

## INTERVIEW: ANASTASIA BATTLE

# Intervening for Humanity, for a Future of Peace and Development

by Charles Notley

Aug 10—One of the leading personalities in the United States at the forefront of the growing world movement to demand negotiations over Ukraine and talks for a new world economic and security framework, is Anastasia Mares Battle. Based in Michigan and a LaRouche movement leader, she has many roles and responsibilities—in particular as an anchor of the International Peace Coalition, formed in early June and now active globally. She is a co-coordinator with the group [Humanity for Peace](#), a global movement dedicated to promoting harmony and eliminating violence, which has initiated the actions on Aug. 6, timed with the remembrance of those murdered by the needless 1945 U.S. nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and is calling for Ukraine peace talks and a stop to the threat of nuclear annihilation.

In a recent interview, I was able to get her thoughts on what brought her to the level of active commitment she is now carrying through with such willingness and impact. A place to begin, is that she regards herself as an “interventionist,” both in the literal sense of raising key questions of policy and morality in public settings, and also in the larger sense of organizing rallies, events, and ongoing education to mobilize masses of people.

As COVID-19 waned in the U.S. in 2022, she and her colleagues made a point of attending public events, and *intervening* by raising the danger of nuclear war to the top government officials in the U.S., who otherwise peddle lies and distractions.

### Battles Demand Obama Answer for Ukraine Misdeeds

On Oct. 29, 2022, Anastasia and her husband Stewart, put it to former President Barack Obama, in front of



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Anastasia Battle

a 1,000-person get-out-the-vote rally for various Democratic candidates, hosted by the Michigan Democratic Party in Detroit’s Renaissance High School gymnasium. Present were Michigan’s Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and Lt.-Governor Garlin Gilchrist II, plus Dem. Senators and Congresspeople. Anastasia described the event to me this way:

Stewart jumped up first, loudly exclaiming: “Mr. President!” This completely threw Obama off. “Yes? Oh, wait, I’m in the middle of a speech.” Stewart:

“Why don’t you tell everybody here about the danger of thermonuclear war? None of this is going to matter, if everybody’s dead due to a nuclear war that we’re about to face with Russia!” Stewart was then drowned out by people yelling, and chanting “O-ba-ma, O-ba-ma.” Stewart was dragged out.

The process continued. “OK, I’ve got to do this,” I said to myself. I then started yelling, “You overthrew the legitimate government of Ukraine in 2014.” All hell broke loose again. Even though people were pushing me, including one person falling on me on purpose, I kept going with my briefing of how Russia’s not the enemy: “Obama! Tell us about your plans for nuclear war with Russia!”

A 2-minute [video](#) of this intervention, posted on Twitter by José Vega, also a LaRouche “interventionist,” went viral.

As of Winter 2022, Battle helped set up a special [page](#) titled “Interventions” on The LaRouche Organization’s website, with video links to dozens of such inter-



Courtesy, Anastasia Battle

*“In an intervention, one thinks about the process: What is the world stage I’m acting upon? How do I be the voice of Reason, even if the audience is not sane enough to understand what I’m saying? How can I make sure that the people who can understand, do so, and can respond to what I say?” Shown: a video screen shot from her intervention into a presentation in Detroit by former President Barack Obama, Oct. 29, 2022.*

ventions. Several have been seen by multi-millions of people, breaking the media black-out that is part of NATO info-warfare. In this category is the [intervention](#) made Oct. 12, 2022 by fellow LaRouche Movement interventionists José Vega and Kynan Thistlethwaite, who put U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) on the spot over her shift from presenting herself as a “progressive” allegedly concerned about people, to a war-hawk funding Global NATO.

### Confrontation vs. Intervention

According to Battle, *confrontation* is just going at someone, yelling and expressing anger.

There’s a time and a place for “righteous fury.” But without self-control, one will be unable to say the things that need to be heard, and all that’s going to come across is the raving of an angry person. That’s not leadership.

In an *intervention*, on the other hand, one thinks about the process one is intervening on. You’re thinking to yourself. Battle:

What is the world stage that I’m acting upon?  
How do I shift it? How do I be the voice of Reason, even if the people in the audience before me are not sane enough to understand what I’m

saying? How can I make sure that the people who can understand, do so, and can respond to what I say?

