

Interview of Jim Rogers Speaks on the Korea-Japan Tunnel Project

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Question: Yesterday, you showed us a picture of your daughter. What is your family like?

The most important thing in my life right now are my children. I never wanted to have children. I thought children were a terrible waste of time, money and energy. I was never ever going to have children. I felt sorry for people who had children. Well, I was wrong. I was one hundred percent wrong. So now, my children are the single most important thing in my life.

Question: You've traveled around the world twice. When will you next travel around the world with your children?

Well, when this tunnel is built, I want to drive from Tokyo to London with my children. I hope my children are growing up to be adventuresome,

like I am... or was. So, I certainly hope that as soon as the tunnel is finished, I will be one of the first to drive from Tokyo to London.

Question: Yesterday, you inspected the site of the Korea-Japan Undersea Tunnel. How do you rate it as an investment target?

The projections are, apparently, that it can pay for itself, that it can be profitable. That's the most important consideration. You don't want to burden other people with debt. In English it's called "project finance." In other words, the project itself will pay for itself. That is a very good kind of investment. The Koreans don't want to have a lot of debt. The Japanese don't want to have a lot of debt. So with project finance, if it pays for itself, it's fabulous. It's great. That's the kind of investing you need to look for, especially with infrastructure.

Question: Do you think you could benefit from this project?

That's what the financial people who did studies show [that investors gain profits]. I have not done the studies myself. I know it's possible. Will it work? I don't know. The engineers say it is possible to do it. The geologists say it is possible to do it and the financial people say it is possible to do it. I have not done my own independent research on any of it, but the experts tell me it is possible.

Question: You said the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel is one of the most exciting projects, but...

For this part of the twenty-first century, absolutely putting a tunnel between Korea and Japan has to be very exciting. It opens up Japan. It opens up Korea more. It will bring the two countries closer together. It has got to be one of the best things happening right now.

Question: What might be the impact of the Korea-Japan Undersea Tunnel on Korea and Japan?

Of course, it will help a lot if all you have to do is get in your car and drive to the other country! That makes it very easy. Otherwise, you have to go to the airport, get a ticket and blah, blah, blah... If you can just say, Let's go for a drive and then drive, it will change lots of things, lots of people's mentality especially in the southern part of Japan and the southern part of Korea.

Question: Can this project revive Japanese society?

Of course, it will help a lot. A building project like this brings lots of jobs in the first place and once it's open it brings new opportunities for travel, tourism, commerce -- for everything. A project like this... These things don't come along very often in history. We've had them before -- in England with the tunnel between Dover and France. But these things don't happen very often. This is a huge project. It will change geography and it will change history. Geography does not change very often. This will change geography.

Question: High political barriers remain to realizing this project. How might we overcome them?

The most important thing, in my view, is to make sure people know that it is not going to cause debt. The Japanese right now have too much debt and many Japanese people know that. So you have to show them that it is not going to add to your life's burden or your children's burden in the future.

After that, you have to show the benefits for tourism, for commerce, for trade and for everything else. I don't know how you do that. I guess we could go back and see how the English and the French did it when they built their tunnel. Somehow, they convinced people it was good. So, first make sure people know that it is not going to cost them any money, it's not going to cost Japanese taxpayers; it's not going to cost Korean taxpayers. It is going to be a benefit in the end and they [the taxpayers] don't have to pay for it. The project will pay for it.



Jim Rogers with engineers and staff 540 meters below the earth's surface during his tour of the Korea–Japan undersea tunnel

I don't know why politicians are against it. That's what's confusing to me, because to me it is so clear that this is good for the world; this is good for both countries. I don't see why any politician would be against something like this. Maybe you should sit down and speak to them and ask, Why is this bad? Because I cannot see any reason that it is bad.

I guess the ports might say it is bad for the ports, but it brings so much extra business to the port of a different kind -- maybe not as many ships would go in and out of the port but it would bring lots more business of other kinds because more people and more transit can go through the port. Maybe it's not on boats, but it is an increased volume of traffic, so shopkeepers and other people would have much more business.

As far as making money, as far as projections, somebody can sit down and do the financial projections. I haven't. I'm too lazy, but somebody who is smarter than I am can do it. If you have good projections based on good [financial] principles, you should show that to the world. Then, usually, you can raise money in the markets, especially project finance, if you have good numbers and good principles.

Question: What would you estimate is the significance of the Korea–Japan undersea tunnel and the International Highway Project in the twenty-first century?

It has a lot to do with it [development in the twenty-first century], because now you bring Japan closer to Asia and more integrated into Asia. The thirty-eighth parallel is opening up, so this is going to open up Northeast Asia, especially those two countries [the two Koreas] that have been somewhat closed -- they bite each other sometimes. But two countries that have been somewhat closed will be much more open.

You know, people in London are going to drive to Tokyo, too. It's not going to be everybody coming from Asia to Europe. Many people from the rest of the world... Right now, it's impossible to drive from Tokyo to London. But with the thirty-eighth parallel coming down, China opening up, Russia opening up, you're going to see more and more people -- crazy people like me -- traveling to see these countries.

On September 16, 2019, Jim Rogers, the famous investor who has developed a keen interest in Korea and in some of True Parents' projects, visited the city of Karatsu in Saga Prefecture, Japan to learn about the Korea–Japan undersea tunnel project and to tour the beginning section of the tunnel, which already exists. What follows is an interview of him the following day during which he spoke of his impression of the project and its potential value.