

A Russian Dialogue On LaRouche's Ideas

Jonathan Tennenbaum, science advisor to U.S. statesman Lyndon LaRouche, made two media appearances in Russia May 18 and 19, in which he addressed the current economic and strategic crisis, and the pathway LaRouche has charted into the future. The May 18 interview was aired on the "Govorit Moskva" (Moscow Speaking) radio program, on a Moscow-area station that reaches an area with a population of 15 million, and has many thousands of listeners. Speaking in Russian, Tennenbaum answered questions from program host Serafim Melentyev.

The broadcast began with Melentyev reading aloud the quotation from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with which Russian President Vladimir Putin had keynoted his May 10 "Message to the Federal Assembly," and asking Tennenbaum why Putin had chosen precisely this excerpt from precisely this President. Tennenbaum replied that he had not had an opportunity to ask President Putin directly, but that "the policies of Roosevelt are very timely today—not just for Russia, but for the world—because the global economy is so unstable." The interview touched on the state of the U.S. auto industry, the global financial crisis, Vice President Dick Cheney and the neo-cons as a threat to the United States, and the principles and activity of Roosevelt and LaRouche.

The next day, Tennenbaum followed up with a 40-minute webcast interview on the www.km.ru site. He fielded 16 questions e-mailed in on a range of subjects, which were read aloud. Some questions came in prior to the webcast, based on an announcement posted the day before, which identified Tennenbaum as advisor to LaRouche, "who proposes a policy of reasonable protectionism, to be implemented by sovereign nation-states, based on the ideas of physical and institutional economy, which can be traced back to Gottfried Leibniz and are represented in the American School of Political Economy—Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List, and Henry Carey."

Here we present excerpts from a translation of the transcript of the Russian-language interview, which provides an interesting view of the seriousness with which these Russian webcast participants approach current political and scientific issues.

Q: What will they think up next in economics? How can economics be physical? America is a demonstration for the entire world, of what an economy should be—a genuine econ-

omy. Do you think the American economy is a model for everybody?

Tennenbaum: I would say that we are currently experiencing a crisis of economic models. There was a crisis of the so-called socialist model, and now there is a crisis of the so-called free-market model. What we have is a very important transitional process. Lyndon LaRouche, and I am an advisor of LaRouche, the former U.S. Presidential candidate within the Democratic Party, created a new direction in economics: physical economy. This means promoting what was traditionally called the American System of political-economy.

That doesn't mean the system that currently prevails; because, unfortunately, there was a shift in America away from an industrial economy, from production, science, and so forth, towards a post-industrial economy and then a bubble economy. And now the crisis has arrived, and so the idea of physical economy becomes very important. Not only for the United States, but for the whole world, because most people on our planet live in poverty. There is a need to develop infrastructure, to provide a basis for humanity to survive, and—this is very important—there has to be a science-driver for this process.

Q: Does Mr. Tennenbaum think that there could be a situation where some country's—Russia's, for example—officially announced rejection of the standards of "democracy" and "human rights," dictated by the West, might be favorably received by, for example, the U.S. power elite? For example, if Russia were to adopt the development ideology, which would make it possible to solve the currently unsolvable global problems of mankind, and thus be able to overcome the world crisis?

Tennenbaum: So-called western democracy is a myth. You have the U.S. Constitution, which is a very important document, which I think was a breakthrough in the development of political culture. But that is clearly not so-called democracy; rather, it is a special type of republican system. Right now, there is a very important fight in the United States around the question of preserving the constitutional system. In fact, the Bush Administration, especially Cheney and some others, are attempting to get rid of the Constitution.

I think that each country and each people needs to find its own path, in dialogue with others. And I think that it may be very interesting for the Russian and American people to look at what ideas, historically, there are, for seeking a good pathway for the development of a political system. I think that Russia has to find its own path, independent of the so-called ideology of democracy. Of course, I support the participation of the population in making policy, but that is not what is called "pure democracy." Unfortunately, democracy is used as an ideology; as a slogan.

The most important thing for me—and, I think, for Russia—is the restoration of statehood. Without statehood, that is, you have globalization, under which national sovereignty



Courtesy of www.km.ru

Jonathan Tennenbaum on the km.ru website for the live webcast interview May 19.

is destroyed, and that is very bad. It is important to restore statehood, because without the state, there is no defense against economic pirates. What form of statehood, is another question.

Q: What will influence the future of mankind? The right result will come not from science, but from people returning to God, and life returning to His commandments. Christian history ended in America 200 years ago, and now financial welfare holds first place in America. Does America really have something new to offer Great Russia?

