

The Coincidence of Opposites— The World of Tomorrow

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends of the Schiller Institute:

After the very historic summit which surprised the world, between President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong-un, I made a proposal that this model, which shows that you can turn an adversarial relationship—as a matter of fact, we were on the verge of a potential global war—into the total opposite of cooperation if there is good will and if there is collaboration of the large powers—in this case, the United States, China, and Russia, who all worked in the background to help make this summit possible.

I proposed that at the EU summit, which has just concluded, the agenda should have only one item, namely the development of Africa through the New Silk Road. And that the EU should invite President Xi Jinping and about six or so heads of state of African nations which are already cooperating with China, and announce a joint crash program for the industrialization of Africa through the extension of the New Silk Road to all of these states.

Such action, if taken, would have had absolute credibility and would have been taken seriously through the presence of President Xi Jinping, because he has a very high reputation in Africa; it would have given hope to all the young people of Africa, that they might have a prospect of participating in the construction of their own countries, and building up their nations. For Europe, this is the only human way to solve the refugee crisis.

This proposal has been translated into ten languages or more: most European languages, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and is being circulated widely internationally. Did I think that this was a realistic program for this EU? Well, absolutely not. But, is it the right idea to be pushed anyway? Yes. After all, such a summit could be called at any moment by any combination of



Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institutes.

nations. One could use the UN General Assembly in September to discuss this.

Trump-Putin Summit

A new summit has been confirmed in the meantime between President Putin and President Trump for the 16th of July, in Helsinki, after the NATO summit. They will probably discuss a U.S.-Russian agreement on the future of Syria; maybe even a comprehensive plan for Southwest Asia. And secondly, there will be discussion about the need to have global nuclear disarmament, which was announced by Russian

Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov. At the same time however, President Putin made clear that he is calling for global denuclearization from a position of strength; he gave a press conference at the Kremlin the same day, saying that there are a number of Russian weapons systems, where Russia is years, if not decades, ahead of the West. This was what he announced on March 1st. In the meantime, Generals Dunford and Gerasimov met in Helsinki to prepare this summit.

The neo-liberal establishment of the West went absolutely out of their minds. They basically freaked out and called this an “apocalyptic development”—that was *Die Welt* and the *London Times*—especially being completely freaked out about the possibility that Trump may reduce the U.S. troops in Europe, which obviously would be a good thing. But the geopolitical faction went absolutely out of control over this possibility.

This abreaction of the West to something which any peace-loving person could only welcome, namely that the relationship between the large powers—China, the United States, and Russia—would be improved, proves that something else is needed. We need a completely New Paradigm in thinking in terms of the relations among nations.



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Syrian refugees cross the border from Hungary to Austria, on their way to Germany in 2015.

The Refugee Crisis

Coming back to the refugee crisis: The annual global trend report of the UN Refugee Agency published that by the end of 2017, there were 68.5 million people displaced on the Earth. This is almost the size of the German population; 16.2 million new refugees in 2017; 44,500 new refugees every day, or 1 person every 2 seconds. We should keep in mind that each of these individuals is as human a person as you and me and all of us in this room. These are not numbers; these are people like your neighbor, like your friend, your family.

The EU just concluded, proposing a whole number of vague things: “disembarkment camps,” militarize the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), and similar things which are as barbarian as they are unworkable. They want to close the outer borders of the EU; make Frontex a robust mandate; spend a lot of money. European Parliament President Antonio Tajani proposed EU6 billion to close the Mediterranean across the coast of Libya alone. Ex-NATO Gen. Egon Romms even demanded a Bundeswehr mandate to back up Frontex, and others called for NATO to be involved.

“Disembarkment” centers are supposed to set on European soil, later in Africa; but the problem is, none of the countries involved want them. Not Egypt, not Libya, not Morocco, not Tunisia, not Algeria; and the Albanians and Macedonians don’t want to have them either. Libya proposes such camps to be set up south of the Libyan borders, in Niger and Mali, which have zero infrastructure, just desert.

