

Editorial

A vision for the 21st century

On June 23, President Clinton will arrive in China for a visit full of promise for the future, provided he and his interlocutors proceed with the boldness and vision that the world strategic crisis demands.

The economies of most of China's neighbors have been badly battered since President Jiang Zemin last met with President Clinton, in the United States in October 1997. The governments of the West, while trying to pretend that all is well, are desperately trying to come up with a way to stave off a catastrophic collapse of the financial bubble. Some leading policymakers are timidly (and mostly in private) discussing Lyndon LaRouche's policy for a New Bretton Woods System—a bankruptcy reorganization of the global financial system, imposition of fixed exchange rates, and allocation of credit for priority projects in infrastructure and industry. But decisive moves have not been taken, and so, we continue to lurch from one crisis to the next.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who is known as "the Silk Road Lady," for her advocacy of Eurasian development along the ancient Silk Road, addressed a conference in Rome on April 2, and emphasized that the only government that has drawn the appropriate conclusion from the financial crisis, is the government of China. She reported that she was in Beijing last September, briefing people on Lyndon LaRouche's forecast that a systemic crisis would hit in October, and would overshadow the summit between President Jiang Zemin and President Clinton. "I don't think that people believed this," she said. "They were very politely listening, and they said, 'You are very bold, you are very courageous to make such an analysis. And if it happens to be true, you will have done a great service to mankind.'"

But then, on Oct. 27, the crisis hit. Since that time, there has been one conference after another in China, discussing the implications of the global crisis for China. "Mr. LaRouche obviously is a great prophet," people said.

The Chinese government swiftly made some policy changes, Mrs. LaRouche reported, "including to eliminate the bubble, to streamline the control over the regions, and, most importantly, they announced that they were shifting their focus away from the export of consumer goods to Southeast Asia, to the development of

China's domestic market. They allocated the equivalent of \$1 trillion for the next three years for the infrastructural and scientific and technological development of the interior regions of China."

So, she concluded, "there are changes, tectonic changes under way. . . . What is required right now, is not the mentality of accountants, but of visionaries, a vision for the twenty-first century."

Some Western policymakers are at least looking in the right direction. President Clinton moved forward the schedule of his trip to Beijing, originally scheduled for the fall, in order to give the greatest possible momentum to his diplomacy with China. Robert Hormats, vice chairman of Goldman Sachs, at a press conference on May 11, called for China to be included in Group of Seven summit meetings. A discussion on the future architecture of the international financial system in the wake of the Asia crisis, without China, he said, is like a discussion about the future of the auto industry, without General Motors.

But what programs will the G-7 adopt? Too often, its summit meetings have been Mad Hatter's tea parties, at which British geopolitical manipulations have made sure that nothing useful was accomplished. The urgent task for sovereign nations, particularly the United States and China, is to join efforts for a New Bretton Woods system, and the development program known as the Eurasian Land-Bridge.

As *EIR* readers know, China is forging ahead with the Land-Bridge effort, in cooperation with many of its neighbors. But input from the Western nations would make possible much more rapid accomplishments, while reviving the prostrate industrial economies of the West. It is highly interesting, in this light, that Prime Minister Zhu Rongji received a briefing on maglev technology, the transport technology of the twenty-first century, from a group of German industrialists on April 29. He then asked Chinese experts to develop a pilot project for the maglev.

Think of Eurasia spanned with maglev and other high-speed transportation systems, and high-technology industrial corridors developed around those transport arteries: that is the kind of visionary approach that could take hold, under a New Bretton Woods system.