

## **EIR** Feature

# The LaRouche phenomenon in American politics

by Criton Zoakos

The May 3-6 primary elections in Texas, Ohio, and Indiana produced a pattern of votes for candidates associated with Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. which was identical to that which was initially seen at the Illinois March 18 primaries, which originally brought the LaRouche candidates' movement to national prominence: The LaRouche candidates command a consistent average 25% of the Democratic vote. In some individual races, the pro-LaRouche vote goes above 50%, as in the now-celebrated races for Illinois lieutenant governor and secretary of state, won by LaRouche-affiliated Mark Fairchild and Janice Hart. In many other individual races, the pro-LaRouche vote may go up to 43%, while in a few others down to 6-7%. The average for all races in which LaRouche candidates have run, so far this year, is about 25% of the Democratic vote.

The important difference between the May 3-6 primaries in Texas, Ohio, and Indiana, on the one hand, and the March 18 Illinois election, is that after Illinois, the LaRouche candidates—and their voters—were subjected to an unprecedented stream of abuse, slander, and intimidation, originating in some very powerful and influential quarters. One politician in Austin, Texas, said: "LaRouche sustained a full frontal assault in Texas, and it didn't slow him down at all."

Reactions at higher levels of the anti-LaRouche camp bordered closer to hysteria after May 6, than they had been during the earlier, Illinois primary. The reason was that the LaRouche vote held its own despite Paul Kirk's Democratic National Committee's extraordinary efforts to intimidate voters. In all instances, LaRouche candidates spent, on the average, between \$50 and \$100 in their campaigns. In all instances, they faced massive hostility from the media and most of the established party leadership. In most instances, they ran against incumbents. For every one dollar spent by LaRouche candidates, there were between \$1,000 and \$5,000 spent by their opponents. In the cases of Texas and Ohio, large-scale vote fraud and vote stealing was observed and documented. The fact that the 25% average for LaRouche candidates held even under these circumstances, demonstrated that the, not-yet-expressed, pro-LaRouche *potential* inside the Democratic Party may run well above 50%.



NSIPS/Stuart Lewis

*Lyndon LaRouche, the only declared 1988 presidential candidate, meets the press at the National Press Club on April 9, 1986 in Washington D.C.*

This has created a situation in American politics which, according to a dedicated enemy of Mr. LaRouche, "has not existed in American politics in the last 200 years."

After the results were in, on May 7, Terry Michael, the press spokesman of the Democratic National Committee, proclaimed to the press that the DNC policy to contain LaRouche had "worked." As proof, he cited the allegation that "no LaRouche candidate won any 'significant' races, as they had done in Illinois." The DNC, thus implicitly stating that it is happy with a LaRouche vote just below 50%, has acknowledged that LaRouche is its "main opposition." The chairman of the Republican National Committee, Frank Fahrenkopf, had a different interpretation—he pointed out that during the primaries, so far, more Republicans went to the polls than in the past, and fewer Democrats. He further added, "While the Democrats are campaigning to stop the LaRouche candidates in their ranks, the Republicans will be going out campaigning for their candidates."

Mr. Fahrenkopf's observation was just a little bit closer to reality than Michael's, yet not too close: It is a fact, that since March 18, the only campaigning that the old Democratic Party establishment has done, has been against LaRouche rather than the Republican incumbents or challengers. In fact, the Democratic National Committee went on record to state that those LaRouche candidates who have already won positions for the November Democratic party ballots—there are five for U.S. Congress, so far—will not only not receive any official Democratic Party support, but the DNC will advise voters to vote for their Republican opponents.

While the old Democratic establishment is hell-bent on this suicidal course, the Republican Party establishment is displaying a premature smugness. A successful LaRouche onslaught against the entrenched ultra-liberal Democratic Party establishment does not necessarily mean gains in votes for Republican candidates. Mr. Fahrenkopf must, surely, know that it was the traditional Democratic Party voting base of blue-collar workers and farmers who voted President Reagan into office, because their party's liberal establishment had disenfranchised them. This same voting base—which is *the* decisive factor in American politics—is now viewing the anti-LaRouche mobilization of the DNC, as another drive to disenfranchise them.

Also, this same voting base, is profoundly disillusioned with the domestic economic policies of the Republican administration. They are the millions who were never touched by the fake "Reagan recovery." All they see in the DNC's anti-LaRouche antics is the DNC's and the Liberal Establishment's commitment to leave them defenseless against the "structural reform" of the economy, started by President Jimmy Carter and continuing unabated under President Ronald Reagan.

The "LaRouche phenomenon," a mass movement of some one thousand citizen-candidates, cannot be defeated by its rivals, unless it is understood. And it cannot be understood, except in its own terms. Trying to understand it within the frame of reference of its rivals is fruitless labor. To defeat it, one has to understand it. To understand it, one must accept its terms of analysis. To accept its terms is to be defeated by it.