German TV reported that the Algerian government sent 13,000 refugees into the Sahara without food and water, without cell phones or money. In a heat of 48° Celsius [118° Fahrenheit], people had to march to some little village in Niger. Pregnant women and children, many of them were never seen again. The Algerian gov-

ernment denied that this was true. It may be true or not—one never knows in the world of fake news. But I can assure you that this is happening all the time; people are marching through the Sahara, dying, and it is not being reported. Pope Francis compared these camps in Libya for example, where there is not even a government in control, where people have been tortured, mutilated, raped, sold as slaves, to the concentration camps of the Second World War set up by the Nazis.

States have the right to protect their borders, to keep social peace. But you cannot ignore the right to life, the right for asylum, and the plight of the refugees. The Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, said Albania will never allow these camps; he is against dumping desperate people like toxic waste nobody wants, and that Albania will never be a wave breaker for the refugees. If you look at the refugee debate in Europe at this point—and we have had a lot of it in the last days—where are the Western values of human rights and democracy? What we are seeing with the refugee crisis is the *violation* of the most basic human rights: the right to life, dignity, asylum, before the eyes of the world public.

A Fundamental Change in the Image of Man

Underneath all the brutality is a fundamental change in the image of man, what Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov called “post-Christian values,” which reflect a complete deadening of compassion, a complete loss of respect for the sacredness of the human life. Some of the worst hardliners of the so-called Christian parties talk about “asylum tourists” or “refugee shuttle boats,” which reflects a pathological indifference to the suffering and dying of human beings.

After the Second World War, the Federal Republic of Germany’s first Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, explicitly wanted to create the Christian Democratic Union (CDU)

as a Christian party with Christian values as a bulwark, so that the atrocities of National Socialism would never happen again. Now, *Der Spiegel* talks about “fascism” with respect to President Trump; but his policies are no different than those of the European Union. So, how did this happen? We have to go back to the paradigm shift which occurred in the West. Step by step, we moved away from what Adenauer meant, to a zero-growth ideology—pushed by the Club of Rome, by the World Wildlife Fund, by the ecology movement—that we are in a world of limited resources in a closed system, where every human being is a burden to nature.

This was then escalated by the complete deregulation of the markets, the increase of power of the Wall Street and the City of London, the complete dominance of the neo-liberal dogma that the markets are the supreme authority which have replaced God. The role of the state is no longer to protect the common good, but to guarantee the rights of the banks and the speculators, which we saw especially after 2008, with the complete deregulation of the financial system. It became like a self-service shop for the rich at the expense of the majority of the population; austerity against the common good; privatization of all categories of life and the economy; and a devastating increase in wealth disparity.

The image of man has been subject to a cost-benefit analysis; the idea that there is no knowable truth, but just post-factual opinion, where the entire reality is subjugated to the economic model of competition. Even democracy has to be in conformity with the markets. This is the famous sentence by German Chancellor Angela Merkel: we live in a democracy, but it has to conform to the markets. After the recent election in Italy, EU Commissioner Oettinger said, because they didn't like the Lega and the Five Star Movement having won the election, “The markets will teach the Italians how to vote.” This shows the complete arrogance of the neo-liberal establishment. They are completely unable to recognize the causes of the decline of the Western model. This decline is not the fault of China or Putin, it is entirely caused by the policies of the West.

LaRouche Development Proposals

When the Soviet Union allowed the peaceful reunification of Germany in 1989-90, there was a possibility to go in a completely different direction. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there was the chance for a peace order for the 21st Century, because one bloc had dissolved, and there was no more enemy. In 1988, my husband Lyndon LaRouche, having foresight that the

Wall was coming down soon, proposed the soon-to-happen reunification of Germany with Berlin as its capital, and that the development of Poland become a model for the entire Comecon, working with Western technologies. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, we proposed to extend the Paris-Berlin-Vienna Productive Triangle concept to all of Eurasia, calling it the Eurasian Land-Bridge, which is what the New Silk Road is becoming today.

