

Fascism Wrapped in an American Flag

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March 10th, 1989

A Political Research Associates Briefing Paper

In Three Parts

Part One

Outside the Boston federal courthouse a photographer discretely snaps pictures of certain persons entering the building. In the echoing halls, private security guards whisper into tiny two-way radios. Those entering the second-floor courtroom pass through the gleaming arch of an electronic metal detector. When the main defendant leaves the courtroom, husky bodyguards surround him as he is hustled to a car waiting in the basement parking garage.

The scene is from the 1987 trial of perennial Presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. That trial, involving charges of credit card fraud and conspiracy to obstruct justice, was declared a mistrial due to numerous delays, but a later criminal indictment in Virginia saw LaRouche and several of his key followers convicted on charges involving illegally soliciting unsecured loans and tax code violations.

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. is frequently dismissed as a crank or political extremist with no further explanation of his views or the phenomenon he represents. In a democracy based on informed consent, to not understand the nature of the LaRouche phenomenon is a dangerously naive rejection of the lessons of history--because Lyndon LaRouche represents the most recent incarnation of the unique twentieth-century phenomenon known as totalitarian fascism. LaRouche is hardly the first proponent of these views, and he is unlikely to be the last. Therefore there is a deadly serious reason to study the rise and fall of Lyndon LaRouche, the man who brought us fascism wrapped in an American flag.

Who is Lyndon LaRouche?

LaRouche spent his formative years in the small industrial city of Lynn, Massachusetts as a Quaker, and the past fifteen years forging a fascist movement out of cadre originally drawn from idealistic Marxist college students. His name became more familiar to Americans in April of 1986 when two Illinois followers of LaRouche scored primary victories--garnering the official Democratic Party ballot slots for Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State. In repudiating the LaRouche candidates, the Democratic Party's candidate for Illinois governor, Adlai Stevenson, removed himself from the official ticket saying he could not in good conscience run on the same ticket with "neo-Nazis."

With increased media coverage of the LaRouche network's legal difficulties and clearly unusual political theories, most Americans probably think they already know all they need to know about Lyndon LaRouche. Yet the picture most people envision when they hear of the "LaRouchies" is a caricature of a complicated and troubling phenomenon which appears more sinister than comical when the details are sketched in with information emerging from court records, a careful reading of LaRouche's theoretical writings, and interviews with dozens of former members, most of whom prefer not to be quoted by name.

They have been called crooks, con artists, a cult, obsessed with conspiracy theories, a private intelligence army, anti-Semitic. Some critics have called LaRouche America's leading neo-fascist. A handful insist he is a neo-Nazi. They call themselves visionaries, nation-builders, walking in the footsteps of Lincoln, Hamiltonian Constitutionals, neo-Platonic thinkers. Supporters consider LaRouche to be one of the great minds of the Twentieth Century, and the world's leading economist.

Even his sharpest critics generally agree that Lyndon LaRouche himself is highly intelligent and well-read, with an astounding ability to garnish his conversation with historical references drawn from memory. And there is no doubt that LaRouche has built a multi-million dollar financial empire from a small publishing company and a software consulting firm programming Wang mainframe computers for the garment and trucking industries. The LaRouche network now runs publishing and information services linked worldwide by computerized electronic telecommunications systems. Estimates of the recent yearly gross income from the dozens of related front groups ranges from 10 to 30 million dollars, although several years of legal problems have apparently reduced that figure substantially.

Under different circumstance LaRouche might have ended up a mental derelict drifting the streets--a deranged ancient mariner pressing tracts crammed with conspiracies into the palms of startled passersby.

How did LaRouche take a handful of sincere Marxist student intellectuals and turn them into an international intelligence and publishing operation? How did a former pacifist Quaker end up sending his followers into the streets to beat up opponents? How did LaRouche become the guru of a group churning out conspiracy theories detailing a sinister plan by prominent Jews, Russian communists, and New Age Aquarians to manacle western culture with a new Dark Age? How can LaRouche claim to trace this conspiracy from Henry Kissinger and Walter Mondale back through history to the days of the Babylonian Empire? Why do the followers of someone so obviously deranged attract tens of thousands of votes in American election races? And why do most mainstream media outlets refuse to use terms such as "anti-Semite" and "small-time Hitler" when court actions have resulted in those terms being found not defamatory but "fair comment?"

Unravelling the Gordian Knot that is LaRouche is not difficult when you realize the multi-faceted nature of LaRouche and his organization. LaRouche is the Elmer Gantry of

American politics; mixing equal parts of cynical con and fanatic fervor. The terms to describe LaRouche can be gleaned from the pages of any political science textbook. LaRouche's political ideology is authoritarian. His view of history is paranoid. His economic theories are similar to Italian Fascism. His conspiratorial views are laced with racial and cultural bigotry and a large dose of anti-Jewish hysteria. His zealous stormtroopers are motivated by an internal organizational structure that is to politics what the blitzkrieg was to international diplomacy--that distinctive twentieth century phenomenon...the totalitarian movement. History teaches us that to ignore or dismiss such a person as an ineffectual crank can have devastating consequences.

The Long Road to Federal Court

As LaRouche's self image and paranoia grew so too did his appetite for expensive intelligence-gathering and high-tech security devices. His quest for Presidential power made him bold. The funds needed to maintain LaRouche's gargantuan self-image as the world's premiere political economist and spymaster apparently forced his followers to use questionable methods of obtaining cash.

The resulting over-zealous fundraising efforts are what caught the attention of a Boston federal grand jury some four years ago. In the fading days of his 1984 Presidential bid, when the cash-starved LaRouche organization was buying expensive commercial air-time, hundreds of persons found unauthorized credit card charges totalling tens of thousands of dollars paid to one of the many front groups operated by the LaRouche network. LaRouche says it all was a mistake. The grand jury thought otherwise, indicted several of his top lieutenants, and cited three of his related organizations. Law enforcement agents raided his Virginia corporate offices searching for documents to verify the allegations.

In the course of the probe, LaRouche loyalists are alleged to have destroyed evidence and sent key witnesses out of the country. When the grand jury indicted LaRouche on a charge of conspiring to obstruct justice, he blithely told the press the CIA had suggested that documents be shredded and witnesses made scarce.

Linda Ray, a former member of what she calls the "LaRouche Cult" says his followers may have been "the guinea pigs for pioneering the financial fraud in the late 1970's" when members with credit cards were persuaded to take out personal loans to finance LaRouche organizations. Former members say these internal loans were seldom properly repaid.