Tennenbaum: I think that many people in Russia are interested in the ideas of LaRouche, an original American thinker, who continues certain U.S. traditions, intellectual traditions, which are, unfortunately, not well known—including in America. The founders of the United States were intellectuals; they were great thinkers, like Benjamin Franklin, an outstanding, great scientist, or Hamilton, and others. LaRouche continues that line.

I do not see a contradiction between religion and science. Here you have to define what kind of science you mean; I believe that the Cosmos is a kind of book, in which it is possible to read the principles of Creation. Science is not some mere list of facts; rather, it can even be a way of coming closer to God. So, I do not throw religion out, and I would not say that science can replace religion. There is not a contradiction, and I think it is no accident, that almost all of the great scientists, who made discoveries, were believers.

Q: Is there a real possibility of attracting youth in the U.S.A. or Germany to get involved in politics? Russian youth have become really apolitical.

Tennenbaum: My colleague in the United States

[LaRouche] has something very interesting, a very important new phenomenon in politics, and that is the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM). He created this movement. In the U.S.A., these young people are now very active in politics. They visit Congress, and organize discussions with Representatives and their aides. In California, in Los Angeles, you have the largest local organization of the Democratic Party, and our youth, I think eight or nine of them, are members of its Central Committee. This is a new generation, with new ideas.

The future is in the hands of the youth, and this means a revitalization of political culture in the United States. The LYM is also present in Germany, France, Denmark, and we shall see—I think that here, in Russia, there is also interest. It is very important for young people to take part. We have to look for opportunities.

Q: What is your view of nuclear power? Should nuclear power plants exist? They continue to be built, although doctors and ecologists tell us that thousands of people died after Chernobyl, though not immediately after the explosion.

Tennenbaum: Nuclear power is like other technologies. It's like driving a car. You have to drive it well! The power plant at Chernobyl was not so good. Not that it was bad, per se, but I think Russia has more reliable technologies, and every technology must be constantly improved.

But Vernadsky was right, for example, when he said that in the transition to a Noösphere economy, nuclear energy should play a very important role. And we can see that almost everywhere in the world, in China, in India—even in Europe and the United States, the inevitability of nuclear power is being discussed. So I think that the question is not whether nuclear power is good or bad; the question is how to develop this marvelous opportunity, this energy source, in the best way. Because oil and gas cannot be used infinitely. We have to create hydrogen technologies, which are more clean. In Germany, for example, they have developed nuclear technology that is absolutely accident-proof. So, I think that nuclear energy can be developed in a good way.

Q: What do you think about global warming? Is major climate change on Earth possible in the near future, and how can scientists combat it?

Tennenbaum: I have doubts about the scientific foundation of many of these forecasts. I think that we have a poor scientific understanding of climate, but we do know that it is not only human activity that affects climate; climate cycles are connected with solar activity. It is clear that climate is a fluctuating system, in which changes are connected with human activity, or with natural causes from the Sun. It appears that the long-term development is going in the opposite direction; that it's going to get very cold. We are moving in the long-term cycles from a warm climate to a cold one.

The most important thing is to increase mankind's ability



Franklin D. Roosevelt Library



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

President Franklin Roosevelt (above left), whom Russian President Putin quoted in his May 10 address, is important today because of his policies, based on the U.S. constitutional mandate to protect the general welfare. This is the opposite of the neo-conservative policies today, Tennenbaum said, which are typified at their worst by Vice President Cheney (above right).

to react to natural catastrophes and to natural changes and, perhaps, to changes that result from human activity as well.

Q: What do you think about Russian plans for manned flight to Mars? Why spend so much? Or, will there be some benefit for those of us who are alive today?

Tennenbaum: You know, when the United States achieved the Moon landing in 1969, it was very expensive, of course, but the project had a positive economic effect. Research was done that showed that for every dollar, invested in that project, the American economy got back between \$7 and \$10. This has to do with increasing the productivity of the economy.

And . . . maybe man is destined not only for the Earth, but also the Cosmos. There is such a school of thought in Russia: Russian Cosmism, Tsiolkovsky, and others. This is a certain world outlook, which says that there exists a "Philosophy of the Common Cause," and that perhaps we, as people, have a mission in the Cosmos. This is LaRouche's viewpoint—to fight for this. In any event, to have a science-driver, we need to set the missions on Earth, such as the development of infrastructure, technologies, etc., which can advance the development of new knowledge.

Q: Do you think that nuclear weapons will be used in a war against Iran, if it breaks out? President Bush has spoken about this.

Tennenbaum: This is very dangerous. And, indeed, Vice President Cheney, first and foremost, is looking for a pretext to use nuclear weapons. There are people in the U.S.A., unfor-

tunately, who want to frighten the world, to destabilize the world, and this is what the danger of an attack on Iran, with or without the use of nuclear weapons, has to do with. It is because the U.S. neo-conservatives are in trouble right now. They have become very unpopular, and their schemes aren't working.

