
IV. Build the World Land-Bridge!

Can Iraq Be a Center of Development Rather Than Conflict?

This is the edited transcript of an interview with Hussein Askary, conducted by Matthew Ogden and Jason Ross, November 12, 2020. A [video](#) of the interview is available.

Matthew Ogden: I'm very happy to have the opportunity to appear today with Mr. Jason Ross, who is the Science Advisor to the Schiller Institute, and also Mr. Hussein Askary, who is the Southwest Asia editor for *Executive Intelligence Review* and also an activist with the Schiller Institute. Jason and Hussein both collaborated in November 2017 on the publication of a definitive [report](#), *Extending the New Silk Road to West Asia and Africa*, a blueprint for the reconstruction of Southwest Asia and Africa by means of the extension of the New Silk Road policy, and Hussein has translated into Arabic the definitive 2014 book-length [report](#), titled *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*, published by *Executive Intelligence Review*. (Volume II of that report, published by the Schiller Institute, is available [here](#).)

Hussein has been working directly with both leaders and ordinary citizens across the Arab-speaking world and Southwest Asia generally, tirelessly trying to educate political leaders there and citizens in the principles of Lyndon LaRouche's economics. He has set up an Arabic-speaking school for Lyndon LaRouche's economics online, with broad participation, and he has focussed recently on the application of the policies of our first Treasury Secretary, Alexander Hamilton, Hamiltonian economic policies including national credit, directed toward the reconstruction of these war-ravaged regions. These nations have been destroyed by decades of war, and remain flashpoints.



EIRNS/Ulf Sandmark

Hussein Askary, speaking at a Schiller Institute conference in Bad Soden, Germany, November 17, 2019. He is holding his Arabic translation of EIR's Special Report, The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge.

We've seen an extraordinary breakthrough in this fight just over the last few days, as Hussein will tell us more about shortly, where Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, Iraq's Prime Minister, sent out a tweet saying, "There is no alternative to the China-Iraq agreement." We'll get the full implications and background to that from Hussein in a moment, including his personal involvement in bringing this policy shift around. I know he has profound interest, and this is very personal for him, being as he is, a native Iraqi.

And I can say, for myself, as an American, this is a topic in which I have profound interest in, first of all, because this is the application of the Hamiltonian economic policies which built the United States, and made us into a strong, independent republic; but also because I see this as the only exit from the policy of perpetual

war, endless war, perpetrated by the Bush and Obama administrations. The United States has a profound interest at this moment, in the full participation and support in this collaboration to bring the New Silk Road policy into Southwest Asia and Northern Africa, and I think this is a topic which is profoundly important for all thinking Americans, and global citizens at this moment.

So before we bring on Hussein, I would like to invite Jason to just give us a little bit of a broader outline on the current global situation, so that we can then come in from above, and focus on the significance of this breakthrough in Southwest Asia this week.

Jason Ross: The situation that we face and that Hussein's going to be discussing in terms of a breakthrough's potential, it's one of a fight between two paradigms over the last decades. The trans-Atlantic economic system has become increasingly based, not on physical economy, not on science and technology in the broadest sense of expanding the frontiers of science through space and through nuclear fusion—this sort of thing—instead it's focussed on increasing financialization of the economy, in speculation, on maintaining an oligarchical control over the economy, through increasing the ability of finance to direct it, while reducing the potential for physical growth that's required for human wellbeing and for human development.

A new paradigm has been taking the world by storm, especially over the past couple of decades, with the meteoric growth of China, which has pulled almost the entirety of its impoverished population out of poverty and is on its path, as it has planned, toward achieving a good standard of living for everybody, to become a medium-income country in the world, and then beyond, to become a first-tier player in science, technology and economic growth.

China has exported both its know-how and the economic approach that it took through the world, with its Belt and Road Initiative. And this parallels very well

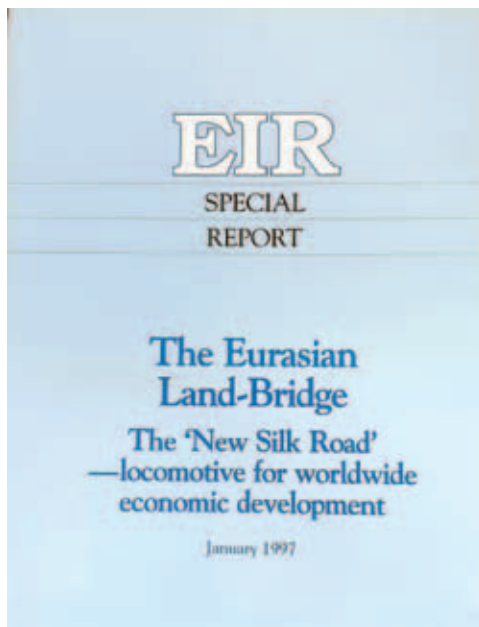
with the Schiller Institute's New Silk Road proposal for a World Land-Bridge, to move for the development of inland areas, of continents, of countries, through the development of a dense and high-capacity, high-technology infrastructure platform.

