

LaRouche wins round in vote fraud fight

by Mary Jane Freeman

The LaRouche Campaign, Lyndon LaRouche's presidential campaign, has scored an initial victory in its legal offensive to expose and jail the perpetrators of a massive election-fraud operation against the voters of Pennsylvania in that state's Democratic presidential primary. On April 25 the Philadelphia County Board of Elections meeting conceded discrepancies in the vote for LaRouche stemming from the April 10 primary.

The discrepancies were raised in five Petitions to Recanvass the Votes filed by The LaRouche Campaign April 23. The Election Commissioners' granting of the petitions triggers a Pennsylvania law which requires a test of the mechanisms of the voting machines, and the test was slated for the City's voting machine warehouse April 28.

Candidate LaRouche, after a high-profile media campaign mobilizing voters against "Soviet agent-of-influence Henry Kissinger" and the "KGB Democrats" Hart, Mondale, and Jackson, received 12-15% of the statewide Democratic vote. Outside the strongholds of the AFL-CIO/Mondale machine in urban centers, five congressional candidates who ran on Lyndon LaRouche's program won an official 30-46% of the vote. The only "claim to fame" of these candidates, all of them formerly political unknowns, was their vocal support for the LaRouche presidency and platform.

But thanks to a "fix" carried out by the Manatt-Mondale political machine and Lane Kirkland's AFL-CIO, the LaRouche vote was not officially tallied. In a statement distributed statewide, LaRouche denounced the fraudulent returns, stating, "I count your vote, even if crooked state officials don't."

Banana republic balloting

A glimpse into the actions of the "crooked state officials" LaRouche was denouncing is given by the challenges his campaign committee, The LaRouche Campaign, has filed. The petitions for a recanvass document more affidavits from voters who cast their ballot for LaRouche than votes registered on voting machines and "official" tallies, and give evidence of widespread machine malfunctioning that prevented LaRouche from receiving more than a one-digit vote on any machine. Challenges were filed for Ward 1, Divisions 1 and 2; Ward 30, Division 9; Ward 39, Division 22; and Ward 48, Division 21, alleging that "error . . . not apparent on the face

of the returns" has been committed. In Ward 30, Division 9, where two LaRouche candidates for Democratic committee voted and poll-watched, the unofficial tally—fraudulent in itself—was read as "2." Yet, the over-zealous fraud experts decided that even two votes were too much, and the official return sheet showed zero votes for LaRouche.

In Ward 1, Division 1, the petition showed a discrepancy between the returns sheet and the voting machines returns, which gave Walter Mondale an additional 27 votes, Hart 5 extra votes, and congressional candidates over 60 extra votes. Election officials claimed the "additional votes" could be accounted for by absentee ballots, yet, only 35 absentee ballots had been applied for in the division, somehow 65 absentee ballots were cast in the congressional race! James Tayoun, ward leader there, was credited with 30 of those.

Another type of fraud was shown in Ward 1, Division 2, where the voter sign-in list recorded 471 persons entering the polls. Yet the numbers on the public counters of the machines recorded only 448 voters. Apparently the voters lost their way to the machines.

History of corruption

A Superseding Indictment filed in 1978 by the Department of Justice against Ransom F. Shoup II, of the R. F. Shoup voting machine corporation, shows that the Philadelphia County Commissioners of Elections and its chair Margaret Tartaglione are not unfamiliar with such irregularities. The indictment, stemming from a criminal grand jury investigation, resulted in Shoup's conviction on charges of obstruction of justice after he had agreed to cooperate with a Justice Department investigation into possible "violations of federal criminal codes in connection with Philadelphia County voting machine breakdowns during the November 1978 general election," but ultimately offered a censored report to the Justice Department. Along with Shoup, chief Tartaglione "was a logical suspect in the investigation."

Tartaglione became a government witness, thereby avoiding indictment and conviction. Shoup, whose machines are still used today in Philadelphia, was also charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States along with co-defendant Edward Goldsmith. They had met with Marge Tartaglione to censor the report on the breakdowns Shoup was to give to Justice. Given the tip-of-the-iceberg discrepancies the LaRouche campaign found after the April 10 primary, the question must be asked: Was a deal cut between the Carter administration Justice Department and Tartaglione, such that she as a "logical witness" of the investigation ended up a government witness?

When the LaRouche challenges were filed, the veteran elections commissioner, Tartaglione, dropped her normal "street tough" act and hid in her office to avoid accepting the papers.

All the petitioners live in the notorious South Philly area of the city, where vote fraud is so common that election officials assert that nothing out of the ordinary occurred here.