Iraq is a nightmare, there is serious resistance within the U.S. institutions—among diplomats, military men, the intelligence services, etc. They are now having difficulties, and they are looking for ways to distract attention from their problems and to change the rules of the game. Well, of course this would be a catastrophe of historic proportions, if there were such an attack.

I think that it is not a long-term strategy. It is a game, and it should be shut down. LaRouche and his LYM are working to get Cheney re-

moved from office, so that there would be a different administration in the United States.

Q: What is your forecast for the next U.S. Presidential elections? What will influence their outcome?

Tennenbaum: The important thing is the economic crisis in the United States. LaRouche and his movement are currently working very hard in the Democratic Party to save the U.S. automotive industry. As you know, major auto companies like Ford and GM are on the brink of bankruptcy. In effect, they are already bankrupt. And now, the possibly very short-term moment of decision has arrived: If the financial pirates, the hedge funds, etc., continue to rule, they will shut down almost the entire industry, meaning the loss of millions of jobs. Many areas of the United States will just die; we'll lose one-third or half of the machine-building capacity of the country. It is a very hot issue.

LaRouche has come out with a proposal for the government to defend [the industry]. That is, the government will take emergency measures to reorganize this sector and retool it for other types of production, including capital goods for major infrastructure projects, rail projects, etc. I am saying this, because the United States is in a very difficult financial and economic situation. This will greatly influence the Congressional elections in November of this year, as well as the Presidential election. Therefore I am optimistic, the way I see it, for LaRouche's ideas and this new direction for revitalizing the Democratic Party, and even part of the Republican Party. (There is a schism in the Republican Party between the neo-



EIRNS/Katherine Reid

The LaRouche Youth Movement in Los Angeles organizing at the first Immigration Rally, March 27. Tennenbaum responded to a question about the apathy of Russian youth, by describing how the LaRouche Youth Movement is shaking up U.S. politics, and is active in Europe and other countries. "And, we shall see—I think that here in Russia there is also interest," Tennenbaum said. "We have to look for opportunities."

conservatives and the traditional Republicans, who want a healthy economy).

I think a Democrat will become President. Who that will be, I don't know. In any event, I take an active approach to this question: How can we determine what the policy will be? And that includes the question of what the youth do.

Q: What do you think about the issues of rewriting history, particularly the role of the Soviet Union in defeating fascism? How can this phenomenon be resisted?

Tennenbaum: Obviously, the Soviet Union played a very important—the key role—in the victory over fascism, and I think that it is important that we were allies, Russia and the United States. It is interesting that, throughout the history of the United States, up until the Cold War, Russia and the United States were allies. And, naturally, it would be very bad to rewrite history in general, especially if we look at the enormous losses the Soviet Union experienced.

But it is also very important to see, that the threat of fascism has not disappeared. It exists today, in the United States, for example, but not only there. Fascism is not an American thing or a German thing. There are different models of fascism. But during periods of financial crisis there is a certain section of the financial oligarchy, the so-called Synarchy, which in the 1920s and 1930s, and again today, wants to shift over to some kind of fascist model. For that reason, the

question of history for me is connected with practical questions, like how to promote the healthy development of the country.

Q: The number of institutions of higher education in Russia is going to be cut significantly. What percentage of high-school graduates do you think ought to receive a higher education?

Tennenbaum: Cutting the number of institutions of higher education is kind of suicidal, since, in any event, Russia's future is with the development of science and technology, so they shouldn't be reduced. I think it is very important for all young people to be able to continue their education. There are very good traditions in Germany, which also influenced the development of education in Russia, and even in the Soviet Union. That was Humboldt, the great German scientist, who thought that education must not be subordinated to pragmatic concerns, that you need to educate the whole

person, to educate citizens, and not just have a technical education.

Q: Will there be some kind of warning signs of the crash of the dollar, and will the American financial system collapse in the near future?

Tennenbaum: The U.S. financial system is very close to collapse, and if the current economic and financial policy continues, I think that the crash is inevitable. The aggressive behavior of the Bush Administration is related to the financial situation, not only in the United States, but there has been globalization. Everything now is interconnected, so a crisis of the dollar will also hit Russia, China, etc.

LaRouche has repeatedly stated that there needs to be a financial reform, to create a new Bretton Woods system, a new global financial system, directed against free trade—so-called free trade—and in favor of fair trade. Free trade means the destruction of the national economies of all countries. We need a system with stable exchange rates, rather than floating rates. LaRouche has an important approach to the dollar's threatened collapse, and that is to organize large-scale government investment in the real economy of the United States. The intention to do this will stabilize the dollar. Of course, measures have to be taken against speculation, and we need re-regulation. . . .

