putin, but to do the opposite: to keep supplying weapons. And this is absolutely terrible.

This has caused a major, I would say, strategically important reaction by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who made an amazingly sharp speech, by basically saying that what certain Europeans are doing right now is in the tradition of Napoleon and even Hitler; that their talk about causing a strategic defeat of Russia is exactly in this tradition. This goes back to the Crimean War, to the—he doesn't say it in this speech, but it has been mentioned before—[19th-Century British Prime Minister] Lord Palmerston and the idea to completely take Russia apart into many pieces. And, indeed, if one looks at what European Union President Ursula von

der Leyen is doing with her ReArm Europe policy, which she is renaming “Readiness 2030,” it’s extremely worrisome. I’m really extremely alarmed about what is going on in Europe at this moment.

Schlanger: We have another question from Los Angeles. Someone writes in and says: “Hi Harley and Helga. I heard you say yesterday that a British admiral threatened to incinerate 40 Russian cities. Has there been a backlash against him in the UK? Or is it now acceptable for military officers to make such provocative statements?” And then the same person asks: “Are there any voices in opposition emerging in Germany to ‘Mr. BlackRock’ Friedrich Merz, and his outrageous military budget?”

Zepp-LaRouche: In the United Kingdom there is a backlash; there are demonstrations going on—and also in Germany. This is so unbelievable, what happened. The way the new parliament was basically outwitted, or rather, Merz, who won the election by promising he would not touch the debt brake, the moment he was voted in, said, “No, the situation has changed.” Then he goes into what analysts are calling the “financial bazooka” in Germany, which is unleashed. *Handelsblatt* said the amount of money which has been unleashed now is €1.7 trillion, and no cap; it can always be enlarged.

This has led to a situation where, yesterday, the new parliament was seated, and immediately the Alternative for Germany is now 1% higher at 23%; the Christian Democratic Union went 1% lower. So, there is only 4% between them. And it is starting to sink into the population what is happening right now; that there is an unbelievable military spending program unleashed



Russian MFA Facebook page

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov reacted sharply to talk in Europe of repeating Hitler’s attempted conquest of Russia.

in Germany, which can only be financed by money created outside of the regular budget, reminiscent of what Nazi Economics Minister Hjalmar Schacht did with the Mefo bills. And what people are really waking up to, slowly—and rubbing their eyes and not wanting to believe it, but it is sinking in—is that once you go onto such a path of militarization, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy—and it will lead to war.

Just Pure Propaganda

Now, this is totally crazy, because first of all, the whole thing is based on the narrative that Russia is intending to attack a European country, that Putin intends to re-establish the Soviet Union, that he’s intend-



German Bundeswehr Facebook page

Spending to build up the German Bundeswehr is increasing more rapidly than at any time since Hitler.

ing to gobble up the entirety of Ukraine, then attack Poland, then the Baltic States, and then even another EU member. Nothing of that is proven! It’s just pure propaganda! There are top military experts who warn against this insanity.

Ted Postol, who is one of the top experts on nu-

clear weapons worldwide, he made a very important speech just two days ago in Berlin, where he, again, showed [what he already showed on our program](#), what the effect would be on Germany if it ever comes to a war—not triggered by Russia, because he also makes the point that the Russian military is absolutely not in a position of capacity to attack all of Europe. Remember that the military budget of all of NATO is ten times that of Russia!

The only kind of war which is thinkable is a nuclear war. And if it comes to an exchange of nuclear weapons in Europe, Germany will be annihilated, and there are many people in Germany right now—not enough—but there is a significant number of people who are waking up to that. Just since Monday, with the new parliament being seated, there are many people in Europe who are now really scared, they're shocked, they're horrified how this coup could happen.

Many people are talking about a “coup.” Maybe it's not legally a coup, but it has the resemblance of a coup, namely that Merz turned around by 180 degrees, and just needed one day to break his promise. He loosened the debt brake, which would have been legitimate and actually economically wise if it had been done to relaunch the physical economy. But to do that for a war economy! I think we have a super-mega-crisis. And the more people wake up to that fact, the better.

Schlanger: Someone asks: “Do you have an update on the progress of the U.S.-Russian talks? Are they moving ahead?”

Zepp-LaRouche: That's the only good part one can report about the present strategic picture. There were these discussions in Riyadh, and it seems that they made progress on a whole bunch of points, including that the Black Sea shipping will be protected; that they agreed not to use civilian ships for military purposes; and that there is an agreement between Russia and Ukraine not to attack



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Nuclear weapons expert Ted Postol of MIT.

energy infrastructure—which, by the way, was just violated by Ukraine, again. The Russian side decided not to respond to that, obviously in order to try to move this agreement forward. But the fact that there is some dialogue going on, that's about the only positive thing one can report. All the other developments which we discussed before are directed to derail this progress between the U.S. and Russia, in particular.

