

Panel 1: First Discussion Session

The follow is an edited transcript of the first of two discussion sessions during Panel 1 of the Schiller Institute Conference on September 5.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: I first of all want to thank all the speakers for their very valuable contributions. But let me ask Mr. Kortunov one question, because you mentioned that the P-5 mechanism is not to discuss social, economic and other issues, but is only concerned with strategic stability.

Now, it is my understanding that you cannot really separate these questions, because the whole effort, what we are trying to do, is to establish a common economic interest; like if you would integrate the Eurasian Economic Union, the EU, the New Silk Road, and get the United States to cooperate in agreements of the Belt and Road Initiative to develop the reconstruction of the Southwest Asia countries which have been destroyed by interventionist wars; by developing Africa. It is my conviction that only if you establish a common economic interest, that you have the basis for going to durable strategic agreements. Would you be so kind as to comment on that?

Alexey Kortunov: Thank you for the question. First of all, I completely agree with you about the link between security and development. I think it is really a phenomenon of the 21st century, which is not properly appreciated in the world. You cannot have development unless you have security, but you cannot have stable security if you ignore development. And I think one of the problems that we encounter right now is that we have very different constituencies of bureaucrats and decision-makers in charge of these two portfolios, and they have to be merged.

For example, if you take the situation in West Asia that you mentioned, that implies we need the Security Council of the United Nations to work hand-in-hand with other institutions or with other institutions specifically G20, especially now, since G20 is headed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, so there is a potential synergy here.

However, when I spoke about the limitations of the P-5, I was thinking about a possible reaction from other

members of the United Nations, if the P-5 tried to monopolize the development agenda. I'm sure that we would see many critics saying that "nobody really authorized you to handle development, you are extending your portfolio unnecessarily." And right now, as you know, probably better than I do, many countries are not happy about special rights that P-5 members enjoy. They believe that the veto power is abused and misused, and to extend this agenda of the P-5 beyond the narrowly defined security measures would be a kind of reward for a not-so-great job that the P-5 has performed so far.

So, I'm with you, but I think we should be cautious not to create another elitist club, that could claim some kind of special rights in the development agenda. We do have the post-millennium development agenda in the United Nations; we have other decisions. We have institutions like the G20 and G7 and the BRICS, so I think that these should be interlocking rather than "inter-bloc-ing" institutions, working together with each other.

Let me also make a small comment to what I have heard from other participants. Of course, this conference is primarily about the United States; of course, the United States is in trouble right now, as a country; and of course, all of us—Russia, China, the rest of the world—all of us need a strong United States, because there are many questions and many problems in the world, which cannot be possibly resolved without an active U.S. participation. So I think that smart politicians, all over the place, believe that a strong United States is much better for the rest of us, than a weak United States.

But let me add to that, that you spoke about the disarray in the U.S. politics, about problems in the U.S. foreign policy, but let me say that the rest of the world, to this or that extent, goes through the same set of problems. I'm talking about Russia, I'm talking about China; I go to Beijing from time to time, and at some points it seems as confused as Americans are. So, there are no good guys and bad guys in this world. There is a new set of challenges, and all of us, so far, have failed to find answers to these challenges. It's not just about the inability of the U.S. political leader-

ship. The problem is more general and more universal, unfortunately.

Jim Jatras: I was struck when Mr. Kortunov was speaking, regarding arms control agreements between United States and Russia, and I guess I tend to view such agreements as kind of like the rule of law for people who are naturally law-abiding: If you have the good will to act properly, the laws themselves, the rules, the agreements don't really matter all that much. They'll fall in place. And if you don't have that, if your desire is simply to seek a unilateral advantage and ultimately destroy the other party, well, then all the agreements in the world won't make any difference.

And unfortunately, one of the things I think we fail to deal with, when we look at the American establishment is how deeply ingrained is the notion that we are the "masters of the universe," that other countries are legitimate only insofar as we say they're legitimate. And that ultimately, the response to any obstreperous country is sanctions, threats, and regime change.

And I am not at all joking—and it would be a very bad joke, indeed—when I point out, from the mentality of people who run policy in Washington, the only possible outcome for Russia, and for that matter, for China, is regime change, to change the governments in those countries, to implant a puppet-government of the sort we had in Moscow in the 1990s, and maybe, in most favorable circumstances, to break those countries up, to break up China the way the Soviet Union was, to break up Russia further.

