

Schiller Institute Weekly Dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche

Geopolitics Is Heading Straight for World War III

The following is an edited transcript of the dialogue on April 10, 2024. Embedded links have been added. The video is available [here](#).

Harley Schlanger: Hello and welcome to our weekly dialogue with Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder and chairwoman of the Schiller Institute. Today is Wednesday, April 10, 2024. I'm Harley Schlanger, and I'll be your host. You can email your questions and comments to questions@schiller-institute.org.

Now, despite the failure of NATO's war against Russia, in an effort which they themselves claim is a campaign to defeat Russia, NATO leaders seem intent on not just continuing the war but even escalating it, discussing the possibility of even deploying NATO troops inside Ukraine.

Our first question comes from someone who identifies himself as a "geostrategist," and he writes: "I've heard you discuss in the past the Chinese peace plan as a way to end the war. There seems to be some chatter about the positive potential about the Chinese role after the recent visit to Ukraine by a Chinese mediator Li Hui. What does China propose, and might Europe be open to that as a way to end the war?"

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: There is a lot of motion around this. One of the most important was the state visit by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in Beijing, where he met with [Chinese President] Xi Jinping and [Foreign Minister] Wang Yi. He also had a meeting with the 70 ambassadors of the Global South in Moscow on April 4. The main topic apparently—I don't know in detail—was Ukraine. In that setting, I can only imagine that Lavrov would try, based on his discussions—and



Russian Foreign Ministry

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi (right) welcomes his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, in Beijing, China, on April 9, 2024.

Ukraine was also an issue in the discussions Lavrov had with the Chinese—that there is actually some motion to bring this war to an end. There is also an article by a China expert, Frank Sieren, in *Berliner Zeitung* on April 8, which says that the Chinese proposal is close to a breakthrough. So, these are unconfirmed, and one has to be aware that there is always the potential for disinformation. But I think this is a very hopeful sign that this war could be brought to an end before it leads to a catastrophe.

China does have a positive relationship with both sides. That's very important. They have an unshakable strategic partnership with Russia, but they have also kept an open channel with Ukraine. Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba met with Wang Yi on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference in February, and the

Chinese special envoy, Li Hui, in March had his second tour throughout Europe, meeting with people in Russia, Ukraine, Brussels, Germany, and France. So, I think that there is, hopefully, a possibility to have such a peace conference and settlement. Because, what are the alternatives?

The alternative would be to do what Macron had proposed in late February, which was a flight-forward—or maybe a trial balloon for all of NATO—namely, to move French troops into Ukraine. This has caused complete nervousness and fury. Germany quickly made sure to say that any deployment of French troops to Ukraine would *not* invoke NATO Article 5, but would be a purely French affair—not a NATO affair. Because, obviously, Germany is very wary of being pulled into a war in Ukraine, which would be a complete open ended disaster.

Then there is the recent statement by Professor Mearsheimer, from the United States, and he says that the best thing Ukraine could do is to go for an agreement right now, because if the war continues, they're in danger of losing even more territory.

I'm pretty sure that the Chinese are also making a double effort to bring the war to a conclusion, because without a diplomatic solution, I think the Russians are going to try to make more military gains. And that is something China does not necessarily welcome, because the Chinese position is one of ending wars through diplomacy, of having a harmonious development of all nations. Naturally, they would have nothing to gain, but only to lose, from an escalation around Ukraine. So, while nothing is certain yet, I think there is a certain degree of hopefulness.

The simultaneous effort by Switzerland to organize an international Ukraine conference, which has been pushed a lot by the Europeans and Americans, has so far been mostly rejected by Russia. They do not think Switzerland has a good position as a mediator, given that they [the Swiss government] fully back the sanctions against Russia. Consequently, Russia regards the Swiss conference as a way of confusing the countries from the Global South.

Now, there is obviously a big geopolitical fight involved here. But, given the seriousness of the nature of the war, I think the most promising proposal I can see is what China is trying to do, because they have both the economic weight, and they have chips on all sides, so to speak—including the United States. With the April 2 discussions between Xi Jinping and Joe Biden on the

telephone, to reaffirm their good discussion on Nov. 15, 2023, in San Francisco, it seems there is at least a channel open for such discussions. And given the absolutely precarious situation of the world in general, one can only welcome China's effort, and can only hope that this will lead to a good result. So, I'm modestly optimistic about it.