Schlanger: From a farmer in Texas: “I don't want my tax dollars to pay for killing Palestinian children in Gaza. My friends say Israel controls the U.S. through the Zionist Lobby. Is that true? And do they control President Trump?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Unfortunately, they do. As much as one can support President Trump's policy in the effort to reconcile the diplomatic discourse with Russia—which is absolutely crucial, given the fact that this is between the two largest nuclear weapons powers—the situation in the Middle East is terrible. The fact that President Trump was convinced to bomb Yemen is terrible, because what came from the Houthis



IDF Homepage

Israel Defense Forces on patrol in Palestine's West Bank.

was in reaction to the renewed attack by the Israel Defense Forces on Gaza. The IDF has renewed the ground troop offensive. More than 700 people have been killed, mostly women and children, and it seems that there is now the beginning of what is intended to be the final relocation of all the Palestinians.

The Houthis reacted to that. What Trump should have done is what he did in the first place, when he forced Netanyahu to impose the ceasefire. But Netanyahu had been clear the whole time that he would never agree to phase two of the ceasefire, and that is now being violated. So, I think Trump is about to get himself, the United States, and the whole world into a war with Iran. If that happens, then whatever progress he has made with Russia could be undone in the shortest period of time.

So, the answer to this farmer is, unfortunately, that the influence in the United States of these forces is too big, and it does require a mobilization of the population against it.

Schlanger: I would urge him to make sure he joins the [International Peace Coalition call on Friday, March 28](#). The IPC has met continuously for the past 94 weeks. And he can have his voice heard and hear what else is being said. But Friday, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time, we'll have the next call of the International Peace Coalition.

I have a question that came from someone who is a banker, who asks: "Do you think anything positive can come from this initiative to make Bitcoin a part of the U.S. Federal Reserve System?"

Cryptocurrencies Are a Scam

Zepp-LaRouche: No. And if you want to look at what happens, look at Argentina, where you had a complete collapse of this speculative bubble. The Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, and so-called stable currencies, these are all efforts to have credit generation, money creation outside the control of parliaments and budgets. It is a completely speculative, private effort, and it is going against anything that the theory of American physical economics, the American System, says.

This is very problematic, because it seems that Donald Trump, Jr. is involved in some of these Bitcoin operations. Nothing positive whatsoever can come out of this. And I can only warn anybody who thinks they

can get rich quick by putting your savings into this: Don't do it! Don't do it.

Schlanger: Earlier, when we were talking about Yemen, the question came up about this so-called DOD, Department of Defense Signal chat, which had a journalist, in fact, a very notorious journalist, Jeffrey Goldberg, included. So, we have a question in which someone writes in: "I'm very suspicious. What do you think is the real story about Jeffrey Goldberg of *The Atlantic* magazine being added to the Signal chat of the Department of Defense officials, when they were supposedly discussing the bombing of Yemen?"

Zepp-LaRouche: This so-called Signalgate is obviously designed to cause trouble in the cabinet of Trump, to eventually get National Security Advisor Mike Waltz out. There should be a serious investigation of who is this aide who allegedly included Goldberg on the chat; how was this set up? It looks to me like a real set-up. And it seems now that the argument that no top secret information was revealed may not hold up, given the fact that the exact timing of the air attacks on Yemen was discussed. So, that would be clearly a sign of serious intelligence being leaked.

It smells like this could be a real British-designed operation of the Five Eyes [U.S., UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada], as a counter to Trump's going after the Deep State and shutting down a lot of these operations—and here they create a typical trap to try to counter that. I think that's what it is, and that should be investigated.

Schlanger: Max Blumenthal of *The Grayzone* reported today that Jeffrey Goldberg was recruited initially into politics by Meir Kahane, the extremist rabbi-terrorist, from the Jewish Defense League, and actually was in the Israel Defense Forces for a period of time as a prison guard. And now he ends up as the editor-in-chief of *The Atlantic* magazine. So, I think that gets at this question of your point that it's a set-up.

Now, we have a question from Thomas B., who asks: "To have an economic recovery program for the United States, wouldn't Trump have to take power away from the London and Wall Street banks? I don't see him doing that. Is there any chance for a Glass-Steagall policy?"



CC/CSIS

“Signalgate” leaker Jeffrey Goldberg: part of the set-up? Here he speaks in Washington at a CSIS conference on combating anti-Semitism in Europe, 2015.

Glass-Steagall: The Necessary First Step

Zepp-LaRouche: The questioner is completely right, but I don’t see Trump doing it. And also, Glass-Steagall would be the absolutely necessary first step. But given the complexity of the strategic situation, given the extreme danger in which we are right now, the point I have been making for three years is becoming more urgent by the hour: And that is, that we have to initiate a completely different approach, namely, to set up an international security and development architecture discussion. I wrote [Ten Principles](#) for such a discussion, and Glass-Steagall is just one element in that.