And you say, this is madness, how could anybody think in these terms? I'm not sure how many of them necessarily think through the consequences of their views; but if you look at the way they have a completely illegitimate attitude toward any power that does not take its tutelage from Washington, that is the only logical conclusion.

As far as the P-5 goes, look, I'm a big supporter of the—I'm not thrilled with the UN as an institution—but with the Security Council as something that approximates a concert of powers, where the major powers can try to avoid various collisions; this was a mechanism that was lacking in the League of Nations. I think that the Security Council is really the only valuable part of the United Nations systems. But, let's face it: There's really no P-5: They're a P-3. The other two powers, Britain and France, at least in grand strategic terms,

military terms, are essentially puppets of the United States. Maybe politically that's not necessarily true with respect to Britain, but in terms of who's on which side and which are truly independent actors, China and Russia are, the other two powers are not.

So it really comes down to the big three. I just don't see where the change is going to come in American policy. I'd like to see that Donald Trump can jump us off this treadmill, but so far, he hasn't, and given the kind of chaos we can expect in America if he wins—and where I think the current disorders will go into hyper-drive—I'm not sure what the prospects are for things getting much better.

Two questions for Mrs. LaRouche, from China Daily, U.S.A.: Could you comment on China's commitment to multilateralism? Some experts have argued that China's leading role in establishing a multilateral institution, such as the BRI [Belt and Road Initiative], has raised fears that the government aims to topple the world order. Could you address that? Secondly, could you comment on China's progress toward meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

Zepp-LaRouche: If you say that China wants to replace the unipolar world in which the United States is the hegemon, then I would say, yes, China is trying to change that. But is that a realistic proposition, to keep a unipolar world? I think not.

The world is changing. I have said many times that China is a country of 1.4 billion people which, since the reforms and opening-up of Deng Xiaoping, has set on a course of innovation, lifted 850 million people out of poverty, of its own country, and now has, with the BRI, offered that that model be replicated by other countries, according to their own wishes and standards.

What China has offered is a new system of international relationships. I have talked to enough people from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and also Europe, to know that people who believe in the national sovereignty of their own countries all agree that China is not trying to replace the United States as a hegemon. I think if you look at the history of China, they have also not had a tradition of proselytizing; for example, they're not trying to convince other people to adopt the Chinese culture, the Chinese philosophy. So I think that China is offering an alternative system, but it is something which would be very, very much in the interest of everybody,

including the United States.

As my late husband stressed in the videoclip and what I tried to say in my remarks, is that there are these traditions in the United States, when America was following the American System. Part of that was, for example, the foreign policy of John Quincy Adams, which had exactly the same approach, to have an alliance of perfectly sovereign nation-states.

Now, what we want is that the United States goes back to its own tradition of being a republic, and not being subverted by the British model of running the world as an empire. And that is the big controversy inside the United States.

So, I think that China is not trying to topple the world order, but I think China very clearly has offered a different model, one which is much more in cohesion with the original intention of America as a republic, and one should also remember that it was Benjamin Franklin, who was a total enthusiast about the Confucian philosophy. And there are many, many more common cultural ideas: One is the American System of economy, which is right now followed by China much more; for example, the German economist Friedrich List, who was one of the key authors to make the difference between the American and the British model, he is one of the most read economic authors in China.

One should really see the positive aspect about what China is offering, and not think it is a threat. And I think these different military doctrines, which I mentioned in my remarks, have a wrong picture of what China means in terms of a potential relationship with the United States. And I think that that needs to be discussed, and I think President Trump has the clear potential to go back to his initial relationship with President Xi Jinping as his “good friend.” I know people in China are very doubtful about that, but I think that that is the only way how we will get out of this crisis.

Concerning your second question: I think the intention of China to eliminate poverty in China in 2020, despite the pandemic, is on a good track. I think that the quick recovery of China, after the two months of being hit very intensively by the coronavirus, is also a very promising element for the whole world economy to come out of this crisis. If you look at the statistics, China has been the only country which could go back to an economic growth rate—much less than before, I think it’s only about 2 or 3%, so it’s much less, but it’s

the only one which has a positive growth rate.

