I. International

International Peace Coalition, Week 146

We Must Give Young People Hope

by *EIR* Staff

March 20—Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder of the Schiller Institute and initiator of the International Peace Coalition (IPC), started the 146th consecutive weekly meeting of the IPC on March 20 by challenging the audience to help stop the perilous escalation around Iran, which is now spiraling with "breakneck speed" into the very real potential for nuclear war. Following Israel's bombing of the South Pars offshore natural gas field in the Persian Gulf, Iran began retaliating by attacking oil and gas facilities of neighboring Gulf States hosting U.S. military bases. This is contributing to an oil price shock that risks a blowout of the world financial system. It is rumored that the United States is even considering deploying ground troops into the region who could target disputed islands off the coast of Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Saudi Arabia is also threatening to join the war.

The three main actors, Iran, the U.S., and Israel, have incompatible goals: The United States wants regime change, Israel wants the total destruction of Iran, and Iran insists that the United States must leave the region and pay reparations for the war and many years of destructive sanctions.

Zepp-LaRouche expressed hope in the recent call by Foreign Minister of Oman Badr Albusaidi—who was in the midst of mediating U.S.-Iranian negotiations when the United States and Israel launched what he referred to as their "unlawful military strike" against Iran—for a meeting of all countries in the region to move toward a regional non-aggression treaty, pivoted on an agreement for developing nuclear energy, as a pathway out of the ongoing, unwinnable war. China's Special Envoy for Middle East affairs, Zhai Jun, is in the region and has been calling for an immediate end to the fighting. The region should instead cooperate on regional economic development, he said.

Zepp-LaRouche noted the reluctance of Europeans to join the war. Europe has offered to send warships to the Strait of Hormuz, but only after the fighting ends. She also noted that Iran's Ambassador to Germany, Majid Nili Ahmadabadi, has been asking about the role of the United States at the Ramstein Air Base, suggesting that Germany is complicit in the war. She spoke of Prime Minister of Japan Sanae Takaichi visiting the White House on March 19, where she was subjected to a cruel joke about Pearl Harbor when a reporter asked President Trump why the United States did not give Japan advanced warning about its intent to start the war against Iran.

Zepp-LaRouche then discussed the recent resignation of the head of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, Joseph Kent, who said that the FBI has blocked investigations into the 2025 shooting death of prominent conservative activist Charlie Kirk, and the July 2024 assassination attempt against President Donald Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania. Kent has warned that there may be live, ongoing assassination plans against the President.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova has warned that the U.S. effort to militarize and control outer space is a dangerous escalation. Zepp-LaRouche noted that all of the current conflicts could easily go out of control, and stressed the need for negotiations, development, and a dialogue of civilizations. She also noted that Pope Leo XIV is an American and in a unique position to bring other religious leaders together to prevent a descent into barbarism.

Another War with No 'Off Ramp'

The next speaker was Josephine Guilbeau, a 17-year U.S. Army veteran from U.S. Cyber Command and now active with the Eisenhower Media Network. Guilbeau spoke of her attendance at the Catholics for Catholics 3rd annual Catholic Prayer for America

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Gala in Washington, D.C., on March 19, where Joseph Kent spoke and received multiple standing ovations. She stressed that the USS *Tripoli,* with over 2,000 Marines on its way to the Middle East, is just five days from entering the theater of war, and that Americans must act now to avoid another ground war with no "off ramp."

Guilbeau called on Americans to contact their congressional representatives and send letters to the editors of major newspapers to stop the war, saying that we cannot allow Israel to drag us into another bloodbath. Zepp-LaRouche responded by underlining the importance of mobilizing other Catholics around the world to unite in opposition to the war. Guilbeau announced the Eisenhower Media Network–sponsored March 26 press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., which will expose how, as in the Iraq war, contradictory or even non-existent intelligence has been used to dupe a U.S. President into the war on Iran.

Speaking next was Bassam el Hachem, a sociologist and professor at the University of Lebanon, who spoke of the delusion dominating the Trump administration that the war against Iran could be won in four or five days through decapitation. He said that this "adventure" was a failure, and that now Iran holds all of the cards. Iran has knocked out the major U.S. radar systems in the region, forced the two U.S. aircraft carriers to pull back, and it controls the flow of 20% of world oil exports. Without its sophisticated radar, the United States is blind, and Iran's missiles have inflicted damage. President Trump has demanded that his "allies"—the same ones he has threatened with draconian tariffs—help him restore oil and gas shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, but to little effect.

