

Schiller Institute Webcast Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Dialogue, Not Retribution

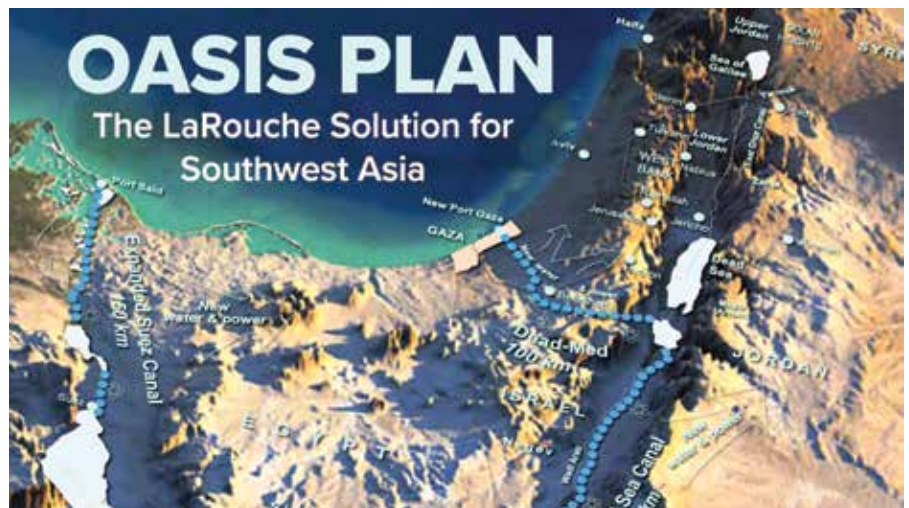
The following is an edited transcript of the April 17, 2024, weekly Schiller Institute dialogue with Schiller Institute founder and chairwoman Helga Zepp-LaRouche. Embedded links have been added. The video is available [here](#).

Harley Schlanger: Hello, and welcome to our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and chairwoman of the Schiller Institute. This is Wednesday, April 17, 2024. I'm Harley Schlanger and I'll be today's host. You can send your questions or comments to questions@schiller-institute.org.

Helga, the first question I have is from a regular participant in these webcasts, who writes: "As the war-hawks in the Biden administration and Congress are scrambling to get a supplemental funding bill passed to allocate more money for war, you convened a conference last Saturday [April 13] to discuss how diplomacy and dialogue can end the conflict in Gaza and achieve a mutually beneficial development plan which could serve as a model for lasting peace. How do you think the conference went, and where do we go from here?"

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I think it went very well. Given the escalation of the situation in Southwest Asia, the conference came at the very right moment. Because unfortunately, sometimes things have to get very bad before people are willing to consider that a change is necessary. So let me just take the opportunity to tell you where I think we stand in the Middle East—or Southwest Asia. There are all kinds of very interesting commentaries and reports, and I would actually suggest to you, our readers and the questioner, to look at these in great detail: There is a report, an interview between Judge Andrew Napolitano and Alastair Crooke; there is a very interesting interview and article by Scott Ritter;

an article by Col. Douglas Macgregor; and others. If you evaluate all of these things together, then I think it is very clear that it is the opinion of these extremely well-educated military men that we have reached a point where Israel is clearly confronted with a situation where a change is necessary. And I think [the Oasis Plan](#) in this moment shows Israel a way out. Because, as several of these commentators mentioned, Israel did not accomplish what it set out to do. Hamas is not destroyed; the Israeli reputation in the world is severely damaged; the whole situation is practically hopeless.



The LaRouche Organization

The Oasis Plan for developing Israel, Palestine, and beyond.

After the [April 13] Iranian attack—with 300 drones, missiles, cruise missiles—a new situation has risen. And I think Scott Ritter, in particular, who after all was a weapons inspector—and therefore I trust his judgment quite a bit in this respect—makes the point that following the deployment of these different weapons, including slow-moving drones that take 3.5 hours to reach their goal, these were meant primarily for mapping the Israeli air defense, which he and others claim was thoroughly accomplished. But then, despite the fact that the U.S.—maybe the British, but especially the U.S. and Israel—have the most sophisticated missile defense systems in the world around these air bases in the Negev Desert, both located nearby, but also on ships, possibly on airplanes, nevertheless nine Iranian

missiles were able to penetrate this missile defense system and hit these air bases.