In contrast to these developments, a virtual summit called the Green Horizon Summit—co-sponsored by the City of London, the Green Finance Institute and the World Economic Forum—has just concluded on "Green Finance," where funds for recovery from COVID, where the idea of the future, is that all projects need to be "green."

According to their agenda, carbon-pricing, green industries, etc., need to be factored into every investment decision. The effect that this would have, if allowed to dominate world development trends and world finance, would be to prevent development by insisting on low-energy power sources, such as windmills and solar, at the exclusion of both coal and natural gas, and nuclear power, which is the real energy source of the future as we continue to work towards the breakthrough of having nuclear fusion.

So the contrast between this sort of green, dead-end outlook, and the outlook of physical economic growth that characterized the economic growth of the United States under Hamilton, and as somewhat recently, under President Franklin Roosevelt, whose New Deal unlocked the productivity of the American nation in large part through direct investments in large-scale infrastructure platforms. So it's exciting for me, as a citizen of the world, as a human being, to see this potential being unlocked in more and more places around the world, and the opportunity to adhere to this new paradigm, and break away from the disgusting, deadly green one that characterized the disastrous Bush and Obama administrations, and would characterize a Biden administration were he to come into office. So it's excellent to have the alternative to that.

Hussein Askary: It's a very important moment, of course, in history, and also in the history of your nation,



and Iraq, my native country, but also the rest of the world. There's enormous turmoil, as I understand in your own country, but also we have problems around the world; we also have the pandemic going on; we have a hunger catastrophe around the world, and also potential threat of a war between the major powers, the United States, China, and Russia.

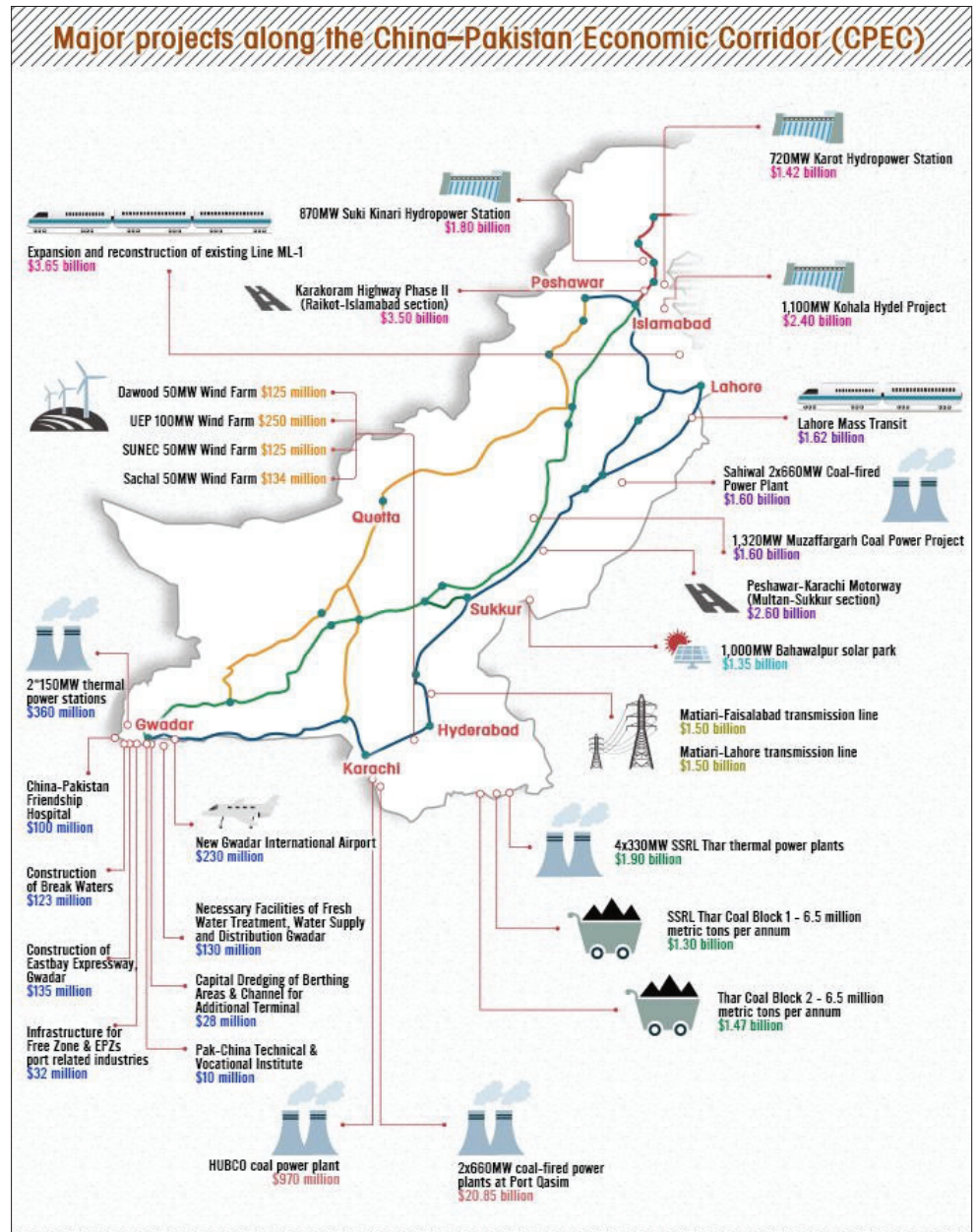
These are not disconnected issues. As Lyndon LaRouche has taught us, in order to be able to understand a specific strategic or economic problem, like when using Google Earth, you look for a certain area, but then you zoom out of that area and look at the whole globe. And then you look back into the history of the humankind, or at least the recent history of humankind, and then you look into the future: Where do you want to go? Where should we be going? And in that sense, all these three or four elements, you have to keep them all in one form in your mind when you discuss these specific issues.