That’s how you become a catalyst. That’s how I think of ourselves. We become catalysts for changing history. Openings and possibilities are already there, and if you know what they are, and you start poking at them, then you can bring them out. And that creates even more opportunities for interventions in the future.

### Early Lessons Learned

Battle described her beginnings, being born into a poor Hispanic family in Richmond, California, an old industrial area, now pretty much bombed out. She had to grow up very quickly, learning a lot about discrimination from the hard-knock streets. To survive, she became aware of how people think, “realizing that at some point that if I let the circumstances of my surroundings get to me, I was going to end up stuck in the ghetto for the rest of my life.”

As an example of a great difference a single individual can make in one’s life, she recollected a high school counselor, who had noticed her plummeting grades. Instead of expressing pity, he “delivered the most up-lifting kick in the ass that I’d ever gotten before,” telling her, “Life is hard; it’s difficult. If you want to get out of this ghetto, you need to pick yourself

up, you need to get good grades, you need to go to college, and you need to make something of yourself, or else you're going to be stuck here."

She did what he knew she could do.

It was a very good lesson for me at the time, and as it turned out, for my future of organizing: you never want to have pity for people's circumstances. If you want to help somebody change and become better, you need to give them the hard truth, ensure you give them the support they need to first hear it, and then later, for them to make the changes they need to make.

One of the programs that counselor introduced her to was Upward Bound, which provided opportunities for participants to succeed in their pre-college performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits.

The "most fun" UB program was with a certain English teacher. In one class, he gave the students a week to memorize a poem. For the test, he turned out the lights, and everyone had to recite the poem in sync, while he threw chairs around, pounded on the desks, and yelled up close into their closed-eyed faces. She only found out later that this was actually a training exercise for civil rights type sit-ins, where everyone had to be prepared for the hostility they were going to get.

This teacher pulled Anastasia aside, saying: "I have never met a student who was so well-spoken, so eloquent," and took her under his wing. He was later fired, when it was discovered he was a member of the Black Panther Party.

Through this teacher, and through the Upward Bound program, Anastasia got involved with an organization called By Any Means Necessary (BAM), another civil rights "direct action" organization.

Unfortunately the BAM group operated according to a one-two step political action formula: "When the police start carrying you away.... We're going to carry big banners.... We're going to yell and shout, and stand

in front of this thing." The main "thing" they were doing at that time was trying to get a resolution through for some recognition of kids from poor areas, to facilitate their getting into universities which they would otherwise not have the same opportunity to attend as the kids from white upper-class families. This wasn't exactly what Anastasia wanted to do. The action just wasn't very good, and she felt it was just a watered-down version of the civil rights movement.

In high school, Anastasia helped found and was Vice-President of its Green Club. Being very active in organizing various actions of the Club, "I was an environmentalist!"

By the time she got to college, she was pushing a lot of environmentalist lines and ideas. In one class, the teacher posed this hypothetical:

Consider the situation where you have a pharmaceutical company that's just made an epidemic-curing drug. Should the government take the patent for that drug away and allow the drug to be sold really cheaply, or should the government let the pharmaceutical company keep their patent, allowing them to jack up the price?

The class began passionately debating the question. "Greenie" Anastasia jumped in with: "Well, I don't think we should have the drug at all!" The teacher asked, "Oh, really? Why is that?" "Well, I think diseases were created to help reduce the population." Anastasia reports that this was the most disgusting thing that ever came out of her mouth:

When I said it out loud—I'd never expressed this depopulation stuff out loud before; it was always just kind of around me—but once I said it, I knew what it meant, and my heart sank to my stomach.

The teacher came back with the non-judgmental: "Well, this is a very interesting opinion." The other stu-



Courtesy, Anastasia Battle

*A child of the ghetto, Anastasia was destined to end up stuck there, until she determined that she would not let those circumstances control her.*

dents talked about it, but no one attacked it. Nobody challenged her. Nobody said that what she had said was crazy. But she realized that she had just basically condoned killing people, which, deep inside herself, she knew was just wrong. “I was really disgusted with myself.”