Earlier, Lyndon LaRouche had proposed an International Development Bank in 1975; an Oasis Development Plan for Southwest Asia; he worked with López Portillo on a Latin American integration proposal called Operation Juárez. We worked with India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on a 40-year plan for India; we worked on a 50-year Pacific Basin development plan. My husband was the author of the Strategic Defense Initiative—which was quite different than the media represented it—it involved a gigantic technology transfer to the developing sector. If the life's work of Lyndon LaRouche had been accepted by the neo-liberal establishment, I can assure you, Africa today would be a blossoming continent, and the world would look very different.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, they said “OK, now communism has been defeated, let's have a unipolar world; a Project for a New American Century. Let's implement shock therapy on Russia. Let's get rid of all governments that oppose us through regime change, color revolution. Let's repeal Glass-Steagall. Let's have ‘humanitarian’ interventionist wars based on lies.” We see the result of such policies in the refugee crisis in the Middle East, and the impoverishment of the developing sector, and southern Europe, for that matter.

This is the policy of the last 20-30 years of the West. And the result is, the Western system is collapsing. You have a revolt from within—Brexit; Trump's election; the Austrian election; the rebellion in the Central and East European states. Therefore, to have the kind of Merkel solution to all of these problems is completely out of the way.

We will see what happens, because the result of the just-concluded European Union summit is very vague; everything is voluntary, a lot of bilateral negotiations will happen. And we have to see if CSU leader Seehofer finds this acceptable, because he said ahead of the summit, that if the CSU capitulates to Merkel, they could start singing the *Requiem*. That is a good thing, because if the CSU starts to sing Classical music, that would be a big improvement right there; but he meant it with respect to the upcoming Bavarian state election.

So, there may be an effort to patch things up. But it



Xinhua

Chinese President Xi Jinping and world leaders at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, Beijing, May 14, 2017.

will not work, because there is still the danger of a new financial crash; all the indicators are about 40% worse than in 2008. The debt level, especially the corporate debt level, the Level 3 derivatives of the banks are all about 40% worse. The danger therefore is a collapse into chaos. A few days ago, the defense ministers of nine EU countries decided to create a European military intervention force to deal with crises around the world—now that’s pretty pretentious if they can’t even get the EU together to have such an approach. But all of this shows, from the EU and from the West in general, that no positive initiatives are forthcoming to address the strategic problems in the world.

The New Silk Road is Changing Everything

However, there is a completely different model and perspective in play. Almost five years ago, President Xi Jinping put the New Silk Road on the agenda as a revival of the ancient Silk Road, which was an exchange of goods, cultures, and technologies, improving the lives of all participating countries. In the meantime, the New Silk Road, or the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as it’s called, has become the largest infrastructure project in the world. According to China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi, the BRI already involves 140 countries working together on a win-win basis. They are realizing six major corridors in Eurasia; hundreds of projects—rail lines, industry parks, hydropower—in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

But the BRI is not just an economic program. President Xi calls it a “community of a shared future for mankind.” It’s a completely new model of relations among nations working together on a win-win perspective; respect for national sovereignty; non-interference into the internal affairs—a completely different system. At the

19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping proposed a vision for the next 35 years, which is unparalleled in the world: By 2020, China will eliminate all poverty within its borders. And given the fact that China has already gotten 700 million people out of poverty and they are now engaged in a gigantic program to address each single household still living in poverty, you can be absolutely certain that they will succeed.

By 2025, China wants to be leading in several areas of science and technology. By 2035, China is supposed to be a fully modernized socialist country; and by 2050, a large modern socialist country—blossoming, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful, where wealth will be available for everybody. The Chinese will live a happier and safer life, and be a full, active member of the world community. There is also a total obligation for all Party members to devote themselves to the common good, to have the highest moral standards, work with a full heart for the improvement of conditions of the life of the entire population.