According to Ray, who has written of her experiences, she and other "LaRouchies" staffing LaRouche-controlled companies often did not receive paychecks; the money instead was used to keep the LaRouche global telecommunications network humming. "We were told that one of the top priorities for meeting expenses was maintaining a 24-hour communications link with the European central office," she recalls. Other former members report they were under intense pressure to meet daily financial quotas.

Former LaRouche loyalists, who often call themselves "defectors," say they were willing to make personal sacrifices and raise money using questionable methods because they were convinced they were part of a historic mission to save the world from an evil global conspiracy--a belief they now reject as an illusion. Intense peer pressure, manipulation of guilt feelings, attacks on their sexuality and fear are used to control LaRouche loyalists, say former members. The sum of the LaRouche organizational techniques equals the formula for the cult-like totalitarian movement defined by political scientist Hanna Arendt.

From Socialist to Totalitarian Fascist

After serving as a non-combatant in World War II, LaRouche flirted with the Communist Party, USA and then drifted into the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) where he spent much of the 1960's. After leaving the SWP, LaRouche became the political guru of the Labor Caucus of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) until SDS voted to expel them in 1969. LaRouche (using the name Lyn Marcus) then created the National Caucus of Labor Committees, which in 1972 had some 1,000 members nationwide.

But in 1973 NCLC underwent a drastic upheaval. LaRouche suddenly vowed to either destroy or establish his "political hegemony" over the American left. He began talking of the need for rapid industrialization to build the working class. He talked of a historic tactical alliance between revolutionaries, the working class and the forces of industrial capital against the forces of finance capital. He began developing an authoritarian world view with a glorification of historic mission, metaphysical commitment and physical confrontation. He told reporters that only he was capable of bringing revolution and socialism to the United States, and his speeches began to take on the tone and style of a demagogue.

In many ways LaRouche was adopting the same ideas and styles which took National Socialism, and turned it into part of the European fascist movement, and eventually played a key role in Hitler's rise to power in Nazi Germany. In fact, LaRouche was denounced as a neo-Nazi by U.S. Communists following a series of 1973 physical attacks on leftists. To be precise, NCLC members were likened to Hitler's violent Brownshirts.

What happened to cause this dramatic shift? Some say it was a dramatic incident in LaRouche's personal life. In 1972 LaRouche's common-law wife, Carol Schnitzer, left him for a young member of the London NCLC chapter named Christopher White, whom she eventually married. For LaRouche, it was a crushing blow. His first wife Janice had similarly walked out on him a decade earlier, taking with her the couple's young son.

This personal event apparently triggered LaRouche's political metamorphosis. LaRouche went into seclusion in Europe, and defectors tell of his suffering a possible nervous breakdown. In the spring of 1973, he returned. His previous conspiratorial inclinations had now grown into a bizarre tapestry weaving together classical conspiracy theories of the 19th century and post-Marxian economics. He began articulating a 'psycho-sexual' theory of political organizing.

Sexism and homophobia became central themes of

the organization's theories. A September 1973 editorial in the NCLC ideological journal *Campaigner* charged that "Concretely, all across the U.S.A., there are workers who are prepared to fight. They are held back, most immediately, by pressure from their wives. . . ." The problem with making the revolution, LaRouche apparently had concluded, was that women are castrating bitches. One former member left in disgust when she was told women's feelings of degradation in modern society could be traced to the physical placement of female sexual organs near the anus which caused women to confuse sex with excretion.

In an August 16, 1973 internal memo, "The Politics of Male Impotence," LaRouche told his followers:

"The principle source of impotence, both male and female, is the mother. . . .to the extent that my physical powers do not prevent me, I am now confident and capable of ending your political--and sexual-- impotence; the two are interconnected aspects of the same problem. . . . I am going to make you organizers--by taking your bedrooms away from you until you make the step to being effective organizers. What I shall do is to expose to you the cruel fact of your sexual impotence, male and female. . . .I shall destroy your sense of safety in the place to which you ordinarily imagine you can flee. I shall not pull you back from fleeing, but rather destroy the place to which you would attempt to flee."

In a cruel sense, LaRouche was true to his twisted words, those members who challenge the increasingly macabre political and social theories expounded by their leader were confronted by loyalists as politically and sexually inadequate traitors to the cause.

LaRouche also developed a fevered, comprehensive paranoid fantasy about the importance of his role in history--and a militant, new-found resolve to act upon it, wiping out all opposition to his leadership of the U.S. revolutionary movement. The result was Operation Mop-Up. Lyndon LaRouche took his sexual identity crisis into the streets.

Operation Mop-up raged from May to September of 1973. LaRouche's followers in NCLC were ordered to brutally assault rivals from the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). NCLC thugs used bats, chains, and martial arts weapons in a campaign to establish "hegemony" over the American revolutionary movement. There were many injuries and some persons required hospitalization.

"Our hearts were not in it," a former NCLC member says about his participation in Operation Mop-Up. "But with LaRouche it was all or nothing; the attacks were supposed to harden the membership." Forcing student intellectuals into violent confrontations was an exercise in self-degradation which cemented their loyalty to NCLC, ex-members say. Their working-class Marxism gave way to an unquestioning, cult-like devotion to LaRouche. "Most of us now find the whole thing was crazy," says a seven-year NCLC

veteran who left the group in the mid-1970's. Operation Mop-Up, however, was just the beginning.

LaRouche spent the summer and early fall of 1973 obsessed with his broken marriage, brooding over the humiliating betrayal, according to ex-members. Late in December, a revelation came; Christopher White, having already stolen his wife, had in addition been programmed by the KGB, with the aid of the MI5 division of British intelligence, to assassinate LaRouche himself--in retaliation for Mop-Up's assaults on pro-Soviet Communist groups! Further, the CIA--jealous of LaRouche's success in uncovering a previous NCLC victim of KGB brainwashing--had resolved either to kidnap LaRouche to extract his secret, or kill him itself to prevent his falling into Soviet hands.

Only LaRouche possessed the intelligence and perception to uncover and foil this fiendish plot, and not surprisingly, he alone held the keys for the cure--in White's case, days of isolation and intense pressure from a battery of LaRouche inquisitors. White finally caved in and confessed to his alleged "psychosexual brainwashing" by the KGB/CIA/MI5 conspirators. Based on tape-recordings offered by NCLC members as "proof," the *New York Times* later carried a harrowing account of this so-called "deprogramming" session. LaRouche's revenge was complete; White--who had taken his wife--had been reduced to a repentant, sobbing psychological wreck.