This is a big political question, touching on the issue of

statehood. The U.S. Constitution says that the government is responsible for the general welfare. And if we have hedge funds, speculation by financial interests, which think that the world belongs to them, and I say, “No, it’s a question of the Consitution,” then, that’s a political question. I know that your President, in his recent message, referred to Roosevelt, and this was very interesting for me, because Roosevelt overcame the Great Depression. I think this is of great importance for the situation today.

Moderator: The question included a sub-question about warning signs of a crash of the dollar. . . .

Tennenbaum: It’s a situation like the motion of two trains, approaching each other. Their motion is relative. Right now, there is hyperinflation of raw materials prices: oil, gold, etc. . . . The dollar is really losing value, so maybe the crash of the dollar is already happening. It depends on what people do; if a political solution is found, or not.

LaRouche said recently, that if the current policy continues, there will likely be hyperinflation, which is a very unpleasant thing. It means not only a collapse of the dollar, but something like in 1923 in Germany, when even with many kilograms of bank notes you could not buy a loaf of bread. It is a very serious threat. And therefore, LaRouche is in a very active dialogue with Senators and experts in the United States and around the world, on organizing actions against this.

It has to do with the fact that certain financial circles are looking for a landing place, where they can get out of paper value and into real value. Hence, the sharp increase in raw materials prices, which, without a doubt, is connected with attempts by speculative interests to find a way to keep ruling after a crash.

Q: LaRouche is an old foe of Cheney. Is the Vice President of the United States really harming the country? Do Cheney and Bush completely control the Administration, or are there other forces?

Tennenbaum: There are other forces. Many people in Russia think the United States is monolithic, just as many people in the United States think that Russia is monolithic. In reality, there is an intense fight in the United States now. I mentioned the split in the Republican Party, and resistance from the military. The United States has a historical political system, which is not monolithic. There are real institutions. Even the Presidency, which is not the same thing as the President: it is a network of institutions, in which [various people] take part.

Even LaRouche, who was a “dissident” at one point—although you can’t really call him a “dissident,” because he takes part in the institutions, even if informally. But this is a real institution, the U.S. executive. The neo-conservatives are a peculiar group; they are not the majority. After Sept. 11, there was a certain kind of de facto coup, or attempts to orga-

nize a coup, because at that moment the neo-cons, representing only one part of the institutions, were able to increase their influence. Now, their influence is waning.

It is a dangerous phenomenon, but I am fairly optimistic that Cheney really will be removed and a new team installed, after which the question of impeaching Bush will inevitably come up. A number of Congressmen are not only thinking about this, but have prepared the relevant texts.

Q: What ideas could bring Russia and the U.S.A. closer together?

Tennenbaum: It is a pity that the dialogue we had throughout history is so weak today. Of course, our countries are very different, but they are also connected. There is the size of our territories. And there is the role of Leibniz, the great German philosopher, who was a kind of father of the American idea, but he was also in touch with Peter the Great, and it can be said that he drafted the program and was the author of the creation of the Russian Academy of Sciences. . . .

And then you had Alexander II, and Mendeleyev was in America. Vernadsky had ties. . . . And there is another question: the idea of statehood. In Russia the idea exists, which is absent in other countries of Eastern Europe, that Russia really is something, that this is a country that deserves a future. . . . LaRouche has always advocated very close cooperation in science, and it is a great pity that the financing of science in Russia today is extremely inadequate, that Russian science is literally starving. I don’t say that it’s adequate in the United States, but I think that it would be very important now to intensify ties between, so to speak, good Russians and good Americans, because this is natural.

Q: Was Dick Cheney’s recent speech the start of a new Cold War?

Tennenbaum: As long as the neo-cons and such people dominate in the Administration, the possibilities for developing U.S.-Russian relations are limited by actions such as Cheney’s. In my view, Cheney is on the way down, his group is declining, although there is still a danger. But the most important thing, which your President has referred to many times, is that there are very big and real problems in the world, such as epidemics and so forth.

When your President talked about Roosevelt—Roosevelt is a key question now for the U.S.A., and not only for the U.S.A.; I would say, for this reason, that we have to establish cooperation, oriented towards real problems, and towards friendship. This friendship between Russia and the United States has a long history. . . . LaRouche also said that Russia is very important, and that he is highly interested in Russia, and that without this cooperation, the United States will not be able to solve its problems.

Moderator: Your wishes to km.ru visitors?

Tennenbaum: I wish for your country to have a good future!