

Two Questions to Geraci, Zepp-LaRouche, and Cheminade

Speed: I want to ask Helga if there's anything that you would like to say at this point, before I begin with the questions. We do have many, but I just want to know if you had any reactions that you wanted to convey at this point?

Geraci: Ten Years in China

Zepp-LaRouche: I would like to ask Mr. Geraci a question myself.

Given that you have been living in China for 10 years, I think it would be very useful for our international audience if you would just give us some of your personal experience. Because, you know, my experience with the Chinese people is that they're really very benevolent. I find them almost naive in their outlook, in their openness.

And I think Western people have a completely different mindset, and therefore they many times expect things which I find they're projecting onto Chinese, or what they claim Chinese intentions are. But, maybe you can give us your view on this matter. Because I think, if we want to get out of this crisis as a civilization, I think to develop trust, and to develop a new way of getting rid of prejudices and getting rid of wrong ideas which are based on ignorance, is one of the most important ingredients. So, if you could just tell us your findings from your ten years in China?

Geraci: Thank you. Thank you, a very interesting question.

I've seen widespread that people in China are very nice, very welcoming. I had the luck, like almost anyone who has lived in China for a decade, to see a transformation that for me, a columnist to analyst, was like a dream unfolding under my own eyes, what a country can do; and by doing this analysis, I also had the luck to meet the people! I was lucky enough to talk to, of course, the Premier and the President, but also any farmer I wanted to. I took the initiative to make a documentary in the rural areas.

I really tried to learn about China, both on a geographic and on a social level. I witnessed a widespread curiosity, and was very much welcomed in all my jobs as I traveled around. I was helped when I was in difficulties. I think this is the essence of China, and to some extent, of many Asian countries.

Now, the question would be, "Why is it, like you said, that some people may have a different perception?" I think this is due to what I would call a biased sample. People in Italy, for example, have a perception of China from what they saw in 1982, when the first people from Wenzhou moved to Italy, and of course, there was a competition in the textile industry, which has, in the eyes of some Italians, destroyed our own industries, or our competition. We continue the rhetoric that China manipulates the value of the renminbi, and subsidizes their companies and so Italy suffers from unfair competition by China.

Unfortunate Animosity

So this type of thinking travels, and that, unfortunately, brings some antagonism towards individuals, to the point that during—this was at the end of January, in Italy—we started to have a little bit of maybe racist or anti-Chinese sentiment. I took the initiative to go around in Milan, in Rome, in the areas where most of the Chinese people were living, to be seen in the restaurants, shaking hands with them, to exactly give the idea that the virus does not have a passport.

I even predicted that we should be most worried not about the Chinese who travel from Wuhan to Milan, which obviously was a concern, but about people traveling from the Northeast and Milan, not to other locations in Italy, but Italians who would travel to China, and come back to Italy. And so, it was probably due to some of them that the virus arrived *en masse* as we have seen in Milan and Veneto—also because those are two regions that trade a lot with China. So, where goods travel, also people travel.

I saw that the Chinese attach a lot of importance to this virus and I've seen the reaction to their behavior. They are, in a way, almost the safest members in the community, because they knew how to do it. The Italians underestimated the risk, not because of a fault of their own, but for the reason I said in my presentation.

Now, I think the niceness of Chinese people may also be related to the level of income. This is a process that we see throughout societies: With poor people, maybe things go more nicely; for middle-income people who have a higher perception of themselves, the reality tends to make them a bit nastier; and then you

need to go really higher, to people who are extremely successful who don't need to impose their own personality.

So, at the moment, because the Chinese population is still made up largely of very, very low-income people, I would say that yes, the large majority of Chinese people are very nice, and let me suggest to people listening to us: Do not extrapolate what you see in your own environment, because you also have not-nice guys in Italy, in France, in Germany, in China—everywhere. If you do business, you are representative of a sub-segment. The general population is a different thing.

My invitation is go, travel, and get lost in the countryside of China, to see and meet what the real China is.

From Senegal

Speed: We have a question from His Excellency Ambassador Cheikh Niang. He is the Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Senegal to the United Nations. Here is his question:

Within the new international relations paradigm that you are advocating, how do you think we can effectively reform the current global governance framework, in a way that will allow the fullest participation of the Global South, both in addressing political challenges, more common in that part of the world, and in correcting the yawning economic imbalances between the developed countries and the developing ones? And how do you envision getting around the unavoidable hurdles to arrive at such a reform?