Xi Jinping invoked China’s rich cultural tradition of 5,000 years and the essential contributions China has made to the universal development of mankind, calling this the great Chinese dream, whose contributions ensure that all of humanity will live a happier life in a beautiful world. China’s economy is based on innovation; the political system is based on meritocracy; but it’s not just for China, because China is now offering the most advanced technologies to the developing countries, especially in the area of nuclear energy and cooperation in space research and development.

Now this new Chinese model, the New Silk Road model, is very attractive. After centuries of colonialism, and the infamous IMF and World Bank conditionalities,

China is providing cheap credit and even grants to Africa and other developing areas. For the first time, many countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia are hopeful—about overcoming poverty and underdevelopment, and having productive and fulfilling jobs for their young people.

The various Western think tanks, which completely arrogantly ignored the progress of the New Silk Road for about four years, all of a sudden have woken up to discover this incredible dynamic underway. Suddenly a flurry of furious reports were written claiming that China has ulterior motives, that China has an authoritarian character. If you ask people in the developing sector about that, however, that is exactly not what they think. They think China is giving them hope for the first time. The problem is that the neo-liberal elites see the world through geopolitical glasses, and they project their own intention: Since their own policies are neo-colonial, they cannot imagine that there is a country on this planet devoted to the common good of the entire world population.

Confucius and Nicholas of Cusa and Lyndon LaRouche

When China speaks about “Socialism with Chinese characteristics,” I personally believe this essentially refers to the Confucianism, which was the dominant philosophy in China for 2,500 years, with the exception of ten years of the Cultural Revolution. Confucius is absolutely important to be studied, because he has an image of man which is very close to the humanism we used to have in Europe. It’s the idea of lifelong learning, that every person has the potential to become a *junzi*, which means basically a sage, which is exactly the same idea as the beautiful soul of Friedrich Schiller. If you develop yourself through lifelong learning, there can be harmony in the family. If all members can realize all their potentials, this then allows for harmony in the state and harmony among the states.

The geopolitical establishment and most ordinary citizens in the West are completely unable to think in the win-win concept based on Confucian philosophy, because they are so used to thinking in terms of a zero-sum game—one wins, the other loses. The one great Western philosopher who is the best pedagogue to teach you to think in a different way, is Nicholas of Cusa with his conception of the *coincidentia oppositorum*; the coincidence of opposites. He is not known in China; I



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Helga Zepp-LaRouche and Lyndon LaRouche.

found only one professor there who is in charge of comparative religions, but Nicholas of Cusa was not just a religious man. He was the founder of the modern scientific method, of the sovereign nation-state, of the representative system, and even if many of his arguments are derived from the theological realm, they are still of tremendous philosophical and scientific importance.

On the way back from Constantinople in 1437-38, where he had brought the delegation of the Greek Orthodox Church to the Councils of Ferrara and Florence, he said that all of sudden he had had an inspiration which enabled him to see all questions in a completely different light; namely, the coincidence of opposites; which was an idea against Aristotle, who basically had argued that contradictory statements cannot be at the same time true. Cusa said this has been the common axiom of philosophy so far, and Aristotle was just the most explicit in expressing this. Then he quotes Philo of Alexandria saying that the logic of Aristotelian thinking is not on a higher level than the *ratio* of the animals.

In a very important writing called *Apologia de Docta Ignorantia* [In Defense of Learned Ignorance], which was a rebuttal to a scholastic scholar named Wenck, Cusa explains why Aristotle is an inferior thinker, only capable of a methodological back and forth. In *De Docta Ignorantia*, he says “The coincidence of opposite thinking is like being on a high tower, where the one who oversees everything, sees the process in its totality. The seeker, the searched, the process of searching, also how the searcher gets closer or further away from the searched.” In another writing called *De Visione Dei* [On the Vision of God], he develops a

pedagogy for training the mind to think in terms of the *coincidentia oppositorum* to overcome a mental wall behind which you have the level of reason.