I joined the Schiller Institute and I've been an associate of Lyndon LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche for 25 years. My fascination with the New Silk Road started already in 1995-96, when the *Executive Intelligence Review*, which I started working for then, published the first ever comprehensive study of the New Silk Road. People popularly call it the New Silk Road; Lyndon LaRouche called it the Eurasian Land-Bridge, to connect Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Since then, I have been obsessed with the idea of building the New Silk Road. Working with the Schiller Institute in my

region of West Asia and Africa, I have worked with governments, organizations, and experts discussing these great design projects as a means to have peace through economic development.

We have produced several reports, the first published by EIR called *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*, I translated into Arabic. In 2017, the Schiller Institute published the special report *Extending the New Silk Road to West Asia and Africa: A Vision of an Economic Renaissance*, co-authored by Jason and myself.



Chongyang Institute of Renmin University and Caijing Magazine

FIGURE 1

Six Belt and Road Transportation Corridors



BRIX

We aren't looking at West Asia or Africa, or any part of the world as separate. This is the vision Lyndon LaRouche and his associates and experts, like Hal Cooper, who passed away this year, had, of bringing all nations together around a unique, uniting concept: economic development, prosperity, scientific-technological progress, and cultural dialogue. This is the essence of what people call the "New Silk Road." (See **Figure 1**.) When Chinese President Xi Jinping first presented the Belt and Road to the public, he called it the Economic Belt of the New Silk Road. He did not say the "trade route" of the New Silk Road, because people are fixated on the question of trade along the Silk Road, whether it's the land Silk Road, "the Belt," or the Maritime Silk Road on the sea, which is called, "the Road."

Yes, trade will benefit greatly from the building of this infrastructure, but what is important is the economic development it will generate. LaRouche said that all the transport lines you see in our publications extending across the continents should be considered as development corridors, which are 100-150 km wide with railway, highways, water canals, and oil and gas pipelines; and then you have power lines, you build industrial, agro-industrial centers and urban centers around them, so the human and raw materials of large sections of the planet that are, for example, landlocked, they will come to fruition, they will be utilized for the

benefit of all nations.

So this is the idea which we have been developing.

One of the best representations of the development corridor concept is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor or [CPEC](#). It is not one road that brings goods from China to the Arabian Sea. It is a complete development corridor, with highways, railways, water dams, power plants, agricultural projects, industrial projects, and so on and so forth. So, Pakistan's economic potential and productivity is raised, while China can benefit from that, both by employing its companies, and also opening a trade route to the rest of the world. It's strategically important.

The region where I have been most active in promoting LaRouche's ideas, including the idea of joining the New Silk Road, is what is called the Middle East. Really, it is called West Asia; there is nothing called the Middle East, except in the media. And also in parts of Africa.

Iraq, my native country, is a strategic crossroads. In recent months, joining the New Silk Road and working with China, has become a major issue.

The problem was that people had little knowledge about the Silk Road, in general, what it is, and how China works in implementing that project with nations around the world. So in that sense, we in the Schiller Institute have been 20 years ahead of everyone, in

FIGURE 2
The Five Seas Region



Source: Project Phoenix—Aleppo: The Eternal City

Syria is the crossroads for the continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa in the World Land-Bridge.

studying, defining and advising countries, and explaining it for people. The Maritime Silk Road not only goes to the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean, but reaches into the Persian Gulf, which is one of the most important trade areas with China and East Asia because of the oil and gas. Almost 80-90% of oil and gas produced in the Gulf, which is 40% of the global total oil and gas trade, goes to East Asia. It does not go to the United States and Europe as some people think. Mostly, China, Japan, South Korea, India and so on.

What is fascinating in this sense, is that it can reach Iraq in the city of Basra and then, from there, join the

Economic Belt of the Silk Road, the land-based economic belt, and extend that into the Mediterranean.

Matthew and I and others have worked on the reconstruction of Syria. See **Figure 2**, the Five Seas map. This concept of the Five Seas—the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea surrounding the area—can also become corridors for trade among Asia, Africa, and Europe. Iraq and Syria, and Iran and Turkey, are positioned to be a hub for this. And as you can see in Figure 2, we extended this concept from Basra in southern Iraq, along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to Syria and then to the Mediterranean.

