

Interview: LaRouche on the 'Contra Scandal'



'The President was badly advised at every turn'

EIR asked Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche to respond to a series of questions, on the probable outcome of the way in which the investigation of the Contra scandal has progressed thus far. The interview is dated May 18.

EIR: From where you sit, how much personal embarrassment for the President do you think will come out of the Contra scandal?

LaRouche: At this point, no one can tell. Personally, I have seen no evidence that the President committed any offense for which he should be impeached; but, these days, proof of innocence is not necessarily a very effective defense—especially the way Ed Meese is bungling along with an out-of-control network inside the Justice Department.

The danger-point for the President might come around September and October of this year. If this Contra mess is not cleaned up by then, the President could be in danger of being railroaded into about the same situation Nixon was placed in in 1974.

EIR: Why September or October?

LaRouche: I expect that there will be widespread fear over both the collapse of the economy and AIDS by the end of this coming summer. Unless the President had dramatically changed his policies on both the economy and AIDS by that time, he would find himself a scapegoat for all sorts of things. If Watergate-style charges were to be hanging over the President's head under those conditions, the President could be personally in very serious trouble. He could be railroaded pretty easily, even on flimsy charges and a lot of perjured testimony.

EIR: You say that you don't think the President has committed an impeachable offense in the Contra case? Why not?

LaRouche: On the basis of every indication so far, the evidence is that the President was badly advised at every turn. The grey area is the way someone may choose to interpret that outrageously unconstitutional Boland Amendment. Otherwise, I see nothing so far—except a large increase in his

unpopularity on other issues—which puts the President potentially in the target-area of an impeachment process.

EIR: You say that the President was badly advised. What were his mistakes in the Contra affair?

LaRouche: I haven't been able to discover a single thing in the President's Central America policy which is not a foreign-policy disaster. McFarlane, Poindexter, and North, for example, are supposed to be military professionals. In case of outbreak of war, a Lazare Carnot or I, discovering officers guilty of such military follies, would retire them immediately for the good of the service.

EIR: Many readers might consider that a pretty strong criticism of these men. How would you back it up?

LaRouche: In irregular warfare against insurgency, some things are ABC to anyone who has studied the successful and unsuccessful low-intensity counterinsurgency of the past 40 years. As one veteran of the Malaya campaign emphasized recently, about 80% of the effort leading to the victory against the Communist insurgents there was spent on separating the guerrillas from political and logistical support in the population. After that, it was an SAS mopping-up operation. The mopping-up took a few years, but during that period, the general situation in the nation was under control.

What the clowns in the NSC's operation did, was the direct opposite. They used the Contra operation to drive more and more of the Sandinistas' potential opposition into patriotic solidarity with the Sandinista government. Of all the things which should have been done in the Central American region, to isolate the Sandinista dictatorship politically, the administration did exactly the opposite. To top it off, these men set up an operation which was a farce militarily, and backed a bunch of mercenary riff-raff whose main activity appears to have been shipping drugs into the United States.

EIR: Why do you think the President chose the so-called Contra option?

LaRouche: I wasn't there when the discussions took place, so I couldn't supply eyewitness testimony on what decisions

the President made personally. I do know, directly, that what happened in 1985 and 1986 was a direct result of policy-decisions made back in 1982, in the process of bringing Project Democracy into White House decision-making. It was a combination of decisions on economic policy toward Central and South America back during 1982, Project Democracy's political ties to Caribbean drug-traffickers, and the series of decisions, including what became Gramm-Rudman, beginning during April, 1983, leading into last October's near disaster at the Reykjavik summit.

Although the President has stuck to a cut-down version of his March 1983 SDI policy, on every other major front in the world, the Reagan administration has been in full retreat under Moscow's pressure. So, since April 1983, when Soviet President Andropov stated publicly, in a major magazine interview, that he recognized the U.S.'s right to do with Nicaragua as it might choose, the Reagan administration used the Nicaraguan Contra operation as a way of seeming to say to worried patriots, "We're still willing to wage the fight against Communism in at least one little corner of the world." Since the administration's economic policy forbade running an effective kind of irregular war against the Sandinistas, it ended up with a disgusting side-show.

EIR: How does that justify describing McFarlane, Poindexter, and North as "clowns"?

LaRouche: Maybe they were acting as opportunists, helping out old buddies who needed a little covert-operations action and some money. Maybe, they had the military competence to know that the Contra operation was a lunatic side-show. Maybe, they were so concerned with their personal career-management, that they simply did not care enough what this operation did to the United States.

I can imagine that anyone who tried to tell the President that this kind of operation was a worthless side-show, would have been put on the President's list of "tear up this guy's calling-card." So, those who wished to stay in the good graces of the White House, would either go along with the policy, or simply avoid being involved in the operation in any way. As we have seen from his patterns in public conduct, when President Reagan does not wish to admit he has made a mistake, he can be very stubbornly nasty about it, and then he tends to cut a lot of corners in maneuvering around the truth.

So, after the case of Richard Allen, anyone in the NSC hot-spot or at similar levels, knows it is not