

Crossroads of the 'New Silk Road'

The next three presentations emphasized the role of the Central Asian republics, Iran, and the Middle East as the connecting link between East and West, and how the British attempts to destroy the Land-Bridge today are here most violently demonstrated.

Dr. Hadi Qurraie, professor of Near East Languages at the University of Washington, provided an exciting report on the tremendous changes taking place in Iran. He held up copies of an Iranian daily he receives, saying, "Day after day, there are reports of projects, new factories, mines, dams, roadways, and railroads being built or being completed."

Abdul Tarshi, from Afghanistan, spoke next. Tarshi gave the audience an exercise in geography and demographics: He began by explaining the necessary elements required for economic development and the Land-Bridge—water, electricity, transportation, communications, and, most important, educated manpower. Then, one by one, Tarshi located each of the Central Asian republics on overhead maps and presented the figures on their population size, land area, resources, major products, and how each "fits into the Land-Bridge."

The last part of his presentation focussed on Afghanistan. He said Afghanistan has been for more than 160 years the plaything of a "Great Game" between the British Empire and Russia. Eliciting smiles in his audience, he recounted how, in response to British colonialist oppression, the people of Afghanistan decided to fight the Empire's invaders, and defeated them three times, in 1842, then again in 1880, and again in 1919. Yet, he said, British influence remained, by means of bought-and-paid for puppet-kings.

The final speaker for the evening session was Dr. Mohamad Said, from Palestine. Dr. Said is a family physician who practices in eastern Washington. "I must tell you why I admire this organization," he declared. The Schiller Institute "is a global organization, it gives solutions to global problems. It stresses that economic cooperation is the basis for political agreements between nations. Second, it attacks the British Empire, which is an evil empire. It was the British who created the problems in the Middle East through divide-and-conquer methods. Third, Lyndon LaRouche is a visionary. That is why he is attacked. I fully support the exoneration of Mr. LaRouche. He is seen as a hero in many countries."

Dr. Said then discussed his activities over the past 20 years in attempting to create a dialogue between the Palestinians and the Israelis, including his fights and political battles with the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. He said that there must be justice for the Palestinians, if there is to be peace in the Middle East. But peace, he said, can only be kept through economic development. Dr. Said then described the irrigation and energy development projects of the "Oasis Plan for Middle East Development" developed by LaRouche and his associates.

Ethnicism hinders Africa's development

by Hon. Girma Yilma Bulbula

The Hon. Girma Yilma Bulbula is formerly Ethiopia's ambassador to the Soviet Union. What follows is from the written text of his presentation to a conference on "The New Bretton Woods System and the Eurasian Land-Bridge," sponsored by the FDR-PAC in Seattle on June 5. In his oral remarks, the ambassador described his country as an old, and proud nation, which has many tribes and languages, but is united by the use of one language for government and education. Subheads have been added.

Tribalism is even more criminal than imperialism.

— Ahmed Sekou Toure, 1979

British colonialist domination imposed an artificial backwardness on many nations and their people. It caused both an abnormal stagnation and cultural development and even cultural retrogression.

— Lyndon LaRouche, "A Theory of Development for African Labor," 1979

Today Africa is abandoned and betrayed by its intellectuals, marginalized and forgotten by the world. The peoples and the continent are subjected to genocide, degradation and ethnic strife. Africa is no more newsworthy. It has lost its strategic value after the collapse of the socialist world. There seems a near total blackout by the western electronic and print media. They become active whenever ethnic warlords take power by force and western governments are obliged to evacuate their nationals from a certain African country.

As an African and a member of the human family, I sincerely thank the LaRouche movement and the Schiller Institute for their special interest in the plight of Africa and its immense problems. Their fact-finders travel to trouble spots and appeal to the conscience of the world through conferences and various publications. The *New Federalist* and the *Executive Intelligence Review* are the only sources to know about present-day Africa. Africans are indeed grateful for this noble deed. . . .

The development of infrastructure and a viable financial system are possible only in a stable, democratic, open and legal society. The current situation in Africa is very alarming.

There is no rule of law, no visionary and intellectual leadership. Some “intellectuals” even accepted the divide-and-rule policy of the British Empire as a panacea to African problems.