A big fight has been going on in an area in southern Iraq: It's called the Al Faw Peninsula, which has become a battleground for the whole global New Silk Road strategy, or the New Paradigm. The Al Faw Peninsula is Iraq's only outlet to the oceans. Squeezed between Iran and Kuwait, it is an accumulation of sedimentary silt, brought by the rivers to the Gulf. This area is historically Iraq. When the British created the borders between Iraq and Kuwait, a British colony, they made the Kuwaiti border reach all the way to Um Qasr, the red dot on the west of the map, shown in **Figure 3**, Iraq's only major port. You can see what this does to Iraq: It makes it a landlocked country, and this has been a strategic problem for many Iraqi governments historically.

FIGURE 3
Satellite View of Al Faw Peninsula



CC/UNEP

FIGURE 4
Al Faw Grand Port



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An artist's rendition of Al Faw Grand Port.

So, the idea was to build a major port in the southern tip of the Al Faw Peninsula. This has been an old project, but due to all the wars, the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88), the First Gulf War (1990-1991), then the invasion of Iraq (2003), until now, that has been almost impossible. Al Faw is also emotionally very important for Iraqis, because in the last years of the Iran-Iraq War, tens of thousands of Iraqi young men died in trench warfare with Iran, to keep control of this peninsula. It was a completely meaningless war, but that was part of a global strategy, which the Iraqi leadership foolishly adhered to.

Figure 4 is an artist's depiction of a satellite view of how port Al Faw will look. The idea is to build a deep-water port to global standards, to allow major container ships to dock and unload their containers and products, and use Iraq as a corridor for trade; but also this is important for Iraq's own development.

The invasion of Iraq brought an economic disaster; there was pressure on the Iraqi government to start implementing this project. But due to turning Iraq into a complete rentier economy, after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the Bush-Cheney and British alliance, Iraq was only selling oil and buying 95% of all its needs from abroad. So Iraq was not producing food, not producing any industrial goods, or anything else. Everything was bought by oil money. That arrangement of course, is not sustainable.

So there was a necessity to build this port. The government had a capital budget for investment, so they started with certain small projects, for example building the breakwater, these two long arms you see in the picture. The eastern one to the right was built by a Greek company; the western one was built by the Korean company, Daewoo. These countries are allies with the United States in its geopolitical constellation. The project never materialized. Last month, the manager of the Korean company committed suicide, because the Iraqi government never had money to finance the port itself! We don't know what his reasons were, but the whole project has become a disaster, and this whole area is just simply sand at the moment.

In this context, it is very important that certain things happen now to revive the project, which I will come to later, and to make this part of an effort to turn Iraq into a pivot in the whole east-west/north-south Silk Road routes. Doing that will enhance the global image of the New Silk Road, positioning Iraq in the larger picture, but also saving the Iraqi economy and giving the

Iraqi people a decent living standard.

After many, many years—since 1991—Iraq has been subject to horrible sanctions after the First Gulf War; but after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Iraq was almost destroyed. All the infrastructure in Iraq was destroyed and we have two generations who have not had any real education. We don't have agriculture, we don't have industry, and even electricity is not restored—imagine that after 17 years of U.S.-British control of Iraq, we don't even have enough electricity in the country.

Iraq can become an important part in achieving peace in the world, by bringing the major powers together to work for a good cause.

Ogden: That this must succeed is profoundly in the interests of every nation on the planet, including the United States. This area is obviously the crossroads of civilization: This is the bridge between Asia, Europe, and Africa, and it's for that reason that it's been such a target for destabilization for so many generations.

The Eurasian Land-Bridge idea of Helga and Lyndon LaRouche was built on a philosophical axiomatic approach of how mankind can work together, which they called the “dialogue of civilizations,” in direct counter-distinction to the idea of a “clash of civilizations.” The “win-win” form of cooperation expressed by Xi Jinping is obviously in the interests of all nations. And the geopolitical outlook expressed by John Bolton and Mike Pompeo that China is an adversary, that this is a new Cold War, will only lead us down the road to further destruction and further perpetual war.

So, this port project on the Al Faw Peninsula is an extraordinarily important way out. As you just said, it's a crime. You told me at one point that it had been years since you had been back to Iraq, but it is still—whole areas of the country still have destroyed infrastructure and no electricity; when the neocons said “We're going to bomb you back to the stone age,” that really, literally, was what has happened to whole areas of the country.

In January, when I spoke with you last, we discussed the potential for a breakthrough on some of this China-Iraq collaboration and these credit mechanisms. It was very interesting that this is a very Hamiltonian kind of idea. At that point there *were* some breakthroughs that were happening—but, all of a sudden, there was a total destabilization of the country, what you had characterized as a “color revolution,” and the entire perspective

just disintegrated. And it's very encouraging that, with the new government and its new prime minister, that cooperation is now coming back to the forefront. I think it's the pressure of historical events which is making it clear that this is so necessary. Maybe you can tell us how it got derailed over the course of this preceding year.