But given the fact that we are really in a showdown time of total danger, Glass-Steagall is not enough; you need to put the entire package on the table. And I can only hope that between ongoing efforts, from [China’s Three Initiatives](#), Putin’s mention of the potential for a [global security system](#)—that that is being promoted. Because what you see right now is a real counteroffensive. For example, all the BRICS countries are targeted by financial warfare. In Indonesia, you have capital flight, so they had to use the central bank to intervene; and the supposed argument is that Indonesia would spend too much money on school luncheons and pregnant women! Now, that is incredible!

Indonesia is a sovereign country and is very important. It could become the third-largest economy in no time; it’s an important new member of the BRICS. You have a similar attack on Brazil, on South Africa,

on Egypt—and one almost gets the feeling that we are entering the eye of the storm very fast. That’s why one has to take a completely different approach and think that if, right now, a group of countries would insist to put such a global security and development architecture as a war-avoidance means on the agenda—For example, the UN General Assembly could wake up the world as to how great the danger is, and it could eliminate the ability of the imperialist faction to manipulate each conflict up to the point of its boiling over; it could eliminate that possibility. That’s my deepest conviction.

Schlanger: We have a question, again, from the UK: “Do you have any opinion on the assisted suicide bill that’s going to be introduced into the British Parliament this week?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I was not aware of that bill, but there is no question that once you move into the direction of financial fascism—And that is what this rearmament drive is. Because when you resort to financing in the tradition of Hjalmar Schacht, that you create, outside of the budget, monies to finance armaments, that eventually will go along with massive cuts in the social area—with brutal austerity. And as we saw 80 years ago, euthanasia then becomes an economic reason—or, there is an economic reason for euthanasia: you want to reduce the cost of the health system.

We see this all over the place! We see the cutting down of the health system in the United States, in France, in Germany, in Italy. I have not even looked at all the other countries in detail, but I know if these so-called larger countries in Europe are all closing down hospitals, then there’s naturally many reasons that, because of the budget cutting, not enough nurses and specialists are there. So, this completely fits the fascist profile. People better look at what happened 80 years ago in order to mobilize against it in time.

What Would LaRouche Do Today?

Schlanger: Helga, I have one more question for you. Someone writes in and says: “Forty-two years ago last Sunday, on March 23, 1983, was the famous speech by U.S. President Ronald Reagan announcing the Strategic Defense Initiative. That was the policy of your husband, and your husband travelled all over the world with you to promote it.” So he writes: “Now

Trump is talking about some kind of missile defense system. What would Lyndon do today?”

Zepp-LaRouche: He would, for sure, bring the idea into the present dialogue between Trump and Putin, to put a joint missile defense on the table. What people don't realize is that this whole proposal, which became the SDI, was not what the media said about it: It was not “Star Wars”; it was not an effort to just use kinetic energies; not to use off-the-shelf technologies. It was meant as a joint research project whereby American, and at that time Soviet, and now Russian scientists would develop these new technologies together, implement these systems together, in a completely trust-building way. Nowadays, you would have to involve all the other nuclear weapons powers in some fashion—especially the Chinese. So, it's probably more complicated today.

It's very positive that Trump has talked about his desire to halve all nuclear weapons arsenals, and at one point he even said he wants to get rid of them. He made some vague reference to President Reagan, and said he didn't have the technology—yet. So, that implies that maybe Russian and American scientists at least have some idea of where to go, which Putin has demonstrated with the various hypersonic programs which he already [announced on March 1, 2018](#), and more recently with the Oreshnik missile. But to inject that as a confidence-building measure of joint collaboration, joint research, and jointly developing these systems, is absolutely required.

Schlanger: Of course, that could also apply to the space program, a joint space program. And there have been some articles in *Executive Intelligence Review* recently on the science of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

So, Helga, the last question: We have the International Peace Coalition meeting again on Friday, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time. What's on the schedule?

Zepp-LaRouche: We will for sure discuss the crisis in the Middle East. We will have specialists and experts from India, from Iran, from Israel, from Palestine—so that will be one big complex. As the war clouds are gathering over the region in an unprecedented way, if you want to know the up-to-date, expert view, come in on Friday. And, naturally, the situation with Ukraine, and the armament and the strategic developments be-

tween the U.S. and Russia—and the Europeans!

I can only say Lavrov, who is without any question one of the most trusted and experienced diplomats the world has right now, if he starts to use language like what the Europeans are doing is in the tradition of Napoleon and Hitler, this is not said lightly. So, people had better wake up and hear these warnings, because you can see how we are moving, step-by-step, toward catastrophe, out of which, if it goes wrong, nobody would come out alive. And we will try to increase the International Peace Coalition, so invite all your colleagues, your friends, your family members. Watch this, participate in it, because we have to build a real peace movement, which right now is not strong enough.

This coming Saturday, we will have major demonstrations in Germany: in Wiesbaden, I think in Berlin, and other places. That is on Saturday. So, come to the IPC on Friday and think about participating in any demonstration you can on Saturday, because we have to really get a change in the present course before it is too late!



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