Zepp-LaRouche: In the beginning, people played down the coronavirus, saying, “It’s just a common flu.” Very few people knew what a pandemic is, that a pandemic is something which is a global phenomenon, and it has specific characteristics, in terms of how you contain it. And given the fact that the coronavirus is really a new virus about which we don’t know yet a lot, or at least not enough, there was an underestimation about the dynamic unfolding. I think this is slowly changing. I think some people are getting quite worried about the incredible dimension of this.

Then, you have the undeniable fact that the present trans-Atlantic financial system, for sure, but in one sense, also the global system, is blowing out. The money pumping by the central banks is reaching a dimension where we are getting very close to where it

was maybe in the summer-fall 1923, in Germany, shortly before the hyperinflationary blowout of the system occurred. This can happen very, very quickly. If the central banks keep doing what they’re doing now—and there’s no indication that they intend to change it—we will shortly arrive at a point of no return.

Then you have the hunger crisis: This is becoming now a big subject—the destruction of food, the consequences of the coronavirus for food production, the fact that the farmers cannot sell their product to the market because the restaurants are closed; and because the restaurants are closed, there are not sufficient deliveries to food banks.

I can only touch on the multifaceted interconnections of this crisis, which will, in my modest opinion, create such a dimension of the crisis that the only solution is in what I was talking about in the beginning—that the top governments of the world must take responsibility for the fate of all of humanity. And while I understand that President Putin thinks the permanent members of the UN Security Council constitute the appropriate forum, Mr. Polyanskiy was talking about the G20. I don’t think that combination of governments right now is willing to do it, simply because there are some countries involved that would rather defend the interests of the City of London and Wall Street, rather than recognizing that you cannot continue on the past course.

We Need A Full Chorus of Voices

So, I think that the best thing that can be done, is what I said also in my remarks: That we develop an international chorus of countries, of nations, *and* of many individuals and institutions, that simply speak out and say, “Yes, we endorse this idea that there must be a New Bretton Woods system. You must have a credit system which will allow for the first time, the intention of Roosevelt to be realized, namely, to have the industrialization of the Global South, of the developing countries, and that must occur now.”

I cannot see any other pathway. I cannot see any kind of evolution. You need an emergency summit! You cannot solve all these problems in one summit alone; there will be more. But I think we have to move to the idea that the common aims of mankind must be taken care of by the most important, most powerful countries, as representatives of the others. And the reason my husband suggested, many years ago, this combination of these particular four countries, is not that it would be

exclusive of all the others. If you try it in the United Nations, it won't work. Two hundred countries or so is just too many, and democracy has some real flaws in terms of getting to decisions, especially under emergency conditions.

The United States is a sort of *primus inter pares* of the West; at least it used to have that understanding; then, naturally, Russia, China and India can be trusted to represent the interests of what used to be the Non-Aligned Movement; now it's a combination of the Global South, the African Union, the different Latin American organizations, the BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization of Islamic Countries—all of these organizations sort of, in my view, can be trusted by the combination of these four countries, if they work together.

So, the best which can be done, under this incredible emergency—which will, I fear, get much worse in the next weeks and months—is that the more countries and the more leaders who speak out and say, “We demand such a solution,” the better. Because I think we can shape—and that's also the purpose of this conference of the Schiller Institute—I think we can shape the public demand that such a solution be put on the agenda.

Cheminade: I would only add that, with its limited means, Senegal has been doing quite well. It has a very good Pasteur Institute, not with French people, it's Senegalese—and they are planning to produce masks for a few cents, and tests for say, about \$1. So there is this sense of the interest of the nation, of the country. This is extremely valuable in the context of what Helga said before, which means that all these nations of Africa, they would bring something into an association to develop Africa, of the United States, China, India, and other countries, including France and including Turkey, for example. Africa can bring a sense of its own interests in its scientific development, and a sense, also, of social harmony.

And this sense of social harmony in Africa, combined with a sense of social harmony of China, and what we can bring from the Western countries—including, of course, the United States, and France in Western Africa, and other countries in Eastern Africa—these can bring a combination in which Africa would be a sort of catalyst for this change in the world. And this would demand an input from all of us, to create that, and Africa would be not a continent that only needs to be helped, as such, but a continent that would make the jump into the future exactly like China did.