LaRouche lost no time in applying his cure. Any sign of restiveness or dissent on the part of NCLC members now became evidence of "brainwashing" by the KGB, the CIA, or both.

One young woman, attempting to quit what was rapidly becoming a totalitarian cult, was held prisoner in a New York apartment by six fellow members in an effort to "deprogram" her. She somehow managed to fold a plea for help into a paper airplane, sailing it out the window--where it was found by a passerby who called the police. Among the NCLC members arrested were Edward Spannaus, a national spokesman for LaRouche who faced trial in the failed Boston prosecution; and Khushro Gandhi, co-sponsor of Proposition 64, a LaRouche-sponsored California AIDS initiative defeated several years ago after an intensive public awareness campaign in which the initiative was widely-denounced as a witch hunt against the homosexual community. Other defendants in the Boston case were part of the NCLC deprogramming drive, according to former members.

On January 3, 1974, the day the six "deprogrammers" were arraigned, LaRouche gave a long, rambling and altogether extraordinary speech--later reprinted in his own *New Solidarity*> --laying out his theory of how sinister forces had secretly kidnapped and brainwashed his followers. According to LaRouche, the methods used by the KGB and British Intelligence to brainwash the membership of NCLC caused fear of impotence and homosexuality to immobilize each member and thus destroy their capability to organize effectively. LaRouche's pronouncements can easily be dismissed as a deranged conspiracy theory--but the words reveal his emotional and intellectual state at the time of the speech.

While perhaps offensive to some readers, only direct quotes can fully convey the incredible nature and content of LaRouche's demented discourse:

"How do you brainwash somebody? Well, first of all, you generally pull a psychological profile or develop one in a preliminary period. You find every vulnerability of that person from a psychoanalytic standpoint. Now the next thing you do is you build them up for fear in males and females of homosexuality, aim them for an anal identification with anal sex, their mouth is identified with fellatio. Their mouth is identified only with the penis--that kind of sex, and with woman. Womanhood is the fellatio of the male mouth in a man who has been brainwashed by the KGB; that is sucking penises. . . ."

"First they say your father was nothing, your father was a queer, your father was a woman. They play very strongly on homosexual fears. It doesn't work on women. . . .Most women are to a large degree homosexual in this society. The relationship between daughter and mother is homosexual, so the thing is not much of a threat."

"But to young men it is generally a grave threat. . . fears about masturbation. . . .They say, 'See that sheep. Wouldn't you like to do that to a sheep?'"

"It's not the pain that brainwashes, it's forcing the victim to run away from the pain by taking the bait of degrading himself. This persistent pattern of self-degradation, self-humiliation, is what essentially accomplishes the brainwashing."

"Any of you who say this is a hoax--you're cruds! You're subhuman! You're not serious. The human race is at stake. Either we win or there is no humanity. That's the way she's cut."

LaRouche was speaking of the brainwashing plot he believed was being initiated against his followers. In fact, according to former members, LaRouche and his closest aides used this belief to justify an internal campaign which was a "chain of psychological terror" as two members called it in their resignation letter. They charged the LaRouche-mandated sessions to cure their alleged "psychosis" were in fact an attempt to crush the will of "all individuals who have expressed political and intellectual opposition to the tendencies" surfacing inside the LaRouche organization. "What really happened," says a dismayed former member, "is that LaRouche had gone bonkers and was systematically brainwashing us to accept his total control over the organization."

Linda Ray says hundreds of persons left the LaRouche organization during this period. For Ray and others who remained, however, LaRouche's increasingly bizarre and bigoted theories were accepted without question to avoid being subjected to "de-programming" sessions.

A Tactical Alliance with the Reactionary Right

In 1974 LaRouche first began to seek contact with extremist and anti-Semitic right-wing groups and individuals in an effort to forge a tactical alliance in opposing imperialism and ruling class banking interests in general--and the Rockefellers in particular. LaRouche's obsession with conspiracy theories blossomed. Dovetailing with today's American radical Right and neo-fascist neo-populist ideologies, his theories of a Rockefeller-directed global conspiracy of banking interests found a receptive audience.

Yet the core followers of LaRouche still thought of themselves as Leftists forging a temporary and cynical tactical alliance with 'progressive' industrialists to help rebuild a strong economy. With a healthy economy leading to full employment for the working class, the LaRouche followers figured they could then lead the reconstituted working class to revolution. Defectors report that during this period they were required to study Marxist and Leninist tracts and participate in paramilitary training classes led by fellow members.

Having founded the U.S. Labor Party as the NCLC's electoral arm in 1973, LaRouche mounted his first presidential campaign under the USLP banner in 1976. His platform of "Impeach Rocky to prevent imminent nuclear war" garnered only 40,000 votes, but it afforded LaRouche more organizing opportunities on the far Right. Despite its declared Marxist stance, the NCLC stepped up efforts, with mixed success, to penetrate or co-opt such groups as the American Conservative Union, the John Birch Society, the Young Americans for Freedom, and the KKK.

Drawing upon his new contacts on the far Right (reportedly relying in part on Pennsylvania KKK leader Roy Frankhauser) LaRouche arranged with former CIA officer Mitchell WerBell III to provide the NCLC security force with armed self-defense training at WerBell's paramilitary camp in Powder Springs, Georgia. Now deceased, WerBell introduced LaRouche into wider right-wing circles including a shadowy netherworld of spys, mercenaries, and intelligence operatives.

It was during this period that NCLC began to collect and disseminate intelligence on progressive groups. LaRouche publications frequently report their security staffers offer intelligence to domestic and foreign government agencies. While documents released under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that U.S. government agencies frequently dismissed the material provided by the NCLC, it was provided nonetheless. Legal actions against some police agencies have discovered NCLC material in active files on terrorism and subversion.

As LaRouche's fear of persecution and assassination intensified he moved further and further into right-wing circles. His ideological theories were constantly being repackaged to appeal to his new-found friends. One shift in LaRouche's perception of who controlled the worldwide conspiracy came at the time of Nelson Rockefeller's death; an event which left a major hole in LaRouche's theoretical bulwark.