Schlanger: Just a follow-up from the geostrategist. He asks: "Would the Belt and Road Initiative going into Ukraine be part of a reconstruction plan, if there were such a peace agreement, as opposed to leaving it up to BlackRock and Western predators?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I think Ukraine will have the choice—hopefully we come to a point where the war is over. Then Ukraine will have the choice to either become a weapons firm of the world—because even some German weapons factories are planning investments there. And that is really not a good idea, because that means the perpetuation of the war. If it's not the Ukraine war, it will be some other war. But it will be a continuation of the endless war policy, which has been haunting the world for the last several decades. The other option is that of being integrated between Eastern and Western Europe through the Belt and Road Initiative, and developing the agriculture, reconstructing the entire economy, being part of the increasing trade between Europe and Asia.

So, I would hope that part of the solution would be Ukraine's integration into the Belt and Road Initiative, because—just look at the difference in the two options of policy and foreign policy. The United States has been trying to put all bets on military power: They've built almost 1,000 bases around the world; the war machine is practically the most important driver of the U.S. economy. But has it really fulfilled American aspirations, gaining friends around the world? I would say *not*. It has made certain strictly military alliances, but China has been much more successful by trying to develop economic ties with 150 countries in the Global South. And if you are a country in the Global South—or in Europe, for that matter—you have to ask yourself, is it better for you to be an aircraft carrier for the United States' war machine? Or is it better to invest in infrastructure, agriculture, and industry in collaboration with China?

Now, I have been stressing for a number of years, especially since the war in Ukraine started—or the



UN/Evan Schneider

Indian Foreign Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar emphasized his country's very strong relationship with Russia in his recent international travels.

special military operation—that we have to have a system where everybody works together, and that geopolitics has to be overcome. The more I think about it, and the longer this goes on, the more I am convinced that geopolitics is the biggest evil. Because, once you think that other countries are your enemy and your opponent, then everything flows from that. And on the other side, if you say, “No, we have a common interest: The higher interest is the one humanity,” then you can always find a diplomatic solution through economic cooperation to the benefit of all.

So, I think that this key difference between geopolitical thinking and win-win cooperation will decide whether mankind will make it, or not.

Schlanger: As we sent out a notification that you would be talking about the attempt to escape the grasp of geopolitics, we've gotten a number of questions about geopolitics. Let me give you two about India.

Thomas writes that he's concerned about India's economic policy. He thinks that the farmer demonstrations in India exposed the neoliberalism of the current government, instead of the BRICS orientation, and he asks if it's possible for India to return to the approach of Nehru and Indira Gandhi.

And we also have a question from Charles about Indian Prime Minister Modi. He asks: “Is Modi close

to Israel, a friend of Netanyahu? Or is he just acting that way for internal electoral concerns?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I think the Indian policy is very difficult to evaluate at any moment, because, on the one side, you do have a very strong sense of Indian independence—going back to the Non-Aligned Movement tradition—which I think has not gone away, even with the Modi government. If you look, for example, at the recent trips of Foreign Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, he reiterated a very strong relationship with Russia. And I think the overall orientation of the Indian government is: “India first.”

There are opponents in India from the Congress Party, who have a very negative view of the religious emphasis of the BJP [Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party—ed.]. This is an issue which, obviously, the Indians must settle for themselves. A big component, also, is the very large Muslim population—as many as 172 million by 2011. Therefore, Modi is always concerned about the security implications of India's



PTI/Courtesy DPR Defence

The very strong tradition of India lives on in the remembrance of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

relationship with the countries of Southwest Asia.

So, I think the hope is that the tradition of Gandhi and Nehru—and Indira Gandhi, for that matter—that lives on as a very strong identity of India. And you know, India has a fantastic history! If you think about it, India is one of the cradles of humanity. It had one of the most important cultures more than 3,500

years ago—the whole period of the Rig Veda, the Upanishads. These are philosophical-theological writings which are in absolute coherence with some of the most important ideas of Western religion, Christianity, and so forth. They have a “Hymn of Creation,” which is absolutely fascinating. Then there was the Gupta period, characterized by a high-level literature, beginning 300 years after Christ [319–550 CE]. In the 19th and 20th centuries came the Indian Renaissance, which produced many extraordinary poets, such as Rabindranath Tagore. And, in any case, Indian history is very fascinating and very rich.

