

The Peace Dividend of the New Silk Road: Global Reconstruction of The Physical Economy

by Alexander Hartmann

Nov. 6—In her [webcast of Nov. 4, 2015](#), the Chairwoman of Germany’s Civil Rights Movement Solidarity Party (BüSo) Helga Zepp-LaRouche, emphasized the great crisis, but also the great opportunity, which is presented by the current international situation: “There are two fundamental processes in motion. One is that the trans-Atlantic world is collapsing at a rapid rate—in fact, in America as much as Europe. And at the same time there are very hopeful developments—from China, from the BRICS countries; even the developments in Syria are taking a positive course. It is very difficult to say which direction is currently stronger. This is one of those historical moments where there are objective conditions for either trend to win out—either for the collapse, or for optimistic changes. And everything, or almost everything, in such a situation depends on the subjective factor: are there enough people who grasp the opportunity at hand—or not?”

Zepp-LaRouche referenced a recent conference on the New Silk Road in Madrid: “There the leader of the most important Chinese development agency used the image of the Silk Road being a potential ‘Noah’s Ark’ for all the states in the world who need it. I have picked up on this and somewhat modified it, with the idea that development is the only way we can bring peace to the Middle East, and that a lasting solution can actually only be reached with the concept of ‘Peace Through Development.’”

This idea has already been put on the international agenda, because, at the recent Vienna Conference on Syria, China proposed a four-point plan for solving the Syria crisis, “and the fourth point was that the reconstruction process in Syria should begin *immediately* in the regions which have already seen peace, so that the warring parties can see the benefits of the peace dividend.”



Xinhua/Liu Xiang

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Li Baodong upon arrival at the multilateral ministerial meeting on Syria in Vienna, Austria, Oct. 30, 2015.

This is precisely the idea of the New Silk Road, “which is already emerging in various ways, from China through Central Asia into Europe, if we extend it into the Middle East.” For example, China is building a huge development corridor through Pakistan to the Persian Gulf, in which it has invested 46 billion dollars. There are similar efforts beginning in Afghanistan, where China, as well as Russia, has proposed very important programs for development of the country.

“And for a long time we have proposed that the whole Near and Middle East, i.e. the whole of Southwest Asia, be considered one region, and that a kind of Marshall Plan be put on the agenda,” Zepp-LaRouche said. “That would be a great success, and there are many people who are thinking seriously about it. Because we must ask ourselves: The point is not merely to end the war in Syria, but ‘What should the world look

like 50 or 100 years from now?”

The Looming Dangers

But Zepp-LaRouche also alluded to the danger if we do not follow the path of reconstruction:

“We currently have to deal with a mass migration, thus a massive immigration, so to speak, a migration movement similar to that of the mass migration of the old Germanic tribes at the end of the Roman Empire—i.e., it is a movement coming from Africa and from Southwest Asia which simply will not end, because an old order is collapsing, and it is still continuing to collapse.”

If you want to stop these many people who are fleeing from war and destitution from becoming an “explosive force” in Europe, “then we must urgently correct the mistakes which the West as a whole has made over the last decades. And that was to deliver these countries over completely to interests other than those actually implementing a development policy. That mistake we must urgently correct.”

There are many countries in the world which are thinking in this direction—the BRICS countries and many countries in South America and Asia—“who see a solution in this perspective. And I believe that the Silk Road idea is gradually beginning—in Germany, in France, in Great Britain, in Spain—to gain a foothold as a potential solution. From that I conclude: We have the solution, potentially; we must only move on it.”

The Breakdown Crisis in America

The United States also finds itself in a “classical breakdown crisis.” As an example, Zepp-LaRouche cited a report in the Nov. 2 *New York Times* on a study which found that the death rate of 40-50 year olds in the United States over the last ten years had risen by about 10 percent—and for people who qualify as poor, actually 22 percent. The most important causes of death



The Drug Enforcement Administration's latest report makes it official: Drug overdoses kill more than motor vehicle accidents or firearms.

were drugs, alcohol, and suicide; the underlying reason lies in the increasing impoverishment of the population and the worsening of health care. Between 2011 and 2014 heroin consumption has risen over 150%—especially because many people are taking heroin as a substitute for much more expensive pain killers. In cities such as New York City, 60% of the population is poor.