Scott Ritter makes the point that that means the entire myth of U.S. ballistic missile air defense systems is practically ruined. Because if the Iranians can do that, when you have the most developed and most sophisticated American and Israeli missile defense systems, then that can be replicated anywhere; that at no point in the world are these systems protecting whatever they're supposed to protect, including U.S. ships in the Pacific. He says this is a

stalemate, and until the United States develops weapons systems which are superior to those combinations of systems which the U.S., the Russians, the Chinese, the Iranians, and possibly others have, that there is a stalemate and this has strategic implications.

Now, I find this very interesting, because this for sure will add to the sense of being vulnerable in Israel. Therefore, Macgregor, who is after all one of the key military experts as well, he says there is the danger that Israel would use nuclear weapons in the coming confrontation with Iran, and that would mean complete Armageddon.

Now, the alternative, very clearly, is to say: OK, let's go to a completely new paradigm. We have proposed a very reasonable approach, the Oasis Plan, which is the idea of development for everybody: that every side will have a safe future, that they have no more fear of being attacked by one or the other side; that the children can live in peace, that the young people can study and have a future, become scientists, have a family, just have a normal life. And I think, in [the Schiller Institute conference](#), we had this discussion—I mentioned that Kissinger had said repeatedly that the Peace of Westphalia approach does not apply to the Middle East. We had an analyst from Indonesia, Mrs. Connie Rahakundini Bakrie, who made a similar point, quoting other officials saying that because of the division of the area—the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Balfour Declaration, the way the borders were designed and divided—that there is no possibility for a peaceful approach like in the Peace of Westphalia. Now, I think, emphatically, that the only way how—and that is a universal criterion—the only way how human beings can become adult



CC/BMG-2048

Col. Douglas Macgregor, who has warned of a nuclear Armageddon.

as a species, is that we abandon the idea of war as a method of conflict resolution, especially in the time of thermonuclear weapons. Because if you start using those weapons, you are risking the annihilation of the entire human species. And I believe that we absolutely have the potential in us to go to the idea of cooperation and diplomacy as conflict resolution, and create an economic development basis as the fundament and foundation for peace.

Having said all of this, I think our Oasis Plan conference came at the moment when the conflict really

started to reach a new phase, with the Iranian counterattack in response to the Israeli attack on Iran's Damascus consulate in Syria. And this highlights the danger: Armageddon or peaceful development. There is no third way. I think we have reached the end of the road in this respect, and that is why I think this conference was *extremely* important, and why I think it was an absolute success. Because if you look at the different speeches given in the course of the discussion, three, actually four countries or diplomatic representatives, endorsed the Oasis Plan. That came either in their presentation directly or in the discussion: From the Belarus representative, from the Russian representative, from the South African ambassador, and from the Palestinians, all appreciating the approach of the Oasis Plan.

So I think this alone means a big success. And naturally, we won't stop there. We have produced in the meantime, in a crash program—and you should thank our collaborators in the Schiller Institute who worked really hard overnight to make all of this possible—we produced a short version of the seven-hour conference, in a one-hour video, which has some of the most important quotes and excerpts. The idea of it is that we want to get this into the hands of all people who either watched the conference, or who are now becoming aware of the proceedings, and take that as an introductory package and contact as many diplomats, scientists, entrepreneurs, water firms, nuclear firms, politicians of all kinds: Because we have to create a chorus of people who say “No Armageddon in the Middle East. We want to have an Oasis Plan for all of Southwest Asia.” So take this package, this one-hour video—you can add

the invitation: We have written an excellent overview article about the conference. So take the overview article, which you can find on our website, and the video, and help us to spread it as widely as possible, both in countries and institutions of Southwest Asia, but also beyond. Because I think we need a mood change in the way we approach politics, and I think the Oasis Plan provides an excellent approach to try to get the world away from the brink of thermonuclear destruction.



CC photo by Pippa Fowles/No. 10 Downing Street

Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's intervention sabotaged a peace agreement that had already been initialed by Ukraine and Russia in March 2022.

Schlanger: We have a comment and question from Dave in Michigan, who writes that he saw that the topic of today's webcast is "Dialogue, Not Retribution," and he refers to an article in *Foreign Affairs* that just came out on the 2022 draft agreement between Russia and Ukraine—the one that was sabotaged by NATO and Boris Johnson. He says, "It shows that both sides were willing to make concessions." And he writes that Belarus President Lukashenko called for a return to the negotiating table with this draft agreement providing a starting point. Then he asks: "Is it possible that such an approach could revive negotiations, which would include security guarantees for all parties?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Absolutely yes! Now, this is quite interesting, because the fact that *Foreign Affairs* comes up with this idea, echoing what Putin and Lukashenko discussed just a few days ago, is obviously due to the situation in

the U.S. presidential campaign. It is clear that Biden cannot really afford to supply more weapons to Ukraine, because the population doesn't want this anymore; the whole thing is stuck in the Congress. So I think there is clearly a sign coming from the United States that it's not convenient to continue this Ukrainian war, all the more because it's reaching an extreme point of difficulty, where some people even say that it may soon end with a catastrophic defeat of Ukraine.