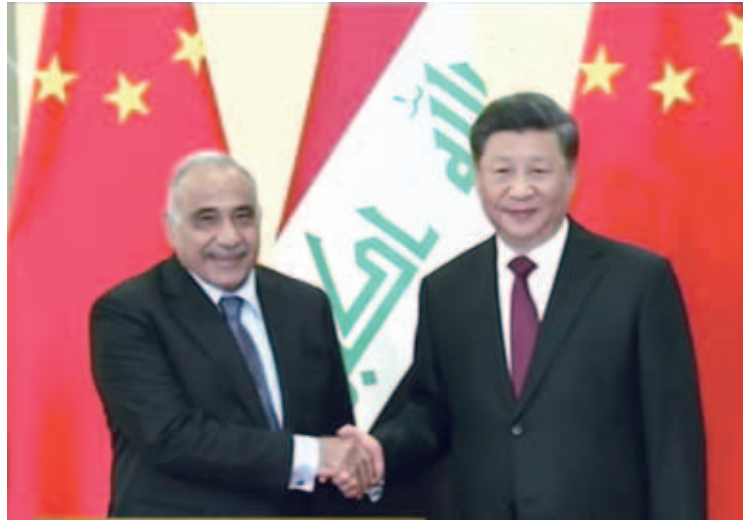
Askary: The Iraq War was a disaster for all parties. Since 2003, the United States has spent \$1 trillion on the war and the consequences of the war, from taxpayers' money. Forty billion of that money, which was allocated to the Defense Department, is not accounted for! Nobody knows where it disappeared to. Even the Congress has not been able to figure out where that money has gone. So there are all kinds of dirty operations.

Iraq itself spent \$1 trillion of oil money since then, without building a single real infrastructure project: that's really a tragedy. In 2015, Iraq and China signed the Belt and Road memorandum of understanding, during Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's government. And in May 2018, Iraq signed what is called now the "Oil for Reconstruction Agreement," which is a fantastic agreement based on what I and my colleague, *EIR* Economics Editor Paul Gallagher, describe as a Hamiltonian credit method, which I'll come to.

But this was not activated either! People in Iraq say there's pressure from other geopolitical parties, especially the United States, and probably the UK and other European countries, not to implement these agreements with China.

In September 2019 however, under enormous pressure due to the high unemployment, the social unrest, and poverty, the Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi, who had been in power for just one year, went to China with a huge delegation, and signed a number of memoranda of understanding, but also a special financial appendix to the Oil for Reconstruction Agreement, which then activated the agreement.

The Agreement creates a special reconstruction fund, using the money from 100,000 barrels per day of Iraqi oil, which Iraq already sells to China. Iraq sells 1 million barrels a day, almost, to China, but the Chinese side will take the money from 100,000 barrels and put it in a special reconstruction fund in a Chinese bank. When Iraq has accumulated \$1.5 billion in that fund, the China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation,



Haider al-Abadi, Prime Minister of Iraq, meeting with Xi Jinping, President of China. Beijing, September 23, 2019.

Sinosure, will add \$8.5 billion, bringing the fund's capital to \$10 billion.

Iraq does not have to have \$10 billion; it's enough to reach a critical mass of money into that account (\$1.5 billion), and then China adds the remaining 85% of the \$10 billion. The Chinese and Iraqi sides will discuss what kind of infrastructure projects will be built, including ports, railways, roads, schools, hospitals, housing, water management systems—and it's a full-set agreement, as I described with the Pakistan agreement. But in this sense, Iraq will be able to start the reconstruction process without even having money in the budget, so to speak.

It is not necessary to go through all the details here, since I have explained it in an *Executive Intelligence Review* [article](#), "A Solution Is Possible: Iran, Iraq and the World in this Moment of Crisis," in January. The Iraqi fund was activated in September 2019; in October the first money went into the fund. By January 2020, Iraq had already amassed \$1.5 billion in that fund, and the Chinese were supposed to add their \$8.5 billion and start the work.

As soon as Prime Minister Abdul-Mahdi returned from Beijing, due to the frustration in the Iraqi population with the economic and social conditions, especially among youth, we had massive demonstrations. Fueled by outside groups—everybody has theories about who financed them—the demonstrations went from peaceful into extremely violent in October-November and into December 2019. At that point, a third force came



Office of Ali Khamenei

Qasem Soleimani (left, and center of right photo), Iranian Major General in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, worked alongside U.S. forces to rid Iraq and Syria of ISIS.



Courtesy photo

into the situation, shooting demonstrators *and* police, which is a typical intelligence operation. Amid all this disturbance, on January 3, 2020, the United States decided to assassinate Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, who was in Iraq. Assassinated with Soleimani was Abu Mahdi al Muhandis, the head of the Iraqi “Shi’a militia,” the Popular Mobilization Forces.

The only thing we hear from the United States, is that Qasem Soleimani was leading the Quds Force, which was killing American soldiers. But what they leave out, is actually that, since ISIS had almost overrun Iraq, Soleimani, the Quds Force, the Shi’a militia, the Kurdish militia, and others, were working side by side with U.S. forces to free Iraq from ISIS. That part is left out.

The real story is that the assassination of Soleimani and al-Muhandis made it impossible for the sitting Iraqi government, which had signed the agreement with China, to stay in power. So that was the final nail in the coffin of that government. Adil Abdul-Mahdi had to resign. An interim government came into power, under Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, who is still the Prime Minister.