India is right now making incredibly important steps forward economically; they have already surpassed China in terms of population numbers. So, it is very hopeful, in light of the incredible breakthroughs which have been made technologically and scientifically all over the world—in terms of space travel, in terms of space projects—that India is one of the leading nations in these fields. India also has a very important role in the nuclear energy sector: They’re working with many Non-Aligned countries, helping them to get their own nuclear energy technology.

So, I think India is a very important country. And I can only hope that the historic, tectonic change which is taking place right now, can bring about a new paradigm of international relations—which settles historic, ethnic conflicts among nations in general—and that we really can rise up to the common future of humanity. Let’s work toward this end.

Schlanger: We have one more question on Asia, which you referenced earlier. The person writes: “Given what was a positive talk earlier this month between President Biden and China’s President Xi Jinping, what do you expect to come from the Biden meeting today with Japan’s Prime Minister Fumio Kishida? Is this designed to consolidate Japan as a NATO ally against China?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Unfortunately, I think the answer to that is yes. Because, while Biden is on the one side making these gestures to China, I think there’s also a

very big emphasis on moving Global NATO into the Pacific. You have the tensions around this Philippine island—which is a sort of ridiculous conflict—where a Philippine ship went aground on this shoal claimed by China. There’s still an effort by the Philippines to maintain the ship. China is trying to force its removal. So, these are just territorial squabbles, which are being played up for geopolitical reasons.

And then you have AUKUS, which is the military alliance between the United States, Australia, and Great Britain, which China also regards as a major provocation.

So, again, as long as you are thinking in terms of controlling territory, moving NATO as Global NATO into the Pacific—I mean, what does NATO have to do



Philippine Coast Guard
China Coast Guard ship firing water cannon off the Second Thomas Shoal, or Ayunyin Shoal.

with the Pacific? Nothing! It was founded as a defensive alliance for the North Atlantic. It should have dissolved when the Warsaw Pact dissolved in 1991. You would see a much more peaceful world if they would have done so. Instead, it was transformed from a defensive alliance into a more and more offensive alliance, moving east, closer and closer to the Russian border—and now, moving into the Pacific, closer to the Chinese border. So this Global NATO idea is a completely rotten idea, and it should be rejected by anybody who has an interest in humanity surviving all of these strategic crises.

So, unfortunately, I’m concerned and pretty sure that this Kishida visit will not be something to be happy about.

Schlanger: Let’s move to the situation in Southwest



White House video

President Joe Biden meets Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the White House, April 10.

Asia. The first question I have on this is: “If Palestine were to be given membership status in the United Nations, as was proposed recently on the International Peace Coalition call, for example, could Israel prevent it?”

Zepp-LaRouche: I’m not totally sure. But I think this is very important, because this is something which is supported by the vast majority of countries in the world. I think the United States is not so much in favor of it. But if we want to end this absolute horror show, which is still a complete powder keg, then the very—I think the application is coming up this month—I think it would be a major step toward calming down the situation.

I mean, it remains a complete powder keg! On the one side, the IDF forces have pulled out of Gaza, to a large extent. Many people are concerned that the IDF is just resting before the next attack occurs. The White House National Security Communications Advisor, John Kirby, just said that the Israeli government promised the United States that they would not do anything in respect to Rafah, unless there were face-to-face discussions in Washington with the Biden administration. And presently, there are two members of the Israeli cabinet in Washington.

But on the other side, you have the two Israeli coalition partners, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Fi-

nance Minister Bezael Smotrich, who represent, I think, 14 votes in the Knesset. They give Netanyahu a 3-vote majority, and have said that they will pull out of the coalition—bring Netanyahu down—if he agrees to a deal whereby Hamas is not completely destroyed, and if, in their view, the operation is not finished. Now, that means that Netanyahu is under enormous pressures from all sides. And the danger is looming that the expansion of conflict—involving Lebanon, involving direct conflict between Israel and Iran—is hanging as a Damocles Sword

over the whole situation, because these conflicts could then go completely out of control.

So, the answer to your question is, yes, I think Palestine should be given statehood immediately. And hopefully the UN Security Council will find more unity to implement whatever it decides.

Schlanger: And also a follow-up to that: “If Palestine does become a member of the United Nations, does this open up the possibility to make it more likely that a fund could be set up to implement the Oasis Plan?”