Now, I think this is very good. I think in March [2022] there was an agreement between Zelensky and the Russian government, mediated by Türkiye. And as Putin subsequently revealed in his discussions with a visiting African delegation [in July 2023], this in great detail was worked out. Then it was sabotaged, predominantly by Boris Johnson, who flew into Kyiv and said, "No, keep fighting; we're backing you up all the way." And if you think, how many people have lost their lives in the meantime, it's really a tragedy. The best thing you could do is to say: "OK, let's go back to these negotiations and try to really come to an agreement." And there, again, economic development as a way to reconstruct Ukraine, and hopefully integrate it into a larger cooperation, in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, connecting Europe and Asia, that would be the way to solve the problem.

Schlanger: This is a question from a person in Walnut Creek, California, who expresses anger that the Berlin police shut down a Zoom conference of support for Palestinians, and arrested some participants. And he asks, "Why would they shut down the conference in Berlin?" And then he asks why the International Peace



ICJ

Nicaragua has charged Germany with complicity in Israel's genocide against Palestinians, because of its weapons sales to Israel. Here the Nicaraguan legal team is at the International Court of Justice to make its case.

Coalition and the Schiller Institute are not working with the sponsoring organization behind this, I think connected to [the Secretary-General of the Democracy in Europe Movement 2025] Yanis Varoufakis.

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, the police obviously acted on instruction of the government, and it's obvious that people's nerves were too raw. We were there as a matter of fact, and we distributed our own Oasis Plan leaflets, inviting people to participate in our conference the next day. It's very clear that one of the topics raised would have been Nicaragua's suit before the International Court of Justice against the German government, and that was obviously too much for the government to allow to happen—which is incredible. That shows you that free speech and the right to express criticism no longer exists, even against something already ruled by the International Court of Justice in January to be genocide or “plausible genocide.” So obviously, this is contributing more to damage the image of the German government—that they would suppress free opinion about this. And our own organizers who were distributing these leaflets, they could not detect any violence or anything which would have been a reason for shutting it down.

So, I think it's definitely something which has to be remedied. And there is a growing protest against it. As a matter of fact, there is a quite remarkable video by one of the most famous comedians in Germany, and top actors, Dieter Hallervorden, who has a poem called “Gaza Gaza.” It's a photomontage, where he speaks about what he experiences with the dying children, and you see footage of the collapsed houses, and people fleeing, and so forth—it sends shivers down your spine when you see this. And I can only suggest that you look at that, and get it around internationally, even if the text is German, because it's such a powerful message that it definitely will be understood.

We did reach out to some of the organizers, and it's not that the IPC does not want to talk to them, it's that we have to unify the peace movement internationally, given the fact that civilization has never been in such incredible danger as right now. And as we said from the very beginning: All world citizens of the world have to unite to conquer this danger.

Schlanger: We have a couple more questions on Germany, Helga. I think people are interested in what you think as a political figure, not just internationally, but in Germany. Someone writes that Chancellor Scholz went to China, took a large business delegation with him, and they ask the question: “Is this a sign of opposition in Germany to the EU policy of de-risking or decoupling from China?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I would say definitely, yes. This trip was mixed. It started not so well, because he went to Chongqing first. This is the largest city in the world, with 24 million inhabitants, and a lot of the German high-technology firms have invested there. So he went there. Then it got interrupted, because there was a G7



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (left) had a five-hour meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Bundesregierung/Kugler

internet conference, because of the crisis with the Iranian attack against Israel, so he was distracted and could not follow through with all of his planned agenda. But then, when he went to Beijing, he had a five-hour meeting with Xi Jinping, including lunch and normal political discussion. And that meeting, I must say, was really lifted to a higher level by Xi Jinping in what he said. He said that the second and third largest economies in the world, they have to work together, not only for the sake of the two countries, but for the sake of all of humanity.

Given the fact that these two countries have contributed extremely much to the development of humanity—China, with the Confucian tradition, and Germany with Schiller and Beethoven—there is no reason

for any hostility between these two countries, and that they must work together for the common good of the whole world. So I think altogether this went very well, given the environment, which is not exactly favorable to such an approach. And I'm absolutely convinced and certain that the German industry representatives, the CEOs of some of the largest firms, were quite an important factor—for sure against de-risking. Because they know perfectly well it does not function; that in a highly interwoven economy, if you de-risk you are just shooting yourself in the foot.