But the new government did not continue with the China agreement; it didn’t build infrastructure; it did not continue the policy of the previous government. And, with the COVID pandemic coming in and the collapse of the oil prices on which Iraq depends totally for supplying food and most simple things for the population,

Iraqi society has entered into a new spiral of despair. That was almost the end of the China-Iraq agreement.

Ogden: Over the last few days, you’ve been interviewed on some prominent media channels in Iraq and have participated in many useful dialogues there. People there are looking to you, not only for leadership, but have seen the policies you and the Schiller Institute have laid out, now being adopted, or potentially adopted by leading government forces.

What is the background to your involvement, and what have you been doing in terms of Iraq, the broader region, the presentation for the reconstruction of Syria, and elsewhere? And beyond this port deal, what are the broader development projects that can grow out of it, for the reconstruction and the development of Iraq as a whole?

Askary: I mentioned the Al Faw port project, because this had become the battle cry for Iraqi society. In September, I was contacted by a Facebook group created by young people in southern Iraq, mostly in the city of Basra, where the port was supposed to be built. That Facebook group has now grown to 270,000–280,000 members. They expressed to me their frustration with the government for not building the port, but also told me that there are all kinds of theories about how important this port is. The group is called “The Assembly of Iraqi Honorable Citizens for Building the Grand Faw

Project and Connecting It to the New Silk Road.” It rejects the rail connection to Kuwait and Iran—that’s another story, which I’m not going to go into.

They told me they really need somebody to explain the New Silk Road, and to explain how the China-Iraq agreement can play a role in both building the port and reviving the Iraqi economy.

So, I started giving classes almost twice a week on the New Silk Road, the Belt and Road, and how it started. But also on our background: the history of the Silk Road that was started by Lyndon and Helga Zepp-LaRouche. I displayed our reports, and I even made them available for free to those thousands of youth, and many more in Arab countries. I decided to put the Special Report I had translated into Arabic on the Silk Road, on the Arabic-language LaRouche School of Physical Economics [website](#), so people can download it for free.

Many people have told me that my classes offer “the most scientific and objective view of the whole story” about the New Silk Road and the port and why it’s important for Iraq’s reconstruction; I have also managed to provide a clear picture of what the agreement with China means, and why this idea of a credit system, rather than a monetary system is key in this whole process.

These lessons, which I have on my YouTube [channel](#) or the LaRouche School YouTube channel, started spreading in the [social media](#) around the country, to the extent that people among my relatives started contacting me, saying “We have seen you somewhere on the social media.”

Enormous pressure has been building up, and new groups have come into being propelling me into the realm of the “big” media in Iraq, which is the satellite channel. I was interviewed just last week by two popular Iraqi channels. They just say, “Look, we want you to explain for us this New Silk Road and the Oil for Reconstruction Agreement, because it was a confidential agreement that the Iraqi government really failed to explain its importance to the Iraqi people, and that’s why the government was overthrown.”

I happen to have insight into that agreement. Be-



CC/Mustafa Nader Mondalawy

Iraqi flags began to fill Baghdad’s Tahrir Square at the beginning of the massive demonstrations, in October 2019.

cause of my involvement in this entire period, I could explain in detail why this agreement is so important, especially the credit aspect of it, and what kind of projects should be built. I was also able to explain to the Iraqi people, from these popular TV channels, not only the Silk Road, but also Lyndon LaRouche’s concept of the development corridor. I think it was the first time that the Iraqi people had ever heard the name “Alexander Hamilton.” I explained for them how this concept emerged from the work of Alexander Hamilton, the first Treasury Secretary of the United States, and how the United States had used this historically, that Franklin Roosevelt used a similar method, and so on. And I compared it to the Chinese agreement.

My presentations created shockwaves throughout the country. People who otherwise had had a sense that this was a positive thing, now have a scientific, economic argument to present to the parliament and to the government. I was even contacted by Members of Parliament in Iraq, who told me that there is a big discussion inside the Parliament about the China-Iraq Agreement. They are frustrated with the government for not activating it; pressure is building.

Two days ago, the people in power started to notice that this is turning into a popular movement. People started organizing small demonstrations and gatherings, especially the tribal forces in Iraq, who got much more power when the structure of the Iraqi state dissolved. People have reorganized themselves in tribal structures.

It's not optimal, it's not a good idea, but that's the only thing the citizens can refer to—their tribe, their sect, and so on. So we had these manifestations of people coming out with Iraqi and Chinese flags and signs saying, “The government has to reactivate the China-Iraq Agreement.”

The government has sensed there might be a new revolt brewing under the surface, and the pressure in the parliament is growing, so they have taken notice.