In *De Docta Ignorantia*, Nicholas also speaks of the *spiritus universorum* which unites religions, nations, peoples, which are elements of differentiation, but that the universe as a whole is the perfect expression for the precondition for everything to exist. *Quodlibet in quolibet* is a very famous sentence by Nicholas: “Everything participates in all.” For the political order, that means the multiplicity of people can be integrated without violating their specific identity, because of the totality of the order which already exists. According to Nicholas, each human being is a microcosm, which contains in germ form the entire macrocosm in a complex, unextended way, which is very much like the monad concept of Leibniz. Harmony, according to this philosophy, a peace order, is only possible if all microcosms develop in the best possible way, that the development of the other is the reciprocal self-interest of each for the harmony to function.

If one wants to find a solution to the political problems of today, one has to think in terms of this *coincidentia oppositorum*; to think in terms of the common aims of mankind first, that the one has a higher order than the magnitude of the many. Therefore, self-perfection and ennoblement require an increase in the potential relative population density as a precondition for the existence of future generations.

My husband Lyndon LaRouche has proven in numerous writings why an increase in the potential relative population density and the continuous increase in [our technological] energy flux-density is mandatory. At each given level of technology, a civilization eventually reaches a point of exhaustion in terms of resources and costs. To head off such disaster requires continued, qualitative breakthroughs in the knowledge of the physical principles of the universe, the continuing higher division of labor, and more and more creative minds to participate in the limitless progress of humanity.

Today, this *spiritus universorum* idea exists in the form of the New Silk Road spirit. A community of nations, as the basis for the common good of all, is the only way to address the problems of today. This spirit is now being felt in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, and in more and more countries in Europe. Nicholas of Cusa, in a sermon on the Feast of Epiphany in 1456 in Brixen, which was called by commentators a “Hymn to Civilization,” praised the arts and natural sciences as the great gift to mankind in which all must participate, so as not to

slow the development of one single human being. And that is exactly what the New Silk Road is doing.

The New Silk Road Spirit made possible the Singapore summit. Meetings are now taking place where the building of railroads on the western and soon eastern coast of North Korea, uniting South Korea and North Korea with the Chinese transport corridors and the Trans-Siberian Railroad, is being discussed and planned. President Trump promised that North Korea will soon be a prosperous country. China and Russia also said that they plan to play a big role in this. *Global Times*, the English-language Chinese newspaper, said “The geographical location of North Korea makes it predestined for the integration into the Belt and Road Initiative,” and that this would happen much sooner than anybody could imagine.

We propose to take the same approach to Africa. Instead of the militarization of the refugee policy, have a New Silk Road plan. If the EU is willing to spend tens of billions on camps, on fortification of Europe, let’s set up, instead, credit lines for the industrialization, basic economic infrastructure, water projects such as huge projects like Transaqua, mass transport, fast train rails, maglev, health care facilities, educational systems, space-oriented science-driver programs, new cities based on modular urban development. If all European nations would join together with China, India, Japan, and also the United States, and announce their common commitment to such a policy and projects, and do so with the cooperation of the African states who want to be part of such a crash program, the refugee crisis could be turned around.

But this approach requires a passionate love for humanity—exactly as Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali recently told a mass rally of half a million people shortly before there was an assassination attempt against him—he said, “The only way to move forward from all this history is forgiveness and love. Revenge is for the weak. And because Ethiopians are not weak, we won’t need revenge. We will win with love.”

So, let us act likewise. The world is in an incredible turmoil. It’s very complex, and I do not believe the problems will be solved by having a zillion partial solutions. We need a higher level of reason that will unite all of humanity. I think we have reached the end of an epoch, the end of geopolitics. And we must reach the New Paradigm where we think in terms of the coincidence of opposites; what Xi Jinping has called a “community for a shared future of humanity.” If Europe is willing to survive, we will organize the European countries to join this effort.