The reality is that China is connected to—and it's not just China—China is connected to the Global South, the Global Majority. This is by now 70% of the world GDP represented by the Global South, the Global Majority, which is 88% of the world population. So, Germany, being an export nation, absolutely cannot afford to be decoupled or de-risked, given the fact that for a variety of reasons, the German economy right now is in a free fall. So for Germany, China is an absolute anchor of stability, and I think it would be much better if the United States would also stop its geopolitical confrontation and just cooperate, and we could solve all problems of the world together, nicely.

But I'm not exuberant, because it could have been even better, but I'm quite content with the outcome of this trip under the circumstances.

Schlanger: I have one more question for you on Germany. A regular contributor writes: "Do you think the present coalition government in Germany will stay in office until the next scheduled Federal election in October 2025?" And she concludes her comment saying, "I hope not."

Zepp-LaRouche: [laughs] Well! I can only agree with you, I hope not either, because this government is a disaster. I think they're running Germany into the ground. It's absolutely impossible. And I just read a recent poll that the Greens, fortunately, have now gone down to only 12%, which is almost half of their prior support. I think halving their support twice more would be adequate, so that they wouldn't get into Parliament any more. And I can only say, any Green voter, whoever voted for the Greens should look at what has come out of this Green party: The warmongers *par excellence*; they're just NATO spokethings (or whatever the word is). In English, you can't do this, but in German, with the genderization, you have to say "voters," but in Eng-

lish it doesn't work this way.

In any case, I think they should get into more fights, and there should be new elections as quickly as possible.

Schlanger: Now, I have a question from the United States, where as you know there's been incredible acrimony in the Congress, both between Republicans and Democrats, and within each party, over such things as the Ukraine aid, the funding for Israel, and also the renewal of the FISA surveillance court. The question is, "Why would Republicans vote to renew the FISA [Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act] bill, knowing that it was used to target Donald Trump with fake evidence from the FBI?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, because I think most political issues right now are distractions. What should people be concerned about? They should be concerned that the United States is also in an existential crisis. I don't want to comment on the internal politics of the United States in the middle of an election campaign, but both candidates are not exactly promising a change in the overall policy. Naturally, the Trump voters probably think that there would be a big change, but I think there are so many distractions that we are right now at the point of not even getting to the election campaign. With this thing, what I mentioned in the beginning, about the fact that the crisis in the Middle East is taking the wrong turn, I cannot see that any of the candidates has a policy which would make a difference! Not even Kennedy! It's a catastrophe.

So therefore, I think the most important thing is not all of this, but it is the campaign for the U.S. Senate of Diane Sare in New York and for Congress of Jose Vega in the Bronx. And I would urge all our viewers right now to look at the Diane Sare and Jose Vega campaigns, because they represent some real change for the future of the United States. And if Sare can be voted into the Senate, the Senator from New York is an extremely important position, which can become a rallying point for all reasonable forces in the United States that want to have a real change for the better, and a return to the principles of the American Revolution. I can only say Diane Sare and Jose Vega are the two people representing hope for the future of the United States.

Schlanger: You can find out more about the Sare



Courtesy of Yuriy Zah

Diane Sare, candidate for U.S. Senate in New York State.



Vega Campaign website

Jose Vega is running for U.S. Congress in the Bronx, New York.

campaign by going to <https://www.sareforsenate.com/>. I had the good fortune of doing a one-hour radio interview with Diane Sare in Utah, and she is really challenging the way people are thinking.

And that brings me to the next question which, coincidentally comes from Utah, a regular listener. And she writes: “You said last week there must be a change in thinking, if we’re going to change the country. I’ve been disgusted by the media coverage of the Iranian attack on Israel, which, it seems to me, is focused on who came out best, who won.” And she says, “Treating matters of war and peace like it’s a sporting competition, this seems to be an example of what you meant by the need for a change in thinking. Could you say more about what you mean as the ‘necessary change’?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes. It is a fact that the media on both sides of the Atlantic—because in Europe, in Germany, it’s the same thing—they only talked about the Iranian aggression against Israel, not mentioning at all the Israeli attack on the consulate in Damascus on April 1st, and that way you completely distort the truth. It’s like the “unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine,” the “unprovoked war of Iran against Israel.” All of these things have a history, and if you blot that out, you’re really turning black into white and white into black. Anyway, I just had to say that.

Now, what I mean by a complete cognitive jump, a new way of looking at things: If you look at it from the bottom up, you can say, “Oh, the other person has an ugly nose in the middle of their face, and it’s not even in the middle, it’s slightly to the side; and it’s crooked and your eyes are ugly, and your head is disgusting.”