Ever alert to exploit shifting sentiment and historical opportunities, the U.S. Labor Party began to de-emphasise Rockefeller as the archenemy of civilization, replacing him with a worldwide conspiracy under the control of the "British Oligarchy" and their stooge. . .the Queen of England. A careful reading of USLP published material reveals, however, that a remarkable number of the British and other co-conspirators were Jews. It is this fact that prompted several major Jewish groups to denounce LaRouche's theories as anti-Semitic.

This turn toward a Jewish conspiracy theory of history came shortly after the quasi-Nazi Liberty Lobby began praising a 1976 USLP pamphlet titled *Carter and the International Party of Terrorism*. The pamphlet outlined the "Rockefeller-CIA-Carter axis," which was supposedly trying to "deindustrialize" the U.S. and provoke a war with the Soviet Union by 1978. (At this point LaRouche had not yet discarded his support for the Soviet Union, nor announced his support for "Star Wars" defense against his perceived threat of imminent Soviet attack.) In an overall favorable review of the USLP treatise on the Rockefeller-controlled global conspiracy, Liberty Lobby's newspaper, *Spotlight* complained that the report failed to mention any of the "major Zionist groups such as the notorious Anti-Defamation League" in its extensive list of government agencies, research groups, organizations and individuals controlled by the "Rockefeller-Carter-CIA" terrorism apparatus.

LaRouche, never one to miss a cue, soon was running articles in his newspaper *New Solidarity* with themes that betrayed increasingly bigoted view of Jews and Jewish institutions. By the end of 1976, LaRouche had completed his drift to the extremist-right of the political spectrum where his bigoted conspiracy theories linking international bankers, influential Jewish families, furtive KGB agents, and secret societies found fertile ground.

Soon LaRouche was expounding a view linking certain Jewish institutions and Zionist movements to a plot to destroy Western civilization and usher in a "New Dark Age." Linda Ray thinks that more recent LaRouche converts are not even aware of the group's real history, nor of the cult-like inner circle which controls the secret financial operations.

Opportunistic or not, LaRouche's erratic lurch to the right brought gains to the NCLC in membership and financial strength. Yet his right-wing theories and affiliations are still opaque to many observers who dismiss LaRouche on the basis of his cranky conspiratorial world view and general lunacy.

The Paranoid Style

LaRouche's parlaying of personal and political conspiracy theories into a multi-million dollar financial empire is unique, but paranoid political movements occur cyclically in American history. In his widely-quoted essay "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," professor Richard Hofstadter argues that in times of economic, social or political crisis, small conspiracy-minded groups suddenly gain a mass following. The anti-Catholic hysteria of the 1800's, the anti-immigrant movement which led to the Palmer Raids in 1919, the Red Scare of the 1950's and other societal convulsions, are examples, wrote Hofstadter.

Such movements rise and fall periodically, according to Hofstadter, appealing to people fearful about the world political and economic situation, and longing for simple solutions to complex problems. The use of scapegoats is common among these movements. The findings of two academics who studied a LaRouche campaign contributor list (available from the Federal Election Commission) lend support to the thesis that LaRouche appeals to a paranoid constituency. In a 1986 press release, "Who Controls Us: A Profile of Lyndon LaRouche's Campaign Contributors," John C. Green and James L. Guth of Furman University identify LaRouche as "a new celebrity on the extreme right."

"An analysis of his campaign contributors suggests that LaRouche should be taken seriously, not as a candidate, but as evidence of the failure--and success--American politics," wrote the professors.

According to the results of the study, among LaRouche's contributors are a significant proportion of Northern neo-populist conservatives, "profoundly uncomfortable with modern America and susceptible to conspiratorial explanations of their distress. One seemed to speak for the others when he listed his major concern as 'who really controls us?' To many of these alienated people, LaRouche's outlandish views offer a plausible answer to this question."

According to the study:

"Though LaRouche campaigns as a Democrat, most of his donors are independents, with the largest group 'leaning' Republican. but ordinary people as well, believing that no one can be trusted 'most of the time.' Very few say they are optimistic about their future or that of the country. They are equally disillusioned with politics, 40% report having become discouraged and ceased participating at some point. These attitudes extend to current political groups as well. Three-quarters feel 'far' from mainstream conservative organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. Roughly equal numbers feel 'close' and 'far' from more reactionary groups like the John Birch Society. Uniform dislike, however, is reserved for liberal advocates of change; the ACLU, Common Cause and Ralph Nader.

"LaRouche is most criticized for his political intolerance, a trait exhibited by his contributors. To measure tolerance, we asked all donors to name a group they regarded as 'dangerous' and then asked if they would allow a member of that group to run for president, speak in a public place or teach in public school. Only a quarter of the LaRouchians would allow a member of their 'dangerous' group to engage in all three activities and another quarter would allow none.

"LaRouche would probably approve of their choice of 'dangerous' groups: more than half of the mentions figure prominently in 'conspiracy' theories of politics, such as communists, drug dealers, Jews, bankers, intellectuals and the mass media. Some 'conspiracies' are explicitly named: the 'zionist-socialist movement,' the 'international drug ring,' 'cartel control of money' and the 'post-industrial counter-culture.' But other donors identify mainstream organizations and leaders as 'dangerous,' including the 'unilateral disarmament advocates,' 'eco-freaks,' 'Hayden and Fonda,' 'socialist Democrats' and 'big labor bosses.'

"These kinds of attitudes occur among other conservative activists, but rarely to this extent. And the LaRouchians differ from other conservatives in demographic terms as well. LaRouche's donors seem to be the remnant of the 'small town America' of a generation ago. Nearly three-quarters were born in the Midwest or Northeast and more than half still live there, outside the major cities. Most spent their adult life in one or two states; the only major move they have ever made was to retire to the Sunbelt. Two-thirds are 55 or older, male, of WASP or German extraction, and products of [nuclear two-parent] families. They are not, however, particularly religious; most belong to mainline Protestant denominations and few are active church members. "

The authors concluded, "it is alienated people who make fringe candidates possible. LaRouche should be taken seriously as a symptom of distress in a small part of the body politic. His limited appeal is a sign of the basic health of America politics."

One historian, author George Seldes, thinks LaRouche has followed another seldom travelled but clearly recognizable historic path--the road from Socialism through National Socialism to Fascism. Seldes has authored some ten books concerning authoritarianism and thinks LaRouche's theories and style represent classic "Mussolini-style fascist" ideology. Seldes' analysis carries weight especially since he wrote a biography of Mussolini in 1935 titled *Sawdust Caesar*.