The “secret,” so to speak, of the “LaRouche phenomenon,” is that it is based on the *reality-orientation*, as distinct from a “*perception orientation*” toward which media and politicians are geared, of the most crucial, blue collar-labor-minority constituency of the U.S. population. To illustrate the point: A “perception-oriented” person is the one who, having been run over by an automobile, will not realize what happened to him until he watches his misfortune on the evening television news. The contrary type, the reality-oriented person, on the other hand, is one who expects an honest pay for an honest day’s work, expects his tax dollars to buy him the commensurate public services such as schooling for his kids, sanitation for his town, and defense for his country.

The reality-oriented person, is, as a rule, engaged in the task of raising a family, by means of work, and, as a rule, belongs in the blue collar-farmer-minority constituency. No amount of newspaper, radio and TV, and government assertions of an “economic recovery” will convince him that his self-appointed task of raising a family is not in jeopardy by prevailing economic policies.

The strategic mistake of the anti-LaRouche opposition in the media and political establishment so far has been, to try and stop LaRouche’s influence in this layer of “reality-oriented” people, by means of a propaganda campaign, i.e., by means of dominating the “perception game.” No doubt, LaRouche opponents can dominate the “perception game.” They are discovering that this has no effect on LaRouche’s voting base. The voters vote against the perception game itself, not for or against any particular perception per se.

Following Illinois, the media made the mistake of ignoring the solid 20-40% vote average for LaRouche-associated candidates, and instead, focussed almost exclusively on the impressive Fairchild-Hart victory. The media called it a fluke; Paul Kirk and the Democratic National Committee called it a fluke; Adlai Stevenson III called it a fluke; had they tried to understand the consistency of the 20-40% voting average of LaRouche associated candidates, they would not have considered it “a fluke.”

### **It was no fluke**

Then, as Adlai Stevenson, heir of the oldest political name in the state of Illinois, drifted out of the Democratic Party, which he once considered a family heirloom, and into oblivion, the Democratic National Committee, in conjunction with the Anti-Defamation League and the National Broadcasting Corporation—the combination commonly known as the Public Relations department of “Dope, Inc.”—resolved on a massive slander campaign against both Lyndon LaRouche, the only, so far, officially declared Presidential candidate for 1988, and the candidates movement associated with him.

LaRouche detractors, it turned out, devised a gameplan to “stop LaRouche” at the second tier of the primary elections

scheduled from May 3 to June 2. With a new infusion of money from Pamela Harriman, the DNC, under Paul Kirk, set up a mass mailing operation, a phone bank, and a few additional paraphernalia, to launch a “voter education campaign” against LaRouche. The principal “educational material” was a hysterical, libellous “informational packet” provided by the Anti-Defamation League, an outfit run by Mr. Kenneth Bialkin, the lawyer of international drug dealer Robert Vesco. Most of the anti-LaRouche “educational material” was written by two journalists of the magazine *High Times*, the official advocate of drug legalization.

These scurrilous materials were mailed out to all Democratic Party state chairmen, and the mailings were followed up by lengthy phone calls from Washington, purporting to devise strategies, of sorts, to “stop LaRouche.” A certain percentage of state chairmen responded, among whom were James Ruvolo of Ohio and Robert Slagle of Texas. The appropriate number of newspaper and television outlets was enlisted in the effort to “educate the voters against LaRouche.” An unprecedented amount of mudslinging was carried out from coast to coast. Mr. LaRouche was called names from “neo-Nazi” to “Soviet KGB agent,” to a “snake which eats its tail,” (this from Max Lerner of the *New York Post*), to anti-Semite, to new Hitler, new Lenin, and so forth. Thoughtful citizens, subjected to this excessive overdose of hysterical mudslinging, walked away with the conviction that the great variety of wild slander themes cancelled each other out. The average citizen’s conclusion, invariably, was: “Mr. LaRouche certainly has some folks very upset.” Those “folks,” it turned out, had never enjoyed either the confidence, or the sympathy of the average citizen. So the centrally disseminated anti-LaRouche slander campaign, in its original form, fizzled, some time toward the end of April.

Locally, as with Slagle in Texas and Ruvolo in Ohio, a great deal of local money, and locally modified slanders were mobilized against LaRouche candidates. Characteristic was the San Antonio, Texas campaign for county chairman. One week before election day, chairman Slagle arrived there, held a press conference, and denounced LaRouche for having once argued, in one of his books, that Aristotle and Philip of Macedon, in the fourth century B.C., had reached a certain political understanding with the Persian Imperial court of the time. Convinced of his audience’s unease with matters of detail of classical scholarship, Party chairman Slagle, pompously boasted that “only those Texas Democrats who were crazy enough to believe that Aristotle and Philip had a deal with the Persians, would vote for the LaRouche candidate.” This ludicrous display had a fine ending: 38% of the Democrats of San Antonio’s Bexar County voted to elect LaRouche-endorsed Don Varella as their county chairman. He came first in a field of four candidates.

One can safely conclude that Bob Slagle is not more popular in Texas than Aristotle.