Professor El Hachem noted that at the end of 2024, Israel and Lebanon had negotiated an end to their fighting. Hezbollah honored the agreement, but Israel did not: It acted unilaterally to continue the killing. The United States was negotiating with Iran, but in the middle of the negotiations the U.S. acted unilaterally and started the war. He said that there has been a media blackout, but the U.S. makes sure that Lebanon is weak, which means that Hezbollah is the only local force which can respond to this fighting.

The professor continued that for three days, Israel has been preparing for a ground invasion of Lebanon, giving Hezbollah no choice but to fight. France has worked to negotiate an end to this fighting, but the professor does not expect this to work.

The final invited speaker was Diane Sare, an independent candidate for U.S. President, who asked if it were possible to end these wars without changing America. She said that only Congress can declare war, but this Congress embarrassed itself by abdicating its responsibilities, allowing the war to begin. She called on whistleblowers and independent-minded candidates to unite to break the brainwashing by the billionaire elite, which wants to dumb down the population to eliminate optimism. The peace movement, Sare said, must fight for economic development—eradicating poverty, providing clean drinking water for the world, and building nuclear power for a growing population. This peace movement must act as One Humanity and promote a dialogue of civilizations.

What Gives Meaning to Our Lives?

Participants were then shown a short video interview with Chandra Muzaffar, a prominent Malaysian human rights activist, author, and president of the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), who has called to end all hegemony. He suggested the importance of mobilizing individuals of faith, such as Mahatma Gandhi or Lyndon LaRouche, instead of appealing to religious institutions. Gandhi and LaRouche were people of faith, even though they did not always fit in with the rituals of institutional religious structures. Both challenged us to think seriously about what gives meaning to our lives and what we should do with them. In a time of crisis, said Muzaffar, this is the spiritual perspective that we need.

Zepp-LaRouche responded, saying the elites are willing to waste precious lives as collateral damage. President Trump has said that he can do with Cuba whatever he wants. We are already in a dark age, she said, but she is worried that we are sliding into barbarism. She repeated her husband's frequent question: Do we have the moral fitness to survive? Can we work for the benefit of others? Can we have a dialogue of civilizations? History has shown that arrogance always leads to destruction, and we will not survive an Armageddon.

Sare added that people are naturally good and that we can see signs of resistance to this barbarism. Schools are prohibiting smartphones in classrooms and promoting more reading instead of more screen time.

Professor El Hachem added that students of all faiths are acting to stop the war. “We must give young people hope.”

During the question period, Sare warned of the danger of false-flag provocations to expand the war. She said that President Trump has retreated in Yemen and Minneapolis while declaring defeats to be victories, and that she would be happy if he did the same thing with the Iran War.

A short video was played of former CIA analyst Larry Johnson arguing that nuclear weapons did not end World War II, and they will not end the current conflicts. Zepp-LaRouche agreed, and warned that wars never go as planned. She pointed to the danger of the unpayable $2.4 quadrillion financial derivatives bubble. Economic development is the only way out of these problems, she said, but the United States insists on dominating the world, despite the fact that it represents only a small fraction of the global population. The Global South represents 90% of the world, and it demands equality and will no longer accept an inferior position.

Zepp-LaRouche added that Gulf States have shown what is possible in the middle of the desert, but instead of more luxury hotels, these nations must unite around an Oasis Plan development strategy. She said that China developed two of its poor, desert areas, each the size of Germany, in its northern and western regions, and turned them into lush gardens. There is no need for death and misery anywhere in the world.

The original American System of economics, according to Zepp-LaRouche, demonstrates that credit for production always produces more value than the sum of the individual investments. China’s favorite economist is Friedrich List, who promoted this same system. This American System was opposed to the British model of merely extracting value from trade. She called on the United States to return to its mission of being a “beacon of hope” for the world again, and added that America should return to a policy that, as John Quincy Adams put it, does not go abroad “in search of monsters to destroy.”