“The whole country is really in a breakdown crisis which is absolutely unbelievable,” Zepp-LaRouche said. “And I believe that people who realize this, must understand that it is not America as a nation which is behind these wars in the Middle East, or behind all the other things which people blame America for. We are dealing with an

empire which destroys *all* nations—including the United States. And as long as this empire has not been effectively defeated, this process will proceed.”

Zepp-LaRouche cited the upcoming Paris Climate Conference (COP21) as an example of the policy of this empire. “Of course climate change takes place; of course conditions in certain parts of the earth change; it becomes warmer, the sea level rises to some extent. But, as in earlier periods, mankind must adapt to such developments using modern technology. That is totally feasible because man is the creature which deals with such problems, as before, with scientific and technological progress, and we are a species which can solve all problems scientifically and technologically. It is only a question of time, a question of focus, of how much energy will be applied, how much labor power. Fundamentally, there is no single problem that we, as humanity, can not solve.”

But to that end, the common good must be the central focus, and not the profits of an ever richer class, as today, when 80 people own exactly the same amount of wealth as 3.5 billion people. And that is the problem—that we have a world order which caters to speculation,

to the maximum profit for a small upper class, to which many people naturally attach themselves because they want to have a part in it—but two billion people don't have enough to eat. . . . We need a return to a financial and economic policy which puts mankind in the center, and fortunately, it is to some degree already on the way.”

As a further example of the paradigm which must be overcome, Zepp-LaRouche cited the West's confrontation policy against Russia: “As long as we don't change this paradigm, we are sitting on a powderkeg, the possible outbreak of a Third World War. Therefore it should actually be absolutely clear: The German government must be challenged forcefully not only to distance itself from this policy, but to make it clear, with concrete steps, that it is not part of such a policy, and that we must immediately and unilaterally lift the sanctions against Russia.”

These sanctions in any case are hurting the German economy more than Russia, “and by the way, the German government has already realized that Russia is acting very, very much in Germany's interests by acting against terrorism in Syria, and thereby carrying out the only possible policy which can solve the refugee crisis. In return, it really is time to end the sanctions immediately, and thereby give a clear signal for all Europe: We are not interested in a war against Russia or China, or against anyone.”

A Development Perspective on the Agenda

“We must act so that this development perspective comes on the agenda not only for the Middle East and Africa,” Helga Zepp-LaRouche stressed. The United States and Europe also need large-scale reconstruction programs. The United States needs a continental high-speed rail system, such as is currently being built in China. This could be linked to the idea of building new cities—science cities, “which at the same time will be cultural and scientific centers which will feature beauty again. We can build beautiful buildings, beautiful cities.”



A view of the Russian Science City Dubna, taken by a delegation of the Schiller Institute which visited the area Oct. 26 to 30 this year. A 15 minute video on the trip can be seen [here](#).

Schiller Institute

This effort must be combined “with urgently required water projects, in order to fight the expanding desert in all the U.S. states west of the Mississippi.” We can retool the whole military-industrial complex for this purpose, and devote it to the reconstruction of the United States. As a result no one would lose anything, but the whole country would experience a tremendous advantage.”

The same thing obviously could be done in Europe as well. “Southern Europe, the Balkans, southern Italy, Spain, and Portugal urgently need a reconstruction program such as we have already presented in 2012. Germany has a deficit of investment in infrastructure—roads, bridges, and so forth—of about 2 trillion Euros, which is not a small amount.” The same applies to public housing construction and many other aspects.

This kind of buildup is exactly what China's President Xi Jinping has described as a “win-win perspective:” a perspective from which all countries who collaborate on this model of cooperation, profit. “In other words: We can actually begin to implement a reconstruction program similar to that of the German economic miracle after World War II, and thus gradually solve all our problems, and mankind will have a future. It must simply be put on the agenda. I am optimistic that we can accomplish this, and I also appeal to you: Don't sit like a little bird on the fence of history, as a spectator, but join with us today, and mobilize for these solutions!”

This article has been translated from German.