Rev. John S. Mbiti is a professor of Theology and Comparative Religion at Makerere University in Uganda. He wrote the following about African progress: “Each African people has its own history. This history goes backwards, from a moment of intense experience back to a period beyond which nothing happens. In traditional African thought, there is no concept of history moving forward, towards a future climax or towards the end of the world. Since the future is concerned only in terms of a couple of months, the future can open neither a golden age nor a state of radically different affairs. The notion of a messianic hope or the final destruction has no place in the traditional concept of history. Therefore, Africans do not believe in ‘progress,’ in the idea that the development and activities and human achievements move from a lower to a higher degree.”

Here the professor is echoing what the colonial powers imposed on their colonized subjects. The problem with many Africans, including Professor Mbiti, is that we have accepted and internalized this colonialist notion that ethnicism, in one or another form, gives us our identity as citizens, or Africans. It is this self-conception which has nothing to do with the real African history, which constitutes the main hindrance to meaningful national economic, political, and social development.

To understand how an ethnic self-conception tends to block development, we must take into consideration the kind of personal identity necessary for industrial development and, from that standpoint, identify the problem specific to ethnicism. A coherent and universal economic policy for Africa must take as its focal point the development of the African labor force exposed to modern technology.

The ethnic identity is bestial

Ethnicism identifies the individual as anti-human, narrow and a parochial creature. The ethnic person, instead of being judged on the basis of his contribution to universal human knowledge, is defined first and foremost only as a member of an ethnic group, as a Tutsi, a Hutu, a Kiuku, a Gurage, etc. He is made to believe that his ethnic origin, geographical location, language and religion are particulars opposed to the interests of all other groups. Then, hatred and rivalry for “limited resources” begin.

The ethnic identity and its limits affect the loyalty and personal choices of the individual. These are fixed along the lines of ethnicity and clans. He is to die as he was born, carrying his hate and prejudices. It is this identity, fiercely defended, that has allowed colonial forces to set up one ethnic group against another, creating totally artificial ethnic warfare.

The fatal disease of disintegration is nearly everywhere

in Africa. It is the responsibility of the nation-state to take care of all the territory and the people, to provide education and overall development. It is the responsibility of the nation-state to rule over the economy and protect it, not to privatize it. Without railroads, without roads, without power, without water management, without protecting the population, there will be no balanced development and . . . creation of wealth. If we destroy the nation-state and replace it by various ethnic groups, there will be endless civil strife and confusion. . . .

European corporations, with the silent support of their governments are encouraging their agents and willing fools to destroy the borders of the nation-states they created in 1884 to plunder Africa. Africa has become a toy to be manipulated at the will of its former colonial masters. We are being told that borders and nation-states are no more important for Africans. As Dr. Godfrey Binaisa of Uganda reported to a recent conference in Germany on the development of Africa, “Most Americans consider Africa as a huge village or one huge country. They don’t even know that there are 50 nation-states in Africa.”

Learn the lessons Dante taught

Africa must create a humanist culture like the one Dante Alighieri created in Italy 600 years ago. Dante faced problems very similar to those of present-day Africa. Italy was divided into thousands of tiny local entities or “tribes,” each one believing firmly in the existence of its own special interests and prejudices, each spoke only its dialect, none of these entities was able to communicate important universal ideas to any others.

Dante understood that his country would fall into ruin if it were not able to shake off its chauvinist and ethnic mentality. Therefore, he took on himself the task of creating a national identity for Italy. This is the reason he wrote the *Divine Comedy*, a poem written in the new Italian language that he had created. Dante used this poem to lead the population to grasp the depth of degradation into which it had fallen. He described a voyage into Hell, where he showed how human beings degraded themselves to the level of mere beasts and, through poetic images explicating the process, he achieved a magnificent polemic against the mentality that accepted such degradation and ethnicism.

To throw off the yoke of ethnicism, Africa needs new Dantes, poets, artists and musicians capable of using typically African references, characters and situations, to shape works of art that polemicize ironically against tribal culture.

I conclude my presentation by quoting Lyndon LaRouche’s statement to the April 26, 1997 conference in Walluf, Germany: “We must rise to the mountaintop from which we can see the past and the breadth of humanity, and to use the very horror of what has been done, the crimes that are being committed in Africa, to use that lever, to force people to discover within themselves the passion to do what is necessary to save all humanity.”