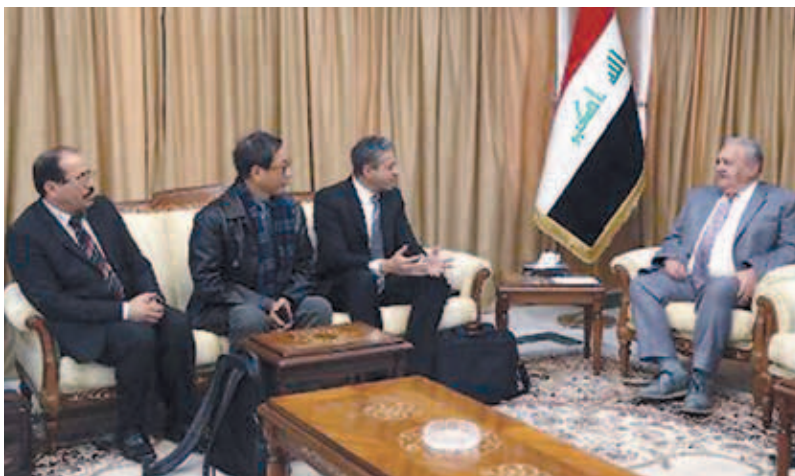
Last week, something very special happened. The Iraqi Parliament voted to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). This is very, very, very late, because all the countries in the region have already joined. World-wide, 103 countries have joined the AIIB; only Iraq in the region was not in. So as a sign of this pressure, the Iraqi Parliament voted to join the AIIB.

Two days ago, Al-Kadhimi tweeted that there is no alternative to the Chinese agreement. Khalid Najim, the Iraqi Minister of Planning, has now declared in a TV interview that over the next few days, we will see the activation of the China-Iraq Agreement, and we will have discussions with Chinese agencies and companies on the projects that should be planned.

Now, I know personally from my engagement in Iraq, and also from previous times with my consulting company, that there are very active discussions with both Chinese and international companies to relaunch the Faw port agreement. The Iraqi Transport Ministry wants all nations to come and discuss this, and make bids on building the port—so American, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, German, all kinds of companies, are invited to discuss and present their bids on how they see the most effective way of building the port, but also other, auxiliary projects.

The Iraqi government—and also this was my

advice to the Iraqi government—is not going East or going West. They have to be open to everyone. The United States' role in Iraq is very, very important for good and for bad. It has been bad so far, but they can get the American policy to shift into a positive direction by calling on the United States to collaborate with China to make sure that these projects are built, because this is the only way Iraq can be stable, and that terrorism will not emerge again. This is my advice in all my presentations and even my TV interviews, because people throw shit at the United States—which you can understand: the United States role in Iraq has been destructive!—but even though that is the general sense, I tell people, “Look, we can't solve the problem by creating a new unipolar world, because that would lead us to world war. We need to become an example of a nation



Courtesy of Hussein Askary

Askary meets with Iraq's Minister of Water Resources. From right, Dr. Jamal Al-Adeli (Minister of Water Resources of Iraq), Hussein Askary (CEO of Swedhydro and Schiller Institute member), Professor Cai Mantang (scientific advisor of Elion Resources Group, China), and Dr. Nihad Mutlag (professor of biology and environmental science at Koufa University, Iraq).



Courtesy of Hussein Askary

Askary meets with Iraq's Deputy Agriculture Minister. At right, Deputy Agriculture Minister Dr. Mahdi Al-Qaisi and senior ministry advisors. From left: Hussein Askary, Professor Cai, and Dr. Mutlag.

where both East and West get together and work together.”

Is the United States going to do that, are the British going to do that? That will be proven from the kind of offers they make to the Iraqi government to build infrastructure, build agriculture—so whoever comes with a good offer to Iraq, they should take it, and they should be open to everyone, not only to China.

Ross: This is something that should be open to everybody. A lot of times, these finance-type discussions turn into situations of the Chinese approach versus the World Bank or the United States. Although that is sort of the way things stand right now, it shouldn't be. Take the continent of Africa for example. Comparing the investment in that continent by let's say, the British, or the Americans, or Europeans generally, with the investments made by China: The Chinese investments are much more in infrastructure and manufacturing, and the West in mining.

Does that mean that China is the only useful investor in Africa? No. Does it mean that African countries like the fact that many times the best data are Chinese, and that China is becoming in some ways the go-to contractor for rail and other projects? Well, they'd like to have choices. And there's plenty of good that the United States can contribute through engineering and project management and other things. There's a lot of capabilities there.

It's unfortunately a terrible and local decision by the trans-Atlantic countries and power structures to refrain from engaging in useful and productive ventures. China sees opportunity in Southwest Asia, in Africa, and it takes those opportunities. It's building markets, it's developing its skills at being an international contractor and setting up businesses overseas. Chinese businesses are getting a lot of experience out of this. It's a good thing for them; it's a good thing for countries that they're investing in. Everybody benefits from these kinds of *productive* investments and projects.

Consider the incredible attacks against Donald Trump in the United States. Even when he was candidate Trump, he had a couple of very simple messages that, in particular, got people angry: “A good relationship with Russia is a good thing, not a bad thing.” And, “A good relationship with China is a good thing, not a bad thing.” Against his presidency there has been a nonstop onslaught of years of attacks, of the bogus Rus-

siagate hoax, and of attempts to put him in an anti-China position. Unfortunately, with the coronavirus, the anti-China pressure has succeeded to a certain degree.

With the danger of military conflicts escalating, and the withholding of financing for infrastructure development, it really all comes together: “What direction will the world take?” As the British financial empire—which still exists—made very clear in this multi-day, virtual “Green Horizon Summit” for green finance festivities, its vision is of a world of green debt, of financialization of the economy.