### The LaRouche Organization

Sometime around 2007/8, while attending a community college in Berkeley, at BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) station, someone called out to her: “You! What do you think the value of a dollar is?” She scoffed at him and began laughing: “Are you kidding me? The dollar ain’t worth s\*\*t. Where the hell have you been?” He snapped back, “Get over here!” It was a LaRouche organizer.

They talked, she “signed up,” and began coming to meetings. The first such meeting featured a lecture by Jason Ross, a LaRouche science specialist, on the topic Why the Whole Is Greater Than the Sum of its Parts. He went through the development of embryos and species, and posed this question to her: “If you were to throw a squirrel into a blender, would it still be a squirrel?” Being the environmentalist animal lover she was, she started freaking out. “Oh, Jesus! Are you crazy!? A squirrel smoothie?” “Exactly! But what is it that makes a squirrel a squirrel, if not its body parts?” “Well, there’s something else,” she said, “that organizes it, that makes it a squirrel.”

“I loved these classes,” she told me. She kept going back and back and back, to those classes, having fights with them over her environmentalist ideology—about climate-change, etc. “I had all the perfect answers to come back, because I was a green-activist person, and I could fight them all off.” It wasn’t until someone finally told her “The whole purpose of the environmentalist movement has nothing to do with saving the environment; it has to do with depopulation. That’s the reason why they are pushing it.” This took her back to that college class where she had advocated population reduction, and she had hated what she had said.

Yeah, you’re right. Saving the environment, getting rid of pollution, and all that, is not the same thing as saying we need to reduce the world’s population, so we can reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and all that. They are *completely different* ideas.

Of course, nobody wants to live in pollution. You’d be a lunatic if you did.

A quote in the LaRouche video documentary, *The Lost Chance of 1989: The Fall of the Wall*, from the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who said “you may go on to live to be 90, but as soon as you gave up the thing you were willing to give up your life for, you died then,” provided Anastasia with the drive to organize. She dropped out of school, and left her job working for the city of Richmond, announcing in an email to the whole city that she had joined the LaRouche movement full time. She laughed at recounting: “I was fired!” In fact, she was fired up!

A few years later she married Stewart Battle, and they took up residence and responsibilities in the Midwest.

### Cynicism vs. the Pursuit of Truth

No one younger than 55 was alive when Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. were assassinated, or younger than 60 when President John F. Kennedy was gunned down. Concerning President Franklin Roosevelt, no one under 78 was alive when he died. I asked Anastasia what the youth of today know about these great men and their understanding of the meaning of their lives. She answered with a discussion of the battle against cynicism:

A lot of people, youth included, have a very cynical view of the world. It’s not helped by the older generations, who caused that to happen, who then judge the young for their lack of knowledge and their lack of ability to understand. It’s not because they don’t want to. Every time I talk to people about these things, I find them *hungry* for that knowledge and understanding. When they hear somebody who’s not cynical about humanity, it borders on unbelievable to them, because almost everybody is.

Cynicism is in everything. It’s in popular culture, regular programming TV, social media. There’s an underlying cynicism in *everything*. It’s become part of the culture; it colors everything that people do. So, people don’t have a drive; instead their gut feeling is “What’s the point?” Or, they don’t feel like looking into

something, because everybody is just a jerk who wants money or sex or power or whatever.

Some youth I have spoken to on the street have told me, “If my teacher spoke to me about history the way that *you* did, maybe I’d pay attention.” [She laughed.] And so, they want to keep talking; then they become interested in things.

It’s only gotten far worse from when I was young in college. I remember experiencing something like that kid in the streets of Richmond: the belief that Truth is whatever you want it to be—“your truth” vs. “my truth” vs.

