



From the Ashes of Notre Dame de Paris

Yesterday the world witnessed, dumbstruck, the terrible fire which destroyed significant portions of the Notre Dame de Paris Cathedral, one of humanity's great cultural treasures. The occasion unleashed an unformed sentiment of deep loss across the planet, a sense based on the universal character of Mankind which transcends all secondary differences of space and time.

Its import was best captured by Jacques Cheminade, former French presidential candidate and long-time friend and associate of the American statesman Lyndon LaRouche, who stated:

"I just learned about the fire at the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris. I want to express here the emotion that we all feel, friends and political allies; an emotion all the stronger because we just concluded our seminar at Autun, home to the St. Lazarus cathedral, the older sister of Notre Dame de Paris. Our cathedrals, centers of education for all, inspired the industrial and agricultural revolutions of the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. Through them the connection between soul and matter which always brings about a superior good for humanity, becomes manifest.

"That in the 21st century, in France, in Paris, such an accident has been possible, overwhelms me. It is time to pull ourselves together in all areas of human activity, because we cannot remain inactive in those areas where humanity is at stake, and where human beings create objects so beautiful that they must be there forever, and for all of us sources of joy."

The response to the loss of Notre Dame is nearly identical to the sentiment which rises up, albeit in a more positive form, with the breathtaking news last week of the proof of the existence of a black hole at the center of a galaxy 53.5 million light years away, and very possibly at the center of each of the 2 trillion galaxies currently known to exist. Equally breathtaking is the way the discovery was made, using eight telescopes spread around the globe, which together—only together—created a "telescope" with an aperture barely large enough to detect and image the process which Einstein's General Theory of Relativity had assured us had to exist.

As Helga Zepp-LaRouche commented: "First of all, it's a wonderful example that, in order to

resolve such really fundamental questions of our universe, you need international cooperation, because this kind of imaging would never have been possible with one nation having a telescope all by itself; but they had to use eight, and even among them, they could not cover the entire spectrum, so what they did is to basically have algorithms, calculating the space in between them and therefore forming a hypothesis.... The dimension of these questions is so big that it demonstrates that if we, as the one humanity, on the little blue planet, want to get a better reading of what kind of universe we inhabit ... it makes very clear that this international space cooperation is a foretaste of the kind of collaboration for the future of humanity."

Contemplating these matters, one feels simultaneously very small—barely a speck in the created physical universe—and at the same time very large—possessing a creative capacity to contemplate, fathom, and eventually discover the universal physical principles behind such immense processes in the universe. As Friedrich Schiller wrote in his "Aesthetical Estimation of Magnitude":

"Reason insists, in accordance with its necessary laws, upon absolute totality of perception, and without letting itself be rebuffed by the necessary limitation of the power of imagination, the mind requires from it a complete summation of all the parts of a given quantum in one simultaneous mental image. The power of imagination is thus compelled to exhaust the entire scope of its comprehensive capacities, but because it nevertheless does not complete this task to the end, and, all exertions notwithstanding, cannot extend its scope, the power of imagination sinks back into itself exhausted, and sensuous man experiences with painful disquiet his limitations.

"But is it an external force, which gives him this experience of his limitations? Is it the fault of the measureless ocean, or the infinite star-sown heaven, that I become self-conscious of my impotence while representing their greatness? Whence, in that event, do I know, that their greatness exceeds the reach of my representation, and that I can obtain no totality of their image? Do I, indeed, know of these objects, that they are supposed to constitute

a totality of a mental image?—I could only know this by virtue of my mental image of them, and in no other way, and yet it is presupposed, that I cannot imagine them as a totality. They are thus not presented to me as a totality, and I myself am the very one, who first put the concept of totality into them. I thus already have this idea in me, and I myself, the thinking being, am the very one, by which I, the being who makes representations of images of the intellect, am vanquished. In contemplating these great objects, I indeed experience my powerlessness, but I experience it through my strength. I am not vanquished by Nature, I am vanquished by mine own self."

And what does all of this have to do with the the state of the world, and solving the terrible crises we face today? Helga Zepp-LaRouche addressed the matter in a discussion with associates today:

"We have to take on this anti-China campaign very much from a sovereign standpoint, because the reality is that there could be no greater discrepancy between what China is actually doing, and the neocon-neoliberal attack on China. The argument that China is an 'authoritarian' model, comes from the same Frankfurt School/Hannah Arendt kind of perspective as the attacks on Lyndon LaRouche as an 'authoritarian personality.' It is important to understand that methodology.

"What is the reality about China? For 2,500 years they have had the Confucian ideal of a beautiful character as the aim of education in society. Xi Jinping is on the record saying that the aesthetical education of man is absolutely important, because the goal of it is a beautiful mind and a beautiful soul.

"That is in total contrast to the 'everything-goes' liberal philosophy of the British system—or the West in general, because you have the same on both sides of the Atlantic, albeit with different predicates: everything from the opioid epidemic to the violence in the schools to the effects of the addiction to digital devices, which leads to brain damage.

"The antidote against that, obviously, is it is more urgent than ever to foster the aesthetical education of Man. Because when Schiller wrote as a comment to the collapse of the French Revolution that a great moment had found a little people, and that the aesthetical education was the absolute only way to improve the political situation, he said that any

improvement in politics from now on can only occur through the aesthetical education. That means that you need great classical art and the confrontation with beauty in painting, literature, music, all kinds of forms of art. Because beauty belongs both to the senses but also to the realm of reason. The notion of beauty is derived in the classics from Reason, and not from the sense. But it also appeals to the senses, and therefore uplifts the person in a playful way, as Schiller describes in the *Aesthetical Letters*.

"There are Chinese scholars who have basically completely picked up on that in modern times.

"The older generation in the West looks at the condition of the youth and they see complete moral depravity. Youth no longer have judgment for history, for strategic issues—they don't even know what strategic means. They have been deprived of everything. They think that knowledge is Googling or something.

"If you ask older people what is the most pressing issue, what are you most worried about, many people say: the total collapse of morality in society. If you ask people what do you think is the most pressing issue, many times you get back as an answer not necessarily unemployment, the war danger, or anything like that, but just this collapse of moral values.

"We have to make sure that we answer that. And emphatically that involves both correcting the image of China in this way, but also posing the issue of the aesthetical education and why we have to have a cultural renaissance. And the space program makes clear that this is not only a necessity, but also an absolute possibility. Because if you want to have the next generations being space generations, you need to apply the extra-terrestrial imperative of the great German-American space scientist Krafft Ehrlicke, because in space you have to have a different kind of discipline. You have to organize your world in a rational way, or otherwise you won't survive in space. As Krafft Ehrlicke always said, what he liked about the Schiller Institute was that we have this idea that people have to become better people, and that morality has to be strengthened through the aesthetical process."

That is a mission which arises anew from the ashes of Notre Dame de Paris.