So rather than looking at China as an adversary, it would be in the absolute interest of the United States, of Europe, to cooperate and use the Chinese economy as it was used before, as an engine. Because if you want to reach the 2020 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, it does require the coordinated effort of all industrial capacities of the world, because the problems are so big, that only if all the countries work together, do we have a chance to come out of this as a human species.

Martin Sieff: Let me add a couple of points of agreement with previous speakers. It seems to me, the good news is we have a constructive consensus among all [on] what the speakers contributed here so far, about the nature of the problem and the need to address it. I think the wisdom of the Founding Fathers of the United Nations in creating the Security Council—in many respects at the insistence of Russian diplomats at the time—as it was done, is precisely that the Security Council cannot be used in its current format, as a platform or attack mode to destabilize the internal relations of countries.

Unfortunately, in the United States, we have a mindset, that is now so pervasive, assured by top Republican as well as Democratic leaders, that countries can be instinctively delegitimized, regardless of international law, and regardless of the mechanisms of the Security Council, if we disapprove of the way they are conducting business. This is an enormously dangerous and reckless situation.

Secondly, I would fully agree with all the observations, in fact, of my dear friend Jim Jatras: The key one here is, that we are looking at a de facto P-3. Britain really has become Earth-Strip 1. It has fulfilled for the last 40 years, certainly since the time of Mrs. Thatcher, its full destiny that George Orwell recognized in his book, *1984*, as being the offshore aircraft carrier of the Eurasian land-mass for Oceania, the island land-mass which is run and governed by the United States. And that’s all Britain is. If you see British foreign secretaries, defense secretaries, even prime ministers coming to Washington, what is quite extraordinary is how eagerly and abjectly they are looking for the latest fashionable trend, and delusional slogan, that is in fashion within the Beltway, that they can eagerly attach themselves to. There is no sense of

existential pride, or intellectual independence left whatsoever. And this has to be understood in dealing with London.

The last point I'd make is that, in the bizarre way Washington goes, our current Secretary of State actually tried to ratchet down, at least marginally, tensions with Russia in his speech in the Nixon Library recently. But he did so, so ineptly and so incrementally, that it could make no difference at all, and he did so in the context of vowing publicly, in a keynote speech that U.S. priority policy was not to destabilize the government of China! This is what Mr. Pompeo said in his Nixon Library speech—I'm not putting words into his mouth. You don't *want* to make up this kind of thing. No sane person would be capable of imagining it! And yet, that is what the Secretary of State of the United States said—and President Trump's Secretary of State. He now ineptly imagines he can play Russia off against China. Of course, there is an absurdity to this.

And, my last point is, this fits into a wise point Dr. Kortunov rightly made at the beginning: You do not simply go overnight from a war stand against a nation, into close relations with a nation. It takes time, it takes the building of trust. Otto von Bismarck took *ten years* developing relations with Russian leaders, especially the future Tsar Alexander II. Abraham Lincoln wrote long and many letters, warmly reciprocated to him, from Tsar Alexander. The key strategic relationships between Germany, Russia, *and* the United States which proved so beneficial in the mid-19th century, were based on long, careful preparation—as was President Nixon's approach with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to China in 1972. It took years for them to reach that point.

You cannot just switch off hostility to Russia, even if they were serious about it. And they would have to take actions to do so. I would simply end here by saying, we need to educate both our foreign policy leaders and the Congress in the realities of survival in a nuclear world, and the realities of diplomacy. They are now totally ignorant of it!

Question for Mr. Kortunov from Hugo López. He asks: “Mr. Kortunov, what do you think about the proposal of President Ronald Reagan and Lyndon LaRouche of a Strategic Defense System (SDI), of laser devices and other physical principles, supported by

mainly the United States and Russia, which would allow the joint elimination of nuclear weapons for war, and facilitate the safe permanence of nuclear weapons only for defense against meteorites, comets and other dangers from space?”

Kortunov: Let me say that some 25 years ago, I was marginally engaged in attempts to save the ABM Treaty, and we had many conversations in Washington, including conversations with the U.S. military about how we can amend the Treaty so the United States would feel comfortable about it, and would not need to withdraw. And one of the ideas that we entertained—and I think there was some kind of positive attitude within the Beltway, at least at that stage—is that we should probably try to do something jointly, something that would allow the two countries—maybe not only the two countries, but also other players—to engage in some global missile security, missile protection system which would be targeted against potential rogue states, or against terrorists.