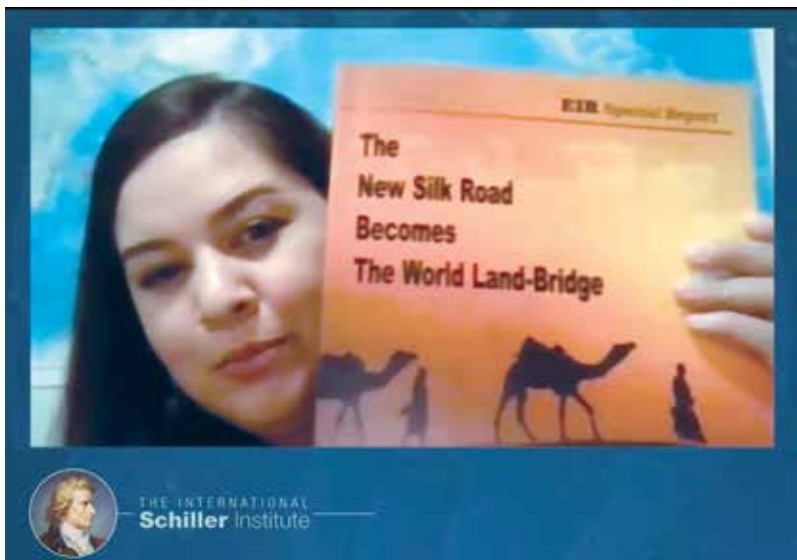
who are sparked to do the kinds of interventions we are doing. Who will stand up and say, “This is not the life I want to live. You’ve ruined this for me, and you need to change, too.” [laughs]

We have to spark that spirit; turn the cynicism into a drive for something better. In Detroit, people have witnessed terrible things that have happened to others and have experienced terrible things that have happened to themselves. They do hate the political leaders, including Kennedy and FDR. They *hate* them because “They’re the white people who destroyed me.” Or, they’ll come up with some other line: “Person X was terrible because he did Y.”

I think we have to think about this a little bit differently. Otherwise, it’s just like saying, “Well, too bad for this youth generation. They’re all screwed up. I guess they’re just not going to know anything.”

I think about how to provoke them, how to get under their skin, and give them something to want to grab onto, so they can find that drive. I think the interventions we do have been very important in this, because a lot of them feel like they are an outlet where they can go and do something, where they can become active, and speak what they’re really thinking.

We have something good on our side in that the human mind functions in coherence with the development of the universe. Were this not the case, irrationality would rule in everything. People wouldn’t be upset about that state of affairs, because that would be just the way things are: crazy, and there would be nothing that could be done about it. Cynicism leads to pessimism, which leads to war. The good news is that that isn’t the way the mind works, and so when one presents something that’s rational, that makes sense, that’s coherent, then it’s possible to elicit the response “Well, I can kind of relate to that.” “Well, sure you can, you are what is called ‘human.’ If you weren’t human, you wouldn’t be able to. The good news is that you are, and so you can.”



Schiller Institute

Anastasia Battle, promoting EIR’s 2014 Special Report, *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*, in her presentation on the Bering Strait Tunnel project to a Schiller Institute conference, Sept. 26, 2020.

“their truth”—feelings, and not actually figuring out why something is truthful. Some people are just wandering, floating, like little particles floating in space. They don’t know why they’re here.

When such otherwise bright young people meet us, they are immediately sparked. I think it’s really important for people like us to be around, who want to accomplish some good things. But we’ve got to think big, really big—a mass youth movement, a million. We need to think like a million youth, who will become educated and start demanding the right policies,

## Culture, Economic Development

Anastasia Battle is “hands on” for the pursuit and promotion of music, the arts, and culture as part and parcel of statecraft and economic development. In May 2021, she and her husband founded the publication *Leonore*, to be the art and science journal of the U.S. branch of the international Schiller Institute. She’s Editor-in-Chief. With three issues published so far, she now expects releases twice a year.

Following her interest in the Schiller Institute’s World Land-Bridge concept, Battle has spoken on the Bering Strait Tunnel connection between Eurasia and North America, which would open up vast new potentials for production, trade and development. A video of her presentation to the Sept. 26, 2020 Schiller Institute conference is available [here](#).

Living in the Detroit area, Battle knows firsthand the destruction of one of the once-great industrial cities in the U.S., and brings her knowledge of LaRouche political economy, and of music and culture, directly into action, whether organizing on a campus, a street corner, or a corner office.