If you treat a country like that—and I’m using that as a metaphor—you can start World War III with anybody. You can start World War III with your neighbor, with your family. Or, you can take a different approach and say, “OK, I can see you have tried and there is a potential, and why don’t you do it like that?” and you give the person an idea, and the person picks up on it, and grows on it, and makes something beautiful. Then, all of a sudden, a creative spark unfolds, which was not there before. And you interact with each other in this way: you build friendship; you build a growing relationship; you’re expanding diplomatic

joy between countries. That’s what I mean. If you proceed from the idea that man is good by nature, therefore, naturally, the other country is also good by nature. In other words, you treat the citizens of other countries, not as enemies, but you treat them as potential friends, and you do everything so that they become friends. And then they will become friends!

I had the fortune in my life to travel, not hugely, but more than most people: I traveled—I didn’t count it exactly, but probably something like 50 countries at least, and I know some of them quite well. So, what experience did that leave me with? That to discover another culture is absolute joy. You discover something which enriches you, because it’s not in your own tradition. That’s why the Creator made so many nations. (I’m putting it in this form.) If you discover the beauty of other poetry—from other traditions, from other philosophies, from other thinking—you get richer. If you discover the paintings, the art, you will find out that most people around the world, just ordinary people, are happy to find a foreigner—even one that doesn’t know the language—to whom they can show things, to explain things. They become your friend.

If you’re a country, well, I do not believe in this stupid saying by this evil guy Churchill, that “countries have no friends, they just have interests.” That’s a whole bunch of B.S. (I have to watch my language.) It’s just not true! You can have friendship among countries, and I think the African countries will tell you immediately that they are friends with China; that many of them are friends with Russia. Why? Because they got support in extremely difficult situations of their own history, and they’re thankful!

So I just think what we have to do—I mean, either we go to World War III, and we are really at the point where that could happen more easily than—I don't even want to think about it. So, before such a danger, we must make the jump to say, "We are the one humanity," because only if we think that way will we survive! So let's think about the one mankind first, and then go to all other issues from that perspective, and then we can find a solution to all of them.

I think this whole idea of more weapons and more sophisticated weapons and so forth, I mean, just think about all the economic potential which is wasted in military production, and how much we could turn the world into a garden if we would retool these industries; use their R&D capabilities; transform them into civilian production for healthcare, for education; for just making life beautiful for all people on this planet—and that would be quite easy. Even the people who think they would lose all this profit, probably, in the end, would be happy not to be remembered as monsters, but that they made the important step to change a system when it had clearly outlived its usefulness.

Schlanger: Well, Helga, I think the other thing is people could go to the Schiller Institute website, and download your [Ten Principles for a New International Security and Development Architecture](#), which is essentially what you just described! It's a very useful dialogue that you're having with all of the viewers on this question: that a change in paradigm requires a change in each of us individually.

Now, with that, let me just finish with this question from Bernie, who asks if you can mention the application for Palestine to have full membership in the United Nations. The U.S. is preventing this with its veto. Your comments on that. And also he asks, "What about the possibility of bringing Palestine into the BRICS alliance?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I think tomorrow in the UN Security Council, there is actually the discussion of the application of Palestine as a state. And I can only hope that the vote will be overwhelmingly in favor. I can only hope that the U.S. representative has a stroke of genius, all of a sudden, and at least goes for an absten-



UN/Evan Schneider

The UN Security Council has discussed the statehood of Palestine.

tion. Because if the United States continues to block that, the world opinion is already turning against those who are not working to stop what is going on in Gaza, which is one of the worst atrocities in the history of mankind, ever. And I think the United States and the countries that are siding with the United States in this, are going to be isolated, and the memory of that will be there for generations and centuries to come. So this is a stain which no country can afford, not even the United States.

I can only say, please go back to what we discussed in the beginning: Take our Oasis Plan one-hour video and the [overview article on the conference](#), organize for it, and create an environment where people understand that giving statehood to Palestine is the best thing one could do, in combination with putting the Oasis Plan on the agenda. And obviously, Palestine eventually joining the BRICS? Absolutely, if we cannot find a more general solution, which naturally would be that everybody joins the BRICS. I think that that has to happen.

Schlanger: I think that's a great proposal, Helga: Let's bring them all into the BRICS, and get rid of these institutions that have been set up for geopolitical gains.

So, Helga, thanks for joining us this week, and I assume we're going to have another very busy week, and we're going to convene again next Wednesday as usual.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes. And be active in the meantime.