Secret Agent LaRouche

In a sense LaRouche is a "Silicon Caesar" since he has risen to power through a sophisticated computerized telecommunications network which gathers political and economic intelligence and then packages it for dissemination through newsletters,

magazines, special reports and consulting services. Former Reagan advisor and National Security Council senior analyst, Dr. Norman Bailey, told NBC reporter Pat Lynch the LaRouche network was "one of the best private intelligence services in the world."

Not everyone shares the view. When Henry Kissinger was told of how LaRouche operatives met with high Reagan Administration officials in the early 1980's, he told the *New Republic*, "If this is true, it would be outrageous, stupid, and nearly unforgivable." Dennis King, co-author of the *New Republic* article which examined LaRouche's influence in scientific and intelligence circles, says during the first Reagan term LaRouche aides managed to gain "access to an alarming array of influential persons in government, law enforcement, scientific research and private industry." These ties form the basis of the LaRouche "CIA defense" against the charges he conspired to obstruct justice. LaRouche claims he believed his security aide Roy Frankhauser, a former Ku Klux Klan leader and government law enforcement informant, was a covert conduit to the CIA.

John Rees, an ultra-conservative whose *Information Digest* newsletter reports on political extremes on the left and right, says he "believes the *New Republic* story that LaRouche staffers had access to a lot of people." But he points out, "If you have all the electronic resources and information-gathering staff that LaRouche possesses you are bound to come up with occasional gems, that's what most people were interested in, not the LaRouche philosophy." Both King and Rees feel the Reagan Administration consciously began distancing itself from contacts with the LaRouche network following the *New Republic* and NBC stories.

Russ Bellant, a long-time LaRouche watcher from Detroit, notes that in the mid-1970's LaRouche simultaneously turned to the right and tried to link up with more respectable groups, including, for a brief period, several state Republican Party organizations. "Some tactical political alliances with various right-wing groups were made on the basis of LaRouche's scurrilous disruption campaigns against mutual enemies, especially liberal Democrats," says Bellant. In fact, LaRouche has consistently targetted the American left, and done so with material and moral support from small but significant elements in law enforcement, the Republican Party and the American far right. There is also evidence to suggest that the LaRouche organization maintained a cozy relationship with certain elements in U.S. and foreign intelligence, military and police agencies.

Bellant and other LaRouche-watchers feel the LaRouche network and its questionable finances and intelligence activities may have been overlooked by certain individuals in intelligence and law enforcement agencies. "These persons were focusing more on the information being churned up by LaRouche's intelligence-gathering apparatus," says Bellant.

LaRouche-related financial operations have run afoul of the law before, but by adopting an aggressive legal strategy his groups have been able to fend off successful prosecution for years until cases were dropped or settled by exhausted plaintiffs and prosecutors. One

Illinois case involving LaRouche-backed mayoral candidate Sheila Jones and LaRouche's Illinois Anti-Drug Coaliton has dragged on for over six years.

The 1986 Illinois primary victory by two LaRouche followers, however, raised the ante. "The visibility that came to LaRouche after the Illinois primary lent credibility to the investigations into his financial operations by bringing forward scores of persons who claimed to have been defrauded by LaRouche operations over the years," says Bellant. There are probably a variety of reasons why the ties between LaRouche and various government agencies and personalities were severed in the mid-1980's. Highly-publicized incidents such as the airport battle between LaRouchies and Henry Kissinger and his wife helped doom the LaRouche network's relationship with the Reagan Administration--their profile just became too visible for a continued relationship.

Principled conservatives challenged the Reagan Administration to justify its flirtation with an anti-Semitic group. Intelligence specialists questioned the wisdom of sharing thoughts with a group which historically worked both sides of the political fence separating allies from adversaries. Even Oliver North got into the act when his fundraisers and security specialists found LaRouche emissaries were getting underfoot.

LaRouche security expert Jeff Steinberg, who used to meet with National Security Council staffers at the Old Executive Office Building in the White House compound, spent much of 1988 in a Boston courtroom facing criminal charges. However it appears the criminal investigation which led to the current legal problems faced by LaRouche and his followers began before the controversy over his ties to the Reagan Administration had reached key decision-makers in government agencies. While there is some evidence of prosecutorial misconduct and civil liberties violations in the course of some of the federal investigations and prosecutions, the claim by LaRouche spokespersons that the indictments are part of a government conspiracy to silence LaRouche appear to be without foundation.

Political Puzzle?

Russ Bellant's articles on LaRouche have appeared in liberal Michigan weeklies and progressive publications, while John Rees tills the right side of the journalistic garden. But both agree LaRouche's ideology is now neither Marxist nor conservative. Rees, who for years has written for conservative, anti-communist, and New-Right publications (including several magazines published by the John Birch Society), thinks it is unfair ever to have called LaRouche a conservative simply because he has tried to woo that political block.

"He is emphatically not a conservative," says Rees, "he is a totalitarian extremist with a cult of personality to rival Joseph Stalin's." Rees concedes that LaRouche's politics are distorted and strange, saying "he is difficult to categorize--in a sense LaRouche is a remedial Fascist. At least Mussolini could make the trains run on time. I doubt LaRouche is capable of doing that." Rees claims that "when LaRouche was rejected by the totalitarian left, he simply tried the other side of the totalitarian spectrum." According to

Rees, ties between the LaRouche network and several racist and anti-Semitic groups are well-established. "Former LaRouche organizers report cooperation with elements of the Aryan Nations Network," adds Bellant who says the LaRouche network is a "neo-Nazi type of cult."

Racism and Anti-Jewish Rhetoric

LaRouche has many connections to the racist political right in this country. Richard Lobenthal, Midwest Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, observes that LaRouche security advisor Roy Frankhauser "has been identified as present with other white supremacists at meetings held at the farm of Pastor Bob Miles in Michigan." Leaders of the notoriously racist and anti-Semitic Aryan Nations have attended the same meetings. "Frankhauser's background and connections are myriad, he is obviously a LaRouchite, he is a professed racist and anti-Semite and was a close associate of neo-Nazi leader George Lincoln Rockwell," says Lobenthal.

LaRouche not only works in coalitions with bigots, he has also propounded ideas which are widely perceived to represent outright racism.