There's so much growth to achieve in the world; there are so many projects that are going to be physically productive; there are so many new technologies to implement to improve the productive powers of labor for people in areas all around the world, that neglecting to take these opportunities will be both stupid and deadly.

My vision for the world is not one where people of good will end up taking China's side against the U.S. when it comes to productive projects, but one where China, the United States, Russia, India, other major players are more on the same page as cooperating partners—also competitors—but from a standpoint of increasing investment in productivity and the immense benefits that that will bring.

Askary: You mentioned the case of Africa. I think there are two questions here in the fight for the policies of the major powers. First, What is the policy? And second, To whose benefit is it? China is not the biggest investor in Africa. It's the United States, Britain, and France. But, if you analyze what these countries invest in, the United States, Britain, and France invest *solely in extraction*. Extracting raw materials from Africa! And in financial services.

The African economies are not involved in any of the supply chains of the oil, the metals, and so on which are extracted from Africa. Who is benefitting from that? It's not the American, or French, or British people—it's the City of London and the major conglomerates. I saw recently that 50 British companies listed on the London Stock Exchange in the City of London, own \$1 trillion in raw material deposits in Africa. These are just a few companies, but they control the raw materials of Africa!

China also has investments in oil, metals, every-

where in the world. But they balance the payment by giving Africans infrastructure, so the African economies can start becoming part of the supply chain, and can improve the living conditions of their populations. They can use part of these raw materials inside their countries, to improve living conditions, but also become producers for the world. Some countries are starting to become like that. For example, Ethiopia and Egypt produce things in China-built factories for other African countries and for Europe. That's the difference in the two attitudes toward investment.

When Obama became President, Susan Rice, who Joe Biden said might be his next Secretary of State—hopefully not!—played a key role in destroying Libya and Syria, and creating havoc in other African states. She met with African ambassadors when Obama became President and made this famous statement: "We do not do infrastructure." Under Obama, the U.S. Export-Import Bank, which is supposed to lend money to American companies working in Africa (among other places), was shut down, in principle; so it stopped financing. There was no investment of the EXIM Bank into Africa under Obama. The Congress also played a role—because they are not interested in that!

Obama himself went to South Africa a few months after Xi Jinping had been there. Xi Jinping told African leaders, "Africa is perfectly positioned to become industrial powers, as we became. You have all the potential to become industrial powers." What did Obama tell the African youth? He said: "Here in Africa, if everybody is raising living standards to the point where everybody has got a car and everybody has got air conditioning, and everybody has got a big house, well, the planet will boil over." So forget about development.

That's the difference in the attitude, which is the problem no matter who is in power. This has to be resolved, because nations now are taking power into their own hands. They see the difference between the two models. They might start nationalizing British, French, and American projects in Africa, oil and gas companies, because they are not benefitting their people.

Djibouti, which is a tiny country in Africa, but very strategically positioned, hosts military bases of *seven* world powers—so they could overthrow the government any day. Just recently, Djibouti decided suddenly to repossess the major container port then under contract with Dubai World Port, a huge international conglomerate, run by the British, but it's registered in Dubai, and with Arab money. The Djibouti government

told them, "Look, you cannot have this port for 25 years. You signed an agreement with a corrupt government before. We are taking it away from you." So, Dubai World Port went to London to an arbitration court, and the British arbitration court ruled against the Djibouti government: "You have to return the port to Dubai World Port." What did Djibouti say to the British court? "You can take that decision and shove it—wherever you want. This is our port; you are out of here."

So this tiny country, Djibouti, can decide that the British Empire and its Arab allies are not important! They are saying, in effect, "Our sovereignty is more important, because we have a responsibility to our people, not to the City of London. And if we don't do that, our people will rise up against us."

This is also what's going on in Iraq, now. The best choice for them is to say, "We're a sovereign nation: We decide to take over our economy, we decide our economic policy, and we are open to working with everyone."

Ogden: Thank you so much, Hussein. Going all the way back to Lyndon LaRouche's idea behind the Oasis Plan—the economic development program for peace between Israel and Palestine—LaRouche's thinking was always from the perspective that development is the new name for peace. The 20th century was dominated by world wars and endless wars, and Lyndon LaRouche's intervention was always from the standpoint that sustainable peace can only be achieved through shared economic development. I think that's what you're expressing here, with this program. That obviously is also the perspective behind the win-win paradigm of the World Land-Bridge, and the stakes couldn't be higher.

As Jason said, we're in the midst of an all-out battle for the soul of the United States, and for the future of U.S. policy right now. The American people would do well to see this approach as being in the interest of our nation, of the entire world. It really is the road out of the hell that has been created from decades of endless war and the prevention of economic development and access to progress and creativity for all people.

It's very good news that Alexander Hamilton's policies are now being introduced to more nations and more peoples. The world will surely be a better place when we can achieve Hamiltonian economics for the entire globe.

Thank you both very much for joining me. I'm honored to be able to share this broadcast with you, and I look forward to speaking with you soon.