

LaRouche in Sudan: 'Peace Through Economic Progress'

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

The image one has of Africa through mass media in the United States or Europe, rarely differs from the standard, painful picture of human suffering, whether through hunger, disease, war, or social dislocation. And the caption under that picture, whether explicit or implied, is also the same: "Africa is poor and devastated, and, well, it will always be that way. That's just the way things are."

In fact, the catastrophic condition of the African continent has nothing to do with "the way things are," but rather, with the ways things have been brought about, deliberately, over decades, by specific international institutions, for the declared purpose of depopulating the continent, and looting its vast raw materials resources. It is the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, instruments of the Anglo-American financial oligarchy, which have destroyed the economic and social fabric of Africa's nations, and rendered their populations vulnerable to the pandemic spread of new and old diseases.

Having wrought this disaster, through the imposition of the notorious Structural Adjustment Programs, the IMF and World Bank now argue, that, by following the same recipes of liberal, free market economics, they can "alleviate" poverty, by halving the number of people subsisting on less than \$1 a day (!), and stopping the spread of HIV-AIDS, by the year 2015.

That the forecast is wrong, is obvious. More important, is the fact that these agencies, and others throughout the so-called advanced sector, refuse to even contemplate the possibility of eradicating poverty, eliminating HIV-AIDS and other diseases, and actually *developing* Africa, into a continent of modern, industrialized, sovereign nations. Their policy is to prevent any such development from taking place. In fact, among the populations of the United States and Europe, the very notion of development, particularly applied to Africa,

has become a bad word. Development, progress, industrialization, are all passé, in the ideological confines of the "new economy."

In this context, a conference which took place in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, on Jan. 14-17, signified a turning-point. Not only did the gathering lay bare the fraud of the IMF and World Bank policies, but it documented the concrete ways and means by which real development could finally take hold in Africa. The symposium, co-sponsored by Sudan's Ministry of Information and Culture, the Centre for Strategic Studies of Sudan, *EIR*, and the Schiller Institute, brought together leading political figures from a group of nations in the region, whose cooperation will be key to this development.

"Peace Through Development along the Nile Valley in the Framework of a New, Just World Economic Order," was the theme of the conference, attended by political personalities, economists, diplomats, and intellectuals from Sudan and neighboring countries. Among the speakers from the region, were two Egyptians from Cairo University, the vice-director of the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development, two Nigerian professors, and numerous Sudanese government officials and others. Cooperation among the Nile countries, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan, is a precondition to progress.

The special guest and keynote speaker was Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., whose ideas are well known in Sudan, a country he visited in 1994 and 1996. LaRouche opened the proceedings on the first day, with a lecture on the perspectives for development in the framework of a new, just world economic order, and also keynoted the second day's session. LaRouche presented an exhaustive overview of the global financial, monetary, and economic breakdown crisis, its root causes, and the political significance of the incoming Bush team in



Lyndon and Helga LaRouche (center) join with other participants in the Khartoum conference on "Peace Through Development Along the Nile Valley, in the Framework of a New, Just World Economic Order."

the United States. He then outlined the means to establish a new monetary system, and a totally new arrangement of political-economic relations among sovereign states.

The broad picture outlined by LaRouche, was filled in over the succeeding days, by numerous illustrious speakers. Prof. Sam Aluko of Nigeria joined with Uwe Friesecke of *EIR* to document the utter failure of globalization. The example of Nigeria, illustrated by Professor Aluko, and also by Prof. Ode Ojuwo, of the University of Jos in Nigeria, made the point, that one cannot compromise with IMF policies and survive.

The role of continent-wide infrastructure in the development of Africa, was presented in a series of speeches, ranging from the Eurasian Land-Bridge (Dr. Gabir Said Awad of Cairo University) and its extension into Africa through Egypt (Cairo University Prof. Hamdy Abdel Rahman), to Sudan's railway program (the general manager of the Sudan Railways Corporation, Eng. Omer Mohamed Nour). Water development was the subject of a session addressed by the Sudanese Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources, and a former Agriculture Minister, who is also a former ambassador to the United States. They laid out the dramatic picture, of how the Nile River waters, if managed equitably and rationally, could enormously expand agricultural output, for Africa and the world.

By linking Africa to the Eurasian Land-Bridge, through Egypt, the entire character of trade relations and economic outlook, will be radically upgraded. As the speakers detailed, the Egyptian government is already moving toward establishing its part of the network, and the Sudanese presented an ambitious outline for extending the national grid, to build transportation bridges to neighboring countries. Such railway infrastructure, articulated into a north-south, east-west continental system, would revolutionize trade relations, and provide the backbone for agro-industrial development inland.

A Dialogue of Civilizations

The final session, dedicated to peace through development as the foundation for a dialogue of civilizations, focused on the peace process in Sudan. Here, two progress reports were presented, on the efforts made by the Sudanese government to end the war which has been raging in the south since 1983.

This war, as LaRouche noted, had actually been started by the former colonial power, Great Britain, which, after conquering Sudan at the end of the Nineteenth Century, introduced a policy of division and confrontation between the south and the north of the country.

The war in Sudan is paradigmatic of wars elsewhere on the continent, for example, in the Great Lakes region, all of which have been instigated and fuelled by foreign powers committed to breaking the power of governments, in order to open up raw materials resources to looting. Finding a means to end the war in Sudan, and establish durable peace, is crucial, therefore, not only to the nation's perspective, but to solving similar conflicts elsewhere.

LaRouche addressed the broad context of religious warfare, as ignited historically, outlining the principles on which a true dialogue of civilizations can unfold.

In the roundtable discussion which followed, Helga Zepp-LaRouche introduced into the debate, the precedent of the Peace of Westphalia, which sparked a lively dialogue.

We present here the complete proceedings of the final session, on "Peace Through Development, Foundation for a Dialogue Among Civilizations." The other sessions of the seminar will be published in a forthcoming issue, including LaRouche's keynote, and the two alternatives for Africa: genocide through the IMF, or peace through "real development," of water resources, agriculture, and transportation infrastructure.