LaRouche, for instance, offended the Hispanic community in a November, 1973 essay (published in both English and Spanish) titled "The Male Impotence of the Puerto-Rican Socialist Party." An internal memo by LaRouche asked "Can we imagine anything more viciously sadistic than the Black Ghetto mother?" He described the majority of the Chinese people as "approximating the lower animal species" by manifesting a "paranoid personality. . . a parallel general form of fundamental distinction from actual human personalities."

LaRouche's use of hysterical Jewish conspiracy theories for ulterior political motives has lead him to be branded an anti-Semite by several major Jewish groups.

One ADL spokesperson, Irwin Suall, was once sued for defamation by LaRouche for calling him a "small time Hitler." The jury ruled against LaRouche. According to LaRouche, only a million and a half Jews perished in the concentration camps, and they died primarily from overwork, disease, and starvation. This denial of the Holocaust is coupled with pronouncements saying there is nothing left of Jewish culture except what couldn't be sold to Gentiles, or claiming British Jews brought Hitler into power.

While many of the ringleaders of the global conspiracy, according to the LaRouche philosophy, are Jewish, members of the LaRouche group rebut charges of anti-Semitism by pointing out that a number of them--including Janice Hart, former Democratic nominee for the Illinois Secretary of State--are Jewish. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which has successfully beat back several costly LaRouche lawsuits, rejects this explanation and insists the group is a paranoid, anti-Semitic political cult.

For his part, LaRouche claims to be merely anti-Zionist, not anti-Semitic. Jewish groups and political scientists acknowledge the important distinction, but LaRouche rhetoric--

such as leaflets distributed in California bearing the offensive headline "Smash the Kosher Nostra!" and naming a number of Jewish figures as part of a global conspiracy, leaves little doubt.

Since 1976, the NCLC's ties to anti-Semitic, ultra-right groups and individuals have been well documented. LaRouche associates have cultivated ties to Willis Carto, a notorious racist and anti-Semite who helped found Liberty Lobby and the pseudo-scholarly Institute for Historical Review. This latter group publishes "historical revisionist" literature deriding the Nazi Holocaust as a Jewish hoax.

Former staffers at both the Liberty Lobby and LaRouche's NCLC claim the two groups cooperated closely on several projects. In the March 2, 1981 issue of its newspaper *Spotlight*, Liberty Lobby cynically defended the relationship this way: "It is mystifying why so many anti-communists and `conservatives' oppose the USLP [U.S. Labor Party -- the NCLC's original electoral arm]. No group has done so much to confuse, disorient, and disunify the Left as they have. . .the USLP should be encouraged, as should all similar breakaway groups from the Left, for this is the only way that the Left can be weakened and broken."

Linda Ray, the outspoken former member of the LaRouche group, recently published a first-person account of her experiences in the Chicago-based national weekly *In These Times*. She recalls that after leaving the group, someone showed her a LaRouche organization pamphlet she had once sold on the street. "In it the Jewish symbol, the Star of David, was used as a centerpiece to point to six different aspects of the illegal drug trade. In this context, the Star of David was a symbol of evil." She was shocked when she realized she had not recognized this while still working with LaRouche.

"Many people find it difficult to understand how Jews--such as I--could have worked for an anti-Semitic group. Perhaps the answer is that the members get so hypnotized by the simplistic `good guys and bad guys' approach to history that they do not hear what LaRouche is really saying."

Ray recalls how LaRouche claimed the British were a different "subhuman species" and how his *Campaigner* magazine concocted the charge that the British created the Nazi movement."Since the blasts were overtly directed against the British, Jewish members often did not recognize the subliminal anti-Semitism of the attacks. LaRouche, like the Ku Klux Klan, Hitler and Goebbels, was attacking the Rothschilds and other British-Jewish banking interests. In the wake of these anti-Semitic writings, many of us were confused. But we continued to defend LaRouche by lamely saying, `We're not anti-Semitic. So many of our members are Jews. We always say in our publications that we are against the Nazis.'

"I remember reading in detail about the `subhuman species' concept. Although I knew it did not make scientific sense, I presumed that it was a deep intellectual metaphor that was over my head." When Ray left the group and finally came to grips with her role as a Jew

working in an anti-Semitic organization, she says "It was as if I was waking from a nightmare."

LaRouche's relationship with Blacks--including his own Black NCLC members--is similarly confusing and complex. While LaRouche's writings are replete with racist assertions extolling white Northern European values at the expense of other ethnic values, he has in some cases succeeded in forging alliances with rightist or opportunist black politicians and civil rights leaders, such as Roy Innis of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and Hulan Jack, a former Borough president and powerhouse in the New York

Democratic Party. Articles from LaRouche's *Executive Intelligence Review* have appeared in publications of Rev. Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam. At the same time they are recruiting Blacks, LaRouche publications praise the wisdom of the Botha government in South Africa, and attack those who protest the system of apartheid.

LaRouchian rhetoric can often offend numerous constituencies simultaneously. The July 7, 1986 issue of the *Illinois Tribunal*, an insert tucked into LaRouche's *New Solidarity* (now *New Federalist*) newspaper, covered the Ku Klux Klan counter rally against Chicago's annual Gay Pride parade by charging: "The idea behind the KKK outburst was--amid heavy media coverage of a mere two dozen Klan demonstrators--to make citizens think anyone who wants to take serious measures against AIDS is a cross-burner and a Nazi. . . . In fact, the Klan does not exist--except as a special dirty-tricks operation of the FBI and the B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League. "

The article went on to say the founders of B'nai B'rith were "about as Jewish as Josef Goebbels." When Illinois Congressman Sidney Yates faced LaRouche-backed challenger Sheila Jones, LaRouche supporters distributed leaflets titled "So, What's A Nice Jewish Boy Doing Supporting Sodomy?" Former Chicago mayor Jane Byrne was targeted in one mayoral race with a LaRouche candidate's campaign slogan of "Byrne the Witch."

In attacking political enemies, LaRouche propaganda often utilizes racist, anti-Jewish, sexist or homophobic stereotypes.

Defining the Terms

The LaRouche cult fits the description of a totalitarian movement as outlined by Hanna Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Totalitarianism is correctly defined by its all-encompassing style, structure and methods, not by its stated or apparent ideological premises or goals. Arendt wrote that not all fascist groups were necessarily totalitarian and not all totalitarian groups were necessarily fascist.

Is LaRouche a fascist? The goal of fascism is always raw power, and it will adopt or abandon any principle to obtain power. The chameleon-like nature of fascist theories is one of its hallmarks, and often leads to confusion as to whether it is on the political left or right as it opportunistically gobbles up popular slogans from existing movements.