I treat everyone the same. People see me as genuine; they know they can trust me, and therefore respond. The greatest thing I’ve learned from this organizing process is that, contrary to the popularly held belief that it is necessary to manipulate people to get things done, it’s far better to be just plain honest and truthful. When you actually get down to it and you start talking to people face-to-face in an honest dialogue, then you can start talking about the principles and assumptions that people are operating from.

It turns out if someone is honest, they will get very excited when someone is able to point out to



EIRNS/Robert Baker

*A singer in the classical bel canto tradition, Anastasia Battle especially loves singing Negro Spirituals: “They hit me really hard in the gut.” Here she is with her husband Stewart at the Humanity for Peace Mozart Requiem concert in New York City, Aug. 6, 2023.*

them certain things about why they think the way they do. Revealed to themselves, perhaps for the first time, is their “creative bug.” They now want to start solving a problem, and it becomes infectious. Once they figure it out, they want to go out and do the same thing for others. You have created more organizers! Learning how to do this is probably the greatest thing that anybody who’s reading this right now can accomplish.

An active singer in the classical *bel canto* tradition, Battle especially loves singing the Negro Spirituals. “It probably has to do with where I come from. They hit really hard in the gut. I get very emotional.”

She made the observation:

The Negro Spiritual is still very prominent in Detroit. People here still cherish their dignity as a legacy of the Civil Rights Movement. It was in Detroit, where Martin Luther King, Jr. got his start in the northern states. Detroit is different from Oakland, California, where Rap predominates. Even though Detroiters live in a really bombed-out area, there’s a dignity about them that wants to see something more for their people, and are willing to fight for it.

Among the projects I’m working on, is creating a youth education curriculum. We’re working with various churches to create a place for the youth of the city to engage in classical culture, to sing the Spirituals, recite and write poetry, to know and produce classical art and science. *Leonore* magazine will play a part in all this.

I think there’s a lot of potential in this city, an underlying depth in people because of what they’ve been through. There’s a lot to work with here.



EIRNS/Robert Baker

*Anastasia Battle with her friend and collaborator, Megan Dobrodt, both of whom sang in the Humanity for Peace Mozart Requiem concert in New York City, Aug. 6, 2023.*

Battle has brought the same insight and concern to the world's food crisis, and the shutting down of family farms. She has narrated and produced Schiller Institute videos to reach both farmers and the public, with emergency and longer-term solutions. In one [video](#), *Tractors Roll*, produced in 2022, and seen by thousands, she delivers the straightforward message—a call to action: “You know there is something wrong when millions go hungry, but farmers have to take to the streets to protest for the right to produce food!”

### **Mission: Love for Humanity**

Anastasia Battle is emphatic that optimism and betterment for society will come from people taking on responsibility for humanity. On July 29, she discussed this directly as a guest on the weekly Manhattan Dialogue of The LaRouche Organization, a week before the Aug. 6 rally at the United Nations, and sister events internationally, organized and publicized by Humanity for Peace to stop the threat of nuclear war.

She said of the mobilization,

This is a mass intervention for humanity. It's an opportunity for people to reflect on just how

insane the world has become. You see everybody fighting amongst each other, there are all these gossip lines, people are nagging at one another. What it really comes down to is that nobody sees any leadership. No one sees anybody taking any leadership within our governments to accomplish real peace.

So, what we've done—Irene [Mavrakakis], myself, many of the other organizers, Rage Against the War Machine, the Schiller Institute—there are many organizations around the world who have joined, who have said, “We're going to take on that responsibility. That's what we're going to do. We're going to represent what our governments should be doing.”

After describing all the many groups pitching in, and activities spreading in multiple countries, Battle drew out her point.

Think about the impact that this is going to have. All these people who are coming together around saving mankind from a nuclear war. We've talked



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

*Anastasia Battle with Irene Mavrakakis, M.D., of Liberty Speaks, coordinators and co-moderators of the Humanity for Peace rally at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza near the UN in New York City, Aug. 6, 2023.*

about this in the LaRouche movement in the past, that what really inspires people is agapē. What really is an important thought to express to people is agapē; that means universal love. What this rally is expressing is that love.