UNRWA Facebook Page

Children waiting for food in Gaza. Because Palestinian children are starving, Nicaragua has filed an accusation against Germany in the International Court of Justice for its weapons sales to Israel in complicity with Israel’s genocide.

Zepp-LaRouche: It definitely would help! Since you mentioned the Oasis Plan, I want to invite all of you, our viewers, to absolutely participate in our upcoming [online conference](#) on the Oasis Plan this Saturday, April 13. It is coming along very nicely: We have gained the commitment of participation from extremely important speakers. We have several ambassadors from the region in Southwest Asia, from the BRICS countries. We have some excellent experts on nuclear energy, on water and water management, infrastructure. So, I think the perspective of having a visionary plan for Southwest Asia as a whole—to have peace through development—this will become much more real in the eyes of many people. Because, what is the alternative? If you don't inject a different idea, then the cycle of violence—of terrorism/counterterrorism, war/counterwar—will turn this region into Hell, in the best case, for decades; in the worst case, into a regional war and beyond.

But, on the other side, given the fact that the world is on the edge of either a new era of mankind or a global war, one can only hope that the idea of making peace through development, of greening the deserts—all you need, really, is lots of fresh water, through a variety of means, [including] canals. You can access aquifers; you can try to impact the weather through ionization of the atmosphere; you can do all kinds of things in terms of desalination of large amounts of ocean water. But greening the deserts, creating more water—which has been a fight among many nations in the region—that is the way to have peace! And I can imagine that all of Southwest Asia, in a few years, could look like the greenest strip of Dubai and the Emirates, which I visited once: It's amazing what you can do with water in a region which was once desert! You can turn it into lush gardens, lush agriculture, lush forests. And that is where we have to go.

Schlanger: There is a question from John, who writes: "It has been disclosed that artificial intelligence

is being used by Israel in the conflict in Gaza." I assume this is in reference to the idea that AI is being used for targeting and figuring out who's Hamas and so on. And then he asks: "We can assume that the U.S. is also using it, can't we?"

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I did not get any privileged information on this point, but I know it has been made an issue. It is one of the most evil and satanic ways of using modern technology. Artificial intelligence can have a very profitable role, but if it's used to target people for assassination, I think it is really the business



CC/Rehman Abubakar

Umm Al Houl Power in Qatar is a gas-fired power plant combined with a desalination facility. This is the kind of development needed in the Middle East to solve the political crisis.

card of the greatest evil you can imagine.

Schlanger: One question on Ukraine: The U.S. House is under enormous pressure to pass the Biden \$60 billion Ukraine bill, to provide more aid and weapons and so on. There's apparently some wobble in Speaker Mike Johnson, who said it would not pass, and now he's trying to figure out a way to get the money. And so, the question comes up, that you just had the British Foreign Secretary David Cameron in Washington to press for this: What would happen with the situation in the European countries, if the U.S. did not provide the money? Would there be a commitment in Europe, as they claim there would be, to provide enough money to keep the war going?

Zepp-LaRouche: There is an effort to militarize the budgets of Europe. In Germany, there's even a push to loosen the "debt brake," which is in the constitution, for military build-up, for weapons commitments to Ukraine. It's just completely insane! Germany is falling apart! Industry is in free fall. There's no money for repair of domestic infrastructure. It's completely insane! And I can only hope that there's a rethinking—hopefully the Chinese initiative will change the dynamic altogether. Look at the situation with Nicaragua having filed an accusation in The Hague against Germany, because of Germany's weapons sales to Israel. This was negotiated in The Hague over Monday and Tuesday, April 8–9, this week. The German position is untenable!

I listened to some radio reports, and all they were discussing is how you get out of this by technical mechanics, that it's not possible to have a legal case, because of this and that article—That totally misses the point! The point is—and some of these commentators reflected it very clearly: They're not outraged by what is happening in Gaza with genocide, war crimes; they're not concerned about the suffering of the Palestinians; they're not concerned about what happens to the whole region and the whole world, as a result of it. What they are worried about is, "Oh, our reputation in the Global South is suffering! All this media coverage we did not anticipate." I mean, this shows you that there is no concern about the real issues, but just the reputation.