Journalist James Ridgeway notes there are real contradictions in LaRouche's politics: "While it maintains contacts with far-right groups, LaRouche's organization is ideologically at cross-purposes with many which are nativist and anarchist. LaRouche is an internationalist and a totalitarian: he believes the masses are 'bestial' and unfit for citizenship."

Freelance journalist Nick Gallo takes us a step further. In *The Seattle Weekly* he acknowledges that much of what LaRouche espouses "appears kooky, if only because his ideas certainly defy conventional political analysis. . . .However go beyond the individual positions on different issues and beneath the surface lurk echoes of sinister themes that have been prevalent in the 20th century: preservation of Western Civilization, purity of culture and youth, elimination of Jewish and homosexual influence, suspicion of international banking conspiracies."

The opportunistic exploitation of anxiety-producing issues by LaRouchies is no surprise to Clara Fraser who knew LaRouche when he was in the Socialist Workers Party. Writing in the *Freedom Socialist* newspaper, she explains, "The pundits are intrigued and puzzled by his amalgam of right and left politics, a tangled web of KKK, Freudian, encounter therapy, Populist, Ayn Rand-like, and Marxist notions. They needn't be. His is the prototypical face of fascism, which is classically a hodgepodge of pseudo-theories crafted for mass appeal. . . ."

Themes generally associated with fascism frequently recur in LaRouche's writings. In the aggregate, LaRouche seems to like the idea of society with an authoritarian governing body, exercising social, political, economic, and cultural control, using force when necessary to maintain order and attain desired goals. Traditional democracy is contemptuously dismissed by LaRouche, who describes himself as a "traditional Democrat," as the "rule of irrationalist episodic majorities."

When LaRouche touts his followers as "neo-Platonic" theorists, most people aren't aware that in *The Republic*, Plato outlined his view of a political system in which only a handful of enlightened "Golden Souls" would be allowed to participate in societal decision-making. While this was certainly a step forward from imperial dictatorship and rule by fiat, it is hardly a step forward for a participatory democracy. LaRouche, incidently, has said his followers are "Golden Souls."

Combining fascism and totalitarianism makes for a potent mixture, but even a totalitarian fascist is not necessarily a Nazi--for that you must include a "Master Race" theory and roots in an ostensibly socialist agenda for empowering the working class. . movement and German Nazi movement. In German the word itself--NAZI--was an acronym for the National German Workers Socialist Party. Most socialists now are painfully aware of that error. LaRouche apparently repeated the error.

But can an organization which has Jews and Blacks as members be called Nazi? The LaRouche network's printed materials are full of ethnocentric, racist, and anti-Jewish rhetoric, but that doesn't necessarily make it Nazi. Where is LaRouche's theory of a

master race? In fact, LaRouche himself has repeatedly enunciated just such a theory, but in his typically convoluted way. In the mind of Lyndon LaRouche, personal or political opponents are not even human, Jerry Brown and Tom Hayden are "creatures;" the rest of us are merely "beasts" or "sheep."

According to Dennis King, it is LaRouche's belief that his enemies are subhuman and his followers superhuman which makes "LaRouche more than a political fascist, but a neo-Nazi." King, whose book on LaRouche is slated for publication in 1989, adds that "people afraid of that characterization should sit down and read his ideological writings. LaRouche talks about the existence of two parasitic species descended from Babylonian culture, the British-Jewish and Russian-Orthodox species, then there are the subhuman masses, then humanity represented by LaRouche and his followers, the Golden Souls, and then a new superhuman race which will evolve from the Golden Souls. It really is pure Nazism," says King.

And if that makes no rational sense; and if some of his followers are Jews and Blacks? "So what?" retorts King "LaRouche is a totalitarian, he can define anyone he wants to as being a member of the human race, and anyone he wants to as being a member of an inferior race, and he can change the definitions from week to week--who is going to argue with him?"

How Serious a Threat?

A surprisingly broad range of LaRouche's critics think his political movement should be taken very seriously.

Richard Lobenthal of ADL warns that the LaRouche organization "Obviously should not be dismissed lightly, they are more than just kooks. They are anti-Semitic extremists. His aspirations are to gain legitimacy and power through, amongst other ways, the electoral process. To snicker about LaRouche is to snicker about any bigot or extremist who would ascend to political office and then subvert that office for their own purposes," he says.

In California a LaRouche-backed referendum, Proposition 64, establishing restrictive public health policies regarding Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) demonstrates how the small LaRouche group there had a devastating effect when it found a fearful audience for its simplistic scapegoating theories.

Mark L. Madsen, a public health specialist for the California Medical Association says the LaRouche initiative, Proposition 64, was based on "absolute hysteria and calculated deception," but even though the initiative was soundly defeated "it has set back public health education efforts at least five years. The LaRouche people have almost wiped out all that we have done so far in educating the public about AIDS."

The LaRouche initiative "created an immeasurable medical problem far beyond AIDS victims," says Madsen. In California the number of regular blood donors went down 30%, and one health expert blames this directly on fear by blood donors of repercussions

from possibly being identified as carrying the AIDS virus. "This fear, whipped up substantially by the hysterical LaRouche theories about AIDS, led to critical shortages of blood in the state of California," says Madsen.

Leonard Zeskind of the Atlanta-based Center for Democratic Renewal helped build a coalition of Christian, Jewish, farm advocacy and civil rights groups to confront the spread of hate-mongering theories in the wake of the devastation of the rural economy throughout the farm belt. He calls the LaRouche ideology "Crank Fascism".

"The LaRouche organizers are not as active in the farm belt as they once were, but they are still there. For those farmers who may have bought into these bigoted snake-oil theories, the effect has been harmful," says Zeskind. "The LaRouche group "has also been very disruptive in the Black community where they exploit legitimate issues such as drug pushing and widespread unemployment. Those of us who have to deal with the victims of the LaRouche philosophy don't find it very humorous at all," says Zeskind.

Prexy Nesbitt, a consultant to the American Committee on Africa who has led campaigns calling for divestment in South Africa, agrees the LaRouche organization should be taken more seriously. "His people have deliberately made themselves an obstacle to our organizing and disrupted our activities," says Nesbitt. "The LaRouche people spied on anti-apartheid activists and South African exiles in Europe and then provided information to the South African government," charges Nesbitt. "This is a very dangerous and potentially deadly game," he says. "Critics of the South African Government have disappeared or been killed, their offices have been blown up," charges Nesbitt.