Unfortunately, that didn't work quite well, because even then, even 25 years ago, the United States was still suspicious of Russia's intentions, and there was no appetite for sharing sensitive technologies, not to mention dual key decision-making.

Of course, right now, the situation is different. It has got much more complicated, and I don't think such a proposal would be even discussed in any serious way in Washington, today.

However, what I think is probably doable, we could start with something more modest: For example, if all of us are concerned about potential missile efforts by North Korea, and all nations in East Asia are building their missile defense systems, including Japan and South Korea and China and Russia and the United States, why don't we coordinate these efforts? And gradually, we can probably build enough trust, to move from coordination to cooperation. Ultimately, I think the future—again, it might sound very idealistic at this particular juncture—but I think that the future is in internationalization of nuclear weapons, both offensive and defensive. Major nations should reconsider their concept of national sovereignty. And that will be not an easy task.

It will be difficult, it will be protested, there is a lot of resistance to that, not only in the United States, but in many other countries, including Russia; but that does

not mean we should not stand up to face this challenge. Thank you.

Question for Helga Zepp-LaRouche: “Considering the list of advanced weapons you outlined, including maneuverable nuclear-powered hypersonic missiles and other terrifying weapons systems, what would be gained by a nuclear war, considering the massive destruction, at best, and more likely the possibility of the end of civilization as we know it? What is the rationalization that makes thinking a nuclear war can be won? Why do people think that’s even possible?”

Zepp-LaRouche: From a rational standpoint, the answer is there is absolutely nothing to be gained. But if you think in terms of why, for example, Russia was always saying that there is, in terms of the American missile defense system, there is a limit where they cannot allow stage 3 and 4 to be accomplished, because that basically would change the strategic balance, so that Russia was no longer able to defend itself. Including the bases in Romania and Poland, which are going in this direction.

The warnings of Russia, that it is a complete illusion that a regional, limited nuclear war can be won, is exactly the problem. There is the danger of miscalculation. And you know, people have these war scenarios, which, in large part are based on the same kind of war games and systems analysis scenarios which simply are not in reality. What would happen if you were to actually start a regional conflict? That’s why Russia reiterated on June 2nd, that if they see the Russian territorial integrity threatened, that there are conditions, thinkable, where even if they would be only attacked with conventional weapons, they would have to resort to a first nuclear strike, or a first use of nuclear weapons. And then you are in the entire Armageddon, which we are warning against.

Let me just come back to one other point, which Mr. Kortunov had mentioned earlier, that the P-5 countries should not appear to walk over the interests of other countries, or take too much authority. And also what Mr. Sieff said earlier.

I think previous examples, that it takes long years,

like Nixon and Kissinger to build trust with China, or the other examples mentioned, this is not really the situation right now. Look at the unprecedented combination of crises we have right now, the pandemic, which is far from being over; look at the infection rates in India, for example, which are almost 80,000/day! The famine now threatening Africa, where the World Food Program was saying that if this is not reversed by increasing the agricultural production worldwide, we soon will have a death rate of 300,000 people a day, dying of hunger! And I could continue—the effects of the lockdowns, the unemployment, the unbelievable combination of crises *does* require that the leading countries of the world take responsibility.

If these five leaders would basically come out of this meeting, or use the meeting to say that they are taking the interests of mankind as a whole, that they are proposing to end an unjust system which did not allow the development of the developing countries, that they reconnect to what the intention of Franklin D. Roosevelt was with Bretton Woods system, by increasing the living standard of every single person on the planet, because that is the basis for peace: If they would argue this case, I think the whole world would support them!

As a matter of fact, we have a whole movement of the Schiller Institute which we organized in previous conferences and which we intend to expand, of increasing the chorus of voices of people who are actually demanding that the P-5, or the Big Four—Russia, China, India, and the United States—but right now the P-5 is the only concrete proposal on the agenda—they must address these issues. Where should the solution come from, if not from the most powerful countries in the world?

If these five leaders would formulate a program which would address the interests of everybody—this is the concept of the coincidence of opposites that if you solve all the problems of the whole world at the same time, by establishing a just new world economic order, allowing for the development of every country on this planet, then, you can find the consensus of all countries. And that is actually what we are trying to accomplish with this conference.