But, I think the political establishments will not get around the fact that the image of Germany is already severely damaged because of this whole situation. And in order to repair it and to re-establish a positive relation with the Global South—which, after all, represents 85% of the human population—does require some rethinking in Germany. And people of all political stripes are called upon to participate in such a rethinking: Because it's not just the fact that this present government is a really problematic one—especially if you look at the Green element, and the FDP, for that matter, as well—but that the opposition is not so different. So, Germany really needs to rethink the present



A German legal team at the International Court of Justice defends against Nicaragua's accusation of complicity in Israel's genocide in Gaza.

ICJ

course of action, where it has allowed itself to become a complete colonialist subject of the present unipolar world-to-be.

I think Germany really needs to shape up and change its outlook.

Schlanger: On the question of Germany, in the daily video update that I do, I took up the question of the effect of the war and the sanctions and so on, on the German economy. So, people can [find that](#) on the LaRouche Organization website.

Helga, we do have a few comments that are useful in terms of the organizing. One is Minnesota County Commissioner Bob Van Hee, who points out that he's been organizing with the LaRouche movement for 35-plus years, and he said, he's "just not sure what's going on with the population. They're hot and cold, they want to do something, and then they're whining." And then he said, "People must take responsibility as a citizen to fight for the common good." And he said, "Thank you for the ideas we need for this."

Then we have a comment from Battifolla [phonetic], from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He says: "The Congo needs an Oasis Plan as well. That would bring a much-awaited peace in the region among a number of neighboring countries, so countries can finally get back on their feet."

Now, I have a final question for you, from Pat Moulton, who is expressing her amazement at the response to the solar eclipse in the United States on April 8. She said, "People got out of their homes, their cars, their offices, and looked to the heavens." And she asks,

“God was speaking from Heaven. Helga, what did you hear?”

Zepp-LaRouche: Oh, I heard an encouragement for what we are doing! I’m kidding. But I think the usefulness of such natural events is that they do, indeed, force people to lift up their eyes to the skies. Because, normally, when people run through the shopping malls, or whatever, they look at the floor, or they look at the shopping windows, or look at some other unimportant matters. But, when something like this occurs, people get excited, and they start to have at least a glimpse of the largeness of the universe. And maybe they even think, maybe they are aware of at least 2 trillion galaxies—which I always find the most mind-boggling idea. Because it just puts the whole thing in the right perspective: that we are the human species, we are part of this wonderful universe, but we still know only a tiny fraction of it. We should take events like this as an encouragement to study more deeply such things as the works of Johannes Kepler. But also NASA projects, the latest from the James Webb Space Telescope, and things like that, because that helps us to become more human.

Schlanger: And that’s really important. Helga, we have, as you mentioned, this Saturday, starting at 11 a.m. Eastern Time, the Schiller Institute online conference on your husband’s Oasis Plan, as a starting point for transforming the world to a development architecture. Anything you want to say, in closing, on why people should participate?

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes. Because, that is the only concrete proposal on the table for peace in Southwest Asia. China had made a proposal, almost two years ago, but there was unfortunately not much follow-up. The Oasis Plan is an idea which was put forward for the first time by Lyndon LaRouche in 1975. And more recently, because of the circumstances of the war, we actualized it. We are now engaged with a lot of scientists, from many countries, who are all excited and agree that the production of lots of fresh water as a peace agreement among the different nations would be the way out. So, our plan is for this conference not to be just a one-time event. We want to present an ap-



NASA/Keegan Barber

The total solar eclipse on April 8, as seen in Dallas, Texas. “The usefulness of such natural events is that they do, indeed, force people to lift up their eyes to the skies,” said Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche.

proach for how to solve the problem, by bringing together scientists, from all countries involved, to share their knowledge—to explore all options for creating water in the region, which is now entirely sand! If you look at the map, almost the entirety of Southwest Asia is desert, desert, desert. And you cannot have a livable home for the Palestinians, nor for any other countries which are in terrible condition, such as Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, unless more fresh water is created.

So, this is very exciting, because it is one of these things which can be improved by man. And that is why I would not only urge you to watch this and participate in the conference on Saturday, but also to share the invitation with as many of your friends, social media, emails, whatnot. Because this can become an absolute turning point for a situation which is extremely horrible—it should never have happened. But this is the moment to start a chapter for a better future.

Schlanger: And you can find the link to register and to send to others, so they can register, on the Schiller Institute website.

So, Helga, thanks once again for joining us this week. And I will see you on Saturday.

Zepp-LaRouche: Yes, and I will see you, too, and all of you out there, too!