In 1981 the respected British magazine *New Scientist* ran an article titled "American Fanatics put Scientists' Lives at Risk." According to the article, LaRouche's *Executive Intelligence Review* had circulated a report naming a number of scientists working in the Middle East as being involved in an insurgent conspiracy against established governments. "In certain Middle East countries with hypersensitive governments," warned the magazine, "these allegations, however indirect, can easily lead to arrests, prison sentences and even executions."

Many conservative and New Right groups have also taken stands against LaRouche's brand of bigotry and opportunism. One staffer at the Heritage Foundation, a New Right think-tank based in Washington, D.C., called LaRouche an "intellectual Nazi" and a Heritage Foundation report warned of LaRouche's danger to national security as a reckless purveyor of private intelligence.

New Right military specialist, retired General Daniel O. Graham, says LaRouche followers have significantly hampered his work. Graham, Director of Project High Frontier which supports and helped develop President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative plan for anti-missile defense, says the LaRouche groups have "caused a lot of problems by adopting our issue in an effort to sieze credit for the idea." "They also mounted a furious attack on me personally," says Graham. "Even today I get mail asking if I'm in league with LaRouche," he adds wearily.

"LaRouche does not just represent some nut to simply backhand away. . .he's very clever, you have to go to great lengths to get around those people." He adds: "Look, these people are purely interested in power. LaRouche doesn't care about these issues one bit, it's just a way to raise money and consolidate his political base."

Jonathan Levine, the Chicago-based Midwest Regional Director of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) agrees that opportunism and exploitation of issues is a key factor with the LaRouche ideology. "Extremists have traditionally tried to piggyback on substantive issues to gain legitimacy for themselves. Never mind that the way the LaRouche candidates frame issues does not warrant serious discussion in a political campaign, but LaRouche may appeal to frustrated, apathetic voters nevertheless."

Bruce B. Decker, a lifelong Republican who has served on the staff of President Gerald Ford and on an AIDS advisory panel appointed by California Governor George Deukmejian, thinks the response to LaRouche's bigoted theories should cut across traditional party politics and electoral constituencies. He lists the forces who joined the California 'Stop LaRouche' coalition which beat back the LaRouche-sponsored Proposition 64, widely perceived as a homophobic and anti-civil liberties response to the AIDS crisis: "We united Republicans and Democrats, progressives and conservatives, religious leaders representing Protestants, Catholics, Jews and other beliefs, ethnic groups including Blacks, Latinos and Asians, professionals associations and labor unions. Isn't that a lesson we've learned from history? That we all have an obligation to stand up together and forcefully oppose the victimization and scapegoating spread by these types of demagogues?"

After the Illinois primary Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) blasted his own party for pursuing a policy of ignoring the "infiltration by the neo-Nazi elements of Lyndon H. LaRouche," and worried that too often, especially in the media, "the LaRouchites" are "dismissed as kooks."

"In an age of ideology, in an age of totalitarianism, it will not suffice for a political party to be indifferent to and ignorant about such a movement," said Moynihan. Ironically, when the *New York Times* covered Moynihan's speech, they essentially censored him by repeatedly substituting the softer term "fascist" wherever Moynihan had said "nazi."

Edward Kayatt, publisher of *Our Town* a weekly community newspaper on New York City's upper East Side, is angered by that type of self-censorship and by the cowardice of most mainstream media on this point.

Kayatt has published dozens of articles on LaRouche, describing him as a neo-Fascist, neo-Nazi, anti-Semite and racist, including a lengthy series by Dennis King. Following the Illinois primary victory, Kayatt penned an editorial which blasted his colleagues in the press for covering up LaRouche's political ideology.

Kayatt noted that "newspapers are of course afraid of libel suits (even though the New York State Supreme Court has ruled it is 'fair comment' to call LaRouche an anti-Semite).

But how can the media justify censorship of a U.S. Senator who is sounding the alarm against neo-Nazism? The beast must be named, but within the media world only NBC-TV has shown the courage to do so."

Both Kayatt and Chicago journalist Michael Miner lay some blame for the Illinois LaRouche victory at the feet of those media which chose not to publicize the LaRouchies. Kayatt and Miner note LaRouche's use of litigation to silence critics. Miner wonders if some of the the "media's disdain [for LaRouche] was not partly a reluctance to borrow trouble." Kayatt agrees. "In the late 1920s, when Adolf Hitler began his march to power, one of the tactics was to entangle all his opponents in libel suits," wrote Kayatt.

It is admittedly hard to cover LaRouche, especially since the media in this country tend to ignore historical connections and are reluctant to analyze ideological positions or treat a fringe political group seriously. Political coverage in the U.S. is frequently based on personalities and style rather than political content. Furthermore, when LaRouche is challenged by a reporter, he simply denies everything, or says it was taken out of context, and then claims his enemies are plotting against him--it is difficult for a mainstream reporter to report what LaRouche really says without appearing biased and vindictive or making LaRouche sound totally crazy.

But Kayatt isn't satisfied with excuses. He reflects the sentiment of many who are concerned about media coverage of LaRouche when he says, "LaRouche will not march to power in America, but he can have a serious destabilizing effect on our institutions and can create a beachhead for organized anti-Semitism. To drive him back into political isolation, America's publishers and editors must show some of their traditional courage and backbone."

LaRouche's legal troubles haven't stopped his followers. They actively organized for the New Hampshire Presidential primary, and purchased several half-hour time slots on network television for campaign programming. For the most part, LaRouche fundraisers continue to use the same boiler-room phone-bank techniques they have used for years. Following the criminal indictments, LaRouche loyalists called people from whom they had previously secured loans and told them to blame the government for non-repayment of the original. They then asked for donations to fight the ongoing legal battles which they claim are part of a plot to destroy LaRouche.

The criminal indictments have slowed down LaRouche organizing and fundraising campaigns, but they have by no means solved the problem. No matter what the outcome in the legal arena, LaRouche and his followers can still do a lot of damage by further spreading prejudiced views. Russ Bellant sums it up when he says LaRouche is "just a symbol of a larger problem of authoritarianism which can be very appealing in times of crisis. The LaRouche phenomenon indicates that we need to educate Americans about the theories and tactics of demagogues."

If we intend to defend democracy we had best learn to recognize its enemies, and not be afraid to stand up and call them by name.

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Both Bellman and Berlet have written extensively about the LaRouche organization.

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