

The Worst Flood The World Needs a New,

Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp LaRouche issued this statement on Dec. 29, 2004.

The presently beginning, biggest aid operation of all times, is faced with a gigantic task: to recover up to 100,000 bodies, in order to prevent the spread of diseases that would multiply the number of victims; to supply about 2 million homeless; to reconstruct 60,000 villages, infrastructure, and agricultural areas. Just to restore the conditions existing before the flood, will require at least an amount of double-digit billions of dollars. The initiative of German Chancellor Schroeder for a debt moratorium for Indonesia and Somalia is a step in the right direction.

But something much more fundamental is needed, if a repetition of catastrophes of this magnitude is to be prevented. We have to distinguish between those aspects of natural disasters that cannot be prevented, and the effects of the neglected development policies of the recent decades. Before the present flood wave, the most dramatic tsunami in history was that which was caused by the explosion of the volcano Thera on what today is called Santorini Island, supposedly in 1628 B.C., destroying the Minoan culture. Therefore, we have to assume that more tsunamis, as big as that one, or as the one just suffered in Southeast Asia, are possible. An early warning system for the threatened areas can be installed relatively simply, and is not even expensive. Not to mention that a phone call from the U.S. State Department, which had been informed of the quake instantly, to the governments of the countries threatened by the tsunami, would also have been very cheap. What, for heaven's sake, prevented the U.S. government from sharing this information with the relevant governments? This question will preoccupy the world intensely!

But the decisive point, where the leading international financial institutions have loaded massive guilt upon themselves, is the scandalous dimensions of the neglect of development in recent decades. The tourist boom in countries like Thailand, Sri Lanka, or the Seychelles, which has granted a windfall of profits for tourism enterprises and international resort chains, cannot cover up the fact that the living conditions of

the “natives” have not really improved, and that the countries involved have not really developed economically. Quite the contrary: the “holiday paradises,” in particular, have proven themselves death traps for many of those euphemistically called “natives,” and for tourists.

The fact that under the system of globalization, one-third of humanity is permanently undernourished; that a billion of those are children living in poverty; that every day, 50,000 human beings die of starvation and preventable diseases; and that whole continents are threatened in their very existence, is proof of the absolute failure of the present world order. Just because the G-7 governments—Germany, France, Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Italy, and Japan—have submitted to the diktats of the international financial oligarchy profiting off globalization, and because the majority of the population demonstrates an unbelievable moral indifference toward the poverty of 4 billion people, it does not mean that this world order has not failed.

The entire scope of the moral failure becomes obvious, when this attitude is compared to the totally different attitude predominant in the 1950's and 1960's. Then, it was a general axiom of thought, that the underserved underdevelopment of the developing countries, which was regarded as the result of centuries of colonialism, must be overcome, as soon as possible, by development programs. In the United Nations, they talked about “development decades,” within which a certain progress, raising the standards of living and life expectancy, was to be accomplished. And for Pope Paul VI, the underdevelopment was so unbearable, that he lashed out against poverty, in his ardent appeal to the world population, his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (*On the Progress of Peoples*), as a situation “whose injustice cries to heaven.”

But, with the paradigm change that, since the late 1960's, has turned the societies in the G-7 nations from producer societies into consumer societies—away from the production of real goods, and toward speculation and a pure money economy, away from the common good, and toward an egotistical dog-eat-dog and “fun”

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society—; with this shift, the attitude toward the so-called “Third World” changed, too. Now, it was considered good, if everything there were as cheap as possible, because a stay at a five-star resort on the beach was less expensive, as these “natives” got oh-so-wonderfully-low wages.

In more than one way, the fantasy world of our consumer and fun society has suffered a reality shock. In its typically cynical way, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung asked, on December 29, what an Indian fisherman and a German tourist have in common? Normally, nothing—but now, they share the same mass grave. . . . If we can read any meaning at all into this horrible flood catastrophe in Southeastern and Southern Asia, then it is only by viewing it as a sign from heaven that man cannot violate Creation’s order for a long time, by treating the larger part of humanity as a second class of human beings, without provoking Nemesis.

The system of globalization is presently in the end phase of its systemic collapse. The free fall of the dollar is only one symptom of this. When the leading “analysts” speak of a Hiroshima for the financial system these days, of an Armageddon, of a coming avalanche, of the end of the system—then, everyone should know what hour has been rung: The great crash of 2005 has come.

But, there is a way out.

1. The G-7 nations must, together with Russia, China, India, and other states of the world, effect a total reorganization of the hopelessly bankrupt global financial system, and replace it with a New Bretton Woods system in the tradition of Franklin D. Roosevelt.
2. Not only the debts of Indonesia and Somalia should be eliminated, but those of the whole developing sector—not least because they cannot be paid anyway.
3. The derivatives and currency speculation, which, according to the most recent report of the Bank for International Settlements, has reached the unbelievable volume of \$2,000 trillion, must simply be wiped out, and be made illegal by agreements among gov-

ernments. Fixed exchange rates must be introduced, in order to make speculation against currencies and national wealth impossible.

4. The creation of new credits for productive investments must be taken away from the control of supposedly “independent,” i.e., private, central banks, and brought under the control of sovereign governments.
5. Part of the New Bretton Woods agreement, must be the creation of some \$2 trillion in new, productive credits for the G-7 nations, to provide for full employment in the context of the building of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, i.e., the infrastructural integration of Eurasia.
6. In order to embark on the urgently needed overcoming of underdevelopment of vast parts of the developing sector in Asia, Africa, and South America, in the context of the building of the Eurasian Land-Bridge as an engine for the reconstruction of the world’s economy, an “International Development Bank” must be part of the agreement, which will provide at least 500 billion euros annually for clearly defined development projects.
7. Lyndon LaRouche and the international movement named after him, have, since the early 1970’s, worked out concrete development programs for Africa, South America, the Pacific Basin, India, Southwest Asia, and for Eurasia, programs which, taken together, could provide a concrete basis for a New and Just World Economic Order—immediately!

Only if the interiors of the nations of Africa, Asia, and South America are developed to a dignified level, will we be able to reduce the effects of future natural disasters to a minimum.

When you think about these questions, which will decide the future of the Twenty-first century, don’t think just about yourself. Think about that which you can contribute, so that humanity becomes worthy of its name!

Join our movement for a New and Just World Economic Order!