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THE LAROUCHE NETWORK

INTRODUCTION*

While most Americans would readily list the names Hart, Mondale, and Jackson as among this year's contenders for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, viewers of late-night television might also mention the name Lyndon H. LaRouche. Since the onset of the primary season in January, LaRouche has been featured in a series of periodic, late-night television broadcasts promoting his candidacy, and his bizarre political and economic theories.

Billing himself as a "conservative Democrat" LaRouche has regaled his audience with predictions of imminent disaster that can only be averted through his leadership. Coupled with his ominous forecasts of catastrophes that range from "global thermo-nuclear war" to worldwide economic collapse have been his wild assertions that individuals such as Henry Kissinger and Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham are "Soviet agents of influence." What makes such claims particularly ironic is that this "conservative Democrat" was in fact a self-proclaimed Communist, who once called himself "the American Lenin,"¹ who helped found the violence-prone U.S. Labor Party, and who leads what may well be one of the strangest political groups in American history.

¹ Gregory Rose, "The Swarmy Life and Times of the NCLC," National Review, March 30, 1978.

* Also see Francis Watson, "U.S. Labor Party," Heritage Foundation Institution Analysis No. 7, June 1978.

THE LAROUCHE NETWORK

Emerging from within the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) during the late 1960s, LaRouche has managed to attract a small, but fanatical following to his conspiratorial view of the world. Despite their small numbers (estimated at from one to three thousand), he has managed to fashion them into a surprisingly broad network of organizations that not only encompasses many major cities in the U.S., but which extends to Europe and Latin America as well.

Although all of the groups, at their core, adhere to LaRouche's ideology, which holds that a "super elite"--including such disparate elements as the Rockefeller family, the British Royal Family, the Anti-Defamation League, the Soviet KGB, National Review, and The Heritage Foundation--controls world events, many are set up ostensibly as academic or charitable organizations. The use of various fronts has been among the LaRouche network's most successful tactics, enabling it to attract unwitting, well-intentioned citizens to its cause. While these individuals generally break any connection as soon as they realize the real nature of LaRouche's organizations, in some cases longer term relationships are established.

Even innocent individuals who do not directly participate in LaRouche-sponsored activities often end up unwitting financial supporters of the network through airport purchases or subscriptions to LaRouche publications. Hawked by clean-cut young people manning tables with signs that carry slogans such as "Feed Jane Fonda To The Whales," magazines like the slick Executive Intelligence Review (EIR), Fusion, The Young Scientist, and Campaigner, are a major source of funds. In fact, some estimates of combined airport and subscription sales put the annual revenue LaRouche generates this way at as much as \$3 million.

Because the LaRouche network contains such a large and ever-changing list of political organizations, publications, and business enterprises, it is useful to categorize the network's elements into three groups: publications and publishing enterprises, political groups, and businesses. A list of current and former elements of the network includes:

Political Groups

- The National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC)
- The International Caucus of Labor Committees (ICLC)
- The National Democratic Policy Committee
- The Fusion Energy Foundation (FEF)
- The Lafayette Academy for the Arts and Sciences
- The Humanist Academy
- The LaRouche Campaign (TLC)
- The U.S. Labor Party (dormant)
- The National Anti-Drug Coalition
- The Club of Life
- The Revolutionary Youth Movement

The National Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization (NUWRO)
 The International Workingman's Association (IWA)
 The Labor Organizer's Defense Fund
 The Committee for a Fair Election (CFE) (dormant)

Publications and Publishing Enterprises

New Solidarity (a newspaper)
 New Solidarity International Press Service (NSIPS)
 Fusion Magazine
 International Journal of Fusion
 Executive Intelligence Review (EIR)
 Investigative Leads (an EIR spin-off)
 War on Drugs
 The Young Scientist
 The New Benjamin Franklin House Publishing Company
 Campaigner Magazine
 Campaigner publications
 American Labor Beacon (reported to be currently
 in the hands of dissident members of the network)
 NSIPS Speakers Bureau

Business Enterprises

Computron Technologies (now bankrupt)
 Computype (a financial printing firm)
 World Composition Services
 PMR Printing Company, Inc.

ACCESS TO PUBLIC OFFICIALS

A major concern regarding the LaRouche network arises from its apparent ability to penetrate high government circles-- especially within the intelligence and police communities. This ability was underscored by a documentary which aired earlier this year as part of the NBC newsmagazine "First Camera." The broadcast featured, among others, Dr. Norman Bailey, a former member of the National Security Council Staff. In the press release announcing the program NBC stated that Dr. Bailey "spoke of LaRouche's value to the Administration."² Moreover, reports by former members³ of the LaRouche network indicate that it maintained regular and frequent contacts with officials of the Department of State, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and even the Central Intelligence Agency. While some of these claims may be overstated, and some of the contacts may have been low-level or self-generated, the potential for security breaches and other problems arising from such relationships remains very real. A recent incident in France illustrates this point.

² NBC Press Release dated March 4, 1984.

³ Information Digest, March 30, 1978.

A minor furor erupted earlier this year following the disclosure of a confidential French Cabinet memorandum by LaRouche followers there. The memo, which ironically was intended to warn French officials about possible ties between the LaRouche network and Moscow, had been circulated to less than a dozen top people within the French Cabinet. After obtaining the document, LaRouche followers published it as part of a full-page newspaper advertisement. Although the document's contents were a minor embarrassment, what was of real concern was the fact that to have access to it, the leaker also had to have had access to a wide range of sensitive material, including defense information.

In addition to gaining access to official circles, the LaRouche network frequently has succeeded in insinuating its followers into positions with organizations it sees as part of the worldwide conspiracy. One of the most celebrated incidents involved a secretary who was a network member working for the Council on Foreign Relations. In the course of her normal duties, she worked at least part of the time for William P. Bundy, editor of their prestigious journal, Foreign Affairs. She even attended the super-secret Bilderberg meeting, a meeting which includes much of the world's business and foreign policy elite, with him and had access to its proceedings.⁴

What puzzles most casual observers of the LaRouche operation is just what it is that the organization really stands for, and what it is that it wants. Depending on the moment and the issue, LaRouche can appear to be ultra left wing, ultra right wing, or somewhere in between. There are, however, certain themes that run consistently through his network's ideology. Among them are a virulent anti-Semitism,⁵ a belief that world events are guided by a conspiracy aimed at eventually causing a new "Dark Ages," and that Lyndon H. LaRouche is the only individual who has the insight to prevent this calamity from overtaking mankind. The question to be asked then is: Who is Lyndon LaRouche?

WHO IS LYNDON LAROUCHE?

Born of Quaker parents in Rochester, New Hampshire in 1922, LaRouche spent most of his formative years in Lynn, Massachusetts. Initially a conscientious objector during World War II, LaRouche had an apparent change of heart while performing alternative service, and subsequently served in the Army in Burma and India. It was also at this time that LaRouche was first attracted to communist ideology.

⁴ Paul Blum and Paul Montgomery, "One Man Leads U.S. Labor Party on Its Erratic March," The New York Times, October 8, 1979.

⁵ In October 1980, New York State Supreme Court Justice Michael Dontzin held that the Anti-Defamation League's characterization of a LaRouche Group as anti-Semitic constituted "fair comment," and that the facts presented in the case "reasonably give rise" to such characterization.

After leaving the service, LaRouche surfaced in 1948 as a member of the Socialist Workers Party, a Trotskyite communist group. Although he left the SWP in 1957, he continued to be active in communist circles, and supported himself by working as a management consultant and systems analyst. During the late 1960s, LaRouche was listed as a faculty member at several of the Marxist "alternative schools" which sprang up at the time, using the name "Lynn Marcus." In June 1968, LaRouche became active with the radical Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), teaching a course at their "Summer Liberation School" organized at Columbia University. From this, he was able to assume a leadership role in the SDS Labor Committee which eventually evolved into the National Caucus of Labor Committees.

During a dispute over support of striking teachers in New York City, LaRouche split with the SDS leadership by taking a position on behalf of the strikers, and broke off the NCLC from the SDS. This group, which remains in existence today, formed the core of what would become the LaRouche network.

Although LaRouche publicly eschews violence, over the years members have been charged with a variety of offenses, including assault, possession of weapons, possession of explosives, and kidnapping. There have, however, been few convictions.

In 1973 LaRouche undertook "Operation Mop Up," as a means of consolidating his hold on what was a de facto attempt to take full control of the U.S. Communist Party. Operation Mop Up was initiated after LaRouche returned from an extended trip to Europe, and took place during Spring 1973. During this action, more than 60 incidents of violence took place, with some victims of LaRouche's forces requiring hospital treatment. Ironically, according to published reports, it was this move towards violence that cemented LaRouche's leadership of the U.S. Labor Party, and helped to increase its membership and coffers.

ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH TIES WITH CONSERVATIVES

In 1974, the LaRouche network began an active campaign to establish links with conservative groups. An internal memorandum written at the time stated "Right wing organizations offer four opportunities: 1) Sources of fund raising related to our organizing, 2) Political contacts to circulate our perspectives in anti-Rocky political financial military circles, 3) opportunity to expose and discredit Rocky's Buckley-FBI-CIA penetration of the right, 4) potential USLP members and periphery."⁶ The "Rocky" refers to the late Nelson Rockefeller, while the Buckley is William F. Buckley, editor of National Review.

⁶ Rose, op. cit.

In making contacts in the conservative and business communities, fronts like the National Anti-Drug Coalition and Fusion Energy Foundation were particularly valuable. The slick publication Executive Intelligence Review was also aimed at this audience.

Typically, USLP members would approach conservatives or businessmen by appealing to their concerns over issues such as economic growth, nuclear power, or drug use. They would then try to solicit a donation for one of the LaRouche fronts declaiming on these issues, or ask for other assistance. Throughout the 1970s the LaRouche network was particularly successful in obtaining financial support for the Fusion Energy Foundation from the business community, in the form of direct contributions and subscriptions to FEF's slick magazine Fusion.

Its most successful publication, however, seems to be Executive Intelligence Review, with a claimed circulation of 10,000. The Review deals with a wide range of topics, but frequently focuses on security matters and terrorism. The magazine's success in attracting readers for such material gave rise to the creation of a spin-off newsletter "Investigative Leads," which is specifically targeted at law enforcement officials.

While in most cases LaRouche's attempts to work directly with conservatives and business groups have been short-lived, his network has had considerable success in selling their high-priced publications to this audience. At a subscription rate of \$400 per year, Executive Intelligence Review's 10,000 claimed subscribers would garner revenues of \$4 million annually. Thus, often without realizing it, the magazine's subscribers are supporting the LaRouche network's other activities.

Another means by which the LaRouche network establishes links to business is through the operation of commercial firms that specialize in printing services and computer software. Some of America's largest corporations have been unknowing clients of LaRouche-controlled companies, and some of his followers are reported to hold high-level positions with at least one major manufacturer of small computers. Included among the firms linked to LaRouche are Computron Technologies Inc., The New Benjamin Franklin House Publishing Company, World Composition Services, and PMR Printing Company.

ANTI-SEMITISM AND TIES WITH HATE GROUPS

One of the most disturbing turns in the path of LaRouche's ideology has been his incorporation of strong anti-Semitic themes into the grand conspiracy he claims steers world events. As part of this move, LaRouche has established ties with organizations which promote racial hatred and anti-Semitism, including the Ku Klux Klan and the Liberty Lobby.⁷

⁷ Ibid.

In promulgating these themes, LaRouche has made claims that Jewish organizations and prominent members of the Jewish community are linked to the international drug trade, that they deal in pornography, and are linked to international terrorism and criminal violence. According to reports,⁸ LaRouche even alleged in a radio interview that the Ku Klux Klan was founded on behalf of B'nai B'rith, and has stated that he found a "kernel of truth" in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion,"⁹ one of the most vicious anti-Semitic fabrications in history.

In addition, according to the Anti-Defamation League, LaRouche and his followers have alleged that "Jews were largely responsible for bringing Hitler to power, and that the Nazi Holocaust is one of the hoaxes produced by the Zionist demagog."¹⁰ He also has saved particular venom for the Anti-Defamation League itself, labeling the organization "Britain's Zionist Gestapo."¹¹

The move by the LaRouche network to establish links with hatemongers dates from 1974. At that time, the National Caucus of Labor Committees was the primary vehicle for LaRouche's followers. In September of that year, the NCLC made contact with Ken Duggan, publisher of The Illuminator, a racist and anti-Semitic magazine. Through Duggan, according to an account published by an ex-LaRouche follower in National Review, LaRouche was introduced to a number of individuals associated with anti-Semitic or racist groups including Roy Frankhouser, a leader of the Pennsylvania Ku Klux Klan, and Willis Carto of the Liberty Lobby. From then on, anti-Semitism became an increasing component of LaRouche's overall conspiracy theory.

What makes the hatemongering aspect of the LaRouche network a serious concern is that the organization has had a history of violence, and has even had some of its members undergo paramilitary training. Over the years, LaRouche followers have been charged with--although infrequently convicted of--criminal acts including assault, kidnapping, possession of weapons, and possession of explosives. Moreover, LaRouche generally travels with armed bodyguards, and is reported to keep armed guards outside his New York apartment. The potential to turn the network's proclivity for violence against a specific racial or ethnic group is real.

LAROCHE AND THE PRESIDENCY

It is LaRouche's attempts to gain the U.S. presidency, more than anything else, that have brought him into the public eye.

⁸ Information Digest, *op. cit.*

⁹ Anti-Defamation League handbook on extremist groups.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ "The LaRouche Network: A Political Cult," ADL Facts, Spring 1982.

His first attempt was in 1976 when he ran under the U.S. Labor Party's banner. Although he got on the ballot in 24 states, he polled only 43,043 votes. Still, this campaign give rise to one of the odder political match-ups in U.S. political history: a joint suit charging election fraud entered into by a coalition of the U.S. Labor Party, elements of the Republican Party, and some members of the American Party.

The dismal 1976 showing may have convinced LaRouche of the futility of running on a third-party ticket. Thus when he ran in 1980, he did so as a Democrat. On the ballot in some 16 states, LaRouche polled 185,000 votes and qualified for \$526,000 in federal matching campaign funds. However, a subsequent ruling by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) held that LaRouche's failure to win at least 10 percent of the vote in two successive primaries disqualified him from eligibility for matching funds after April 17, 1980, requiring the organization to return \$110,618. This decision was appealed, and in March 1982, the federal court barred the FEC from conducting additional investigations until the one under way was completed. In November 1982, Citizens for LaRouche reached a settlement with the FEC, admitting to a variety of violations of the Campaign Financing Act, including the submission of "false or misleading information" to the FEC.

After the 1980 campaign, LaRouche established the National Democratic Policy Committee as a vehicle for his and his followers' candidacies. Claiming 2,600 members, the NDPC is a source of considerable dismay within the Democratic National Committee, with which it is often confused. It also indicates LaRouche's new strategy, which is to represent himself as a "conservative Democrat." In fact, it is merely the successor of the now defunct U.S. Labor Party as LaRouche's political arm.

A number of state and local candidates have been fielded from within the NDPC's ranks over the past several years. Included among them are Mel Klenetsky, LaRouche's campaign manager, who ran for Mayor of New York, and William Wertz who ran for the U.S. Senate from California in 1982.

Often running unopposed for seats on local party committees, or for offices where the other party's candidate would be unopposed, LaRouche followers are becoming a more frequent presence on ballots around the nation. And their effort at the polls is not limited to the U.S. During last year's West German Bundestag elections, Helga Zepp LaRouche, wife of the network's founder, ran unsuccessfully as a candidate. The thrust of all of these electoral efforts, however, is to boost LaRouche's perceived credibility as a major political influence. This is perhaps as important for LaRouche in terms of maintaining his hold over his followers as for giving him any real effectiveness within the political process.

WHAT DOES LAROUCHE WANT?

In trying to determine just who Lyndon LaRouche is, and what it is that he wants, a confused picture emerges. On the one

hand, his known links to hate groups might place him beyond the respectable political spectrum; yet his continuing advocacy of communism would tend to place him at the far left. To further confuse matters, he has recently taken to attacking the Soviet KGB, and accusing various individuals of being "Soviet agents of influence" or KGB moles, while at the same time taking positions which in the end advance Soviet foreign policy goals. Some insight into the possible motivations behind LaRouche's seemingly erratic ideological shifts can be gained from a March 1979 expose of the U.S. Labor Party written by Gregory Rose, a former member of that group.

Writing in National Review, Rose noted that LaRouche maintained contact with the Soviet government through Gennady Nikolayevich Serebreyakov, an official with the Soviet Mission to the U.N. in New York. Moreover, LaRouche himself was reported to have met with Serebreyakov at least twice. Rose reports that after these meetings, "The NCLC's Trotskyite line was replaced with a pro-Soviet line." More important, he speculates that "The NCLC is in a position to promote a pro-Soviet line on such issues as U.S. defense posture within certain conservative circles, whereas the Soviets could not make such an approach directly. It is equally obvious that information on conservative attitudes and personalities gained from NCLC contacts would be helpful to Soviet intelligence."

Rose concludes "...the evidence of a Soviet connection is extensive and well-founded. Conservatives should regard the NCLC with hostility and should warn, and if necessary repudiate those on the Right whom it has ensnared."

Since Rose's article appeared in March 1979, other evidence to suggest that the LaRouche network is at a minimum supporting some of Moscow's foreign policy goals has continued to mount. For example, in its August 6, 1981 issue, New Solidarity, the principal LaRouche political publication, stated "One year ago Poland was the 10th-ranking industrial nation in the world. Today--after one year of destabilization by the British-infiltrated Solidarity union--the country faces economic ruin, starvation, and social chaos...." In January 1982, commenting again on Poland, New Solidarity called U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig "a leading spokesman for the forces Pravda charged are seeking to provoke direct Soviet military intervention in Poland."

LaRouche network publications also frequently engage in attacks on leading opponents of Soviet-inspired terrorism, including such well-known experts in the field as Robert Moss and Arnaud de Borchgrave and on leading anti-communist figures such as the late Reps. John Ashbrook and Larry McDonald. More important, they have also on occasion attempted to obtain sensitive defense information from contacts on Capitol Hill, and within the government. In one specific instance, a member of the LaRouche network attempted to obtain from a member of the House Armed Services Committee staff the range of the U.S. cruise missile--one of America's most sensitive military secrets.

Whether witting or unwitting, it remains clear that ultimately the publications and rhetoric of the LaRouche network will end up with positions that are favorable to the Soviet Union. The fact that their positions are cloaked in ostensibly conservative rhetoric merely makes their pro-Soviet slant harder to perceive. What remains true, however, is that their efforts in the long run can only serve to further Soviet propaganda aims within a sector of the population that Moscow could never reach directly.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the LaRouche network is its ability to adapt whatever coloration is best able to hide its real nature at any given moment. Through its fronts and publications, it continues to influence thousands of Americans, who have no inkling of the bizarre and viciously anti-Semitic conspiracy theories that underlie its philosophy. Moreover, this tendency to create a new front whenever it appears that a new issue has emerged and can be capitalized on makes it necessary to remain ever watchful for the latest of the cult's creations.

The persistent reports of high-level access and the continuing, albeit obfuscated support of Soviet foreign policy goals that are so much a part of LaRouche's rhetoric, make his network more than merely a fringe group that is essentially a nuisance. At a minimum, its anti-Semitism is an affront to decency, and its proclivity for violence a threat to civil order. In the worst case, it may well be the strangest asset for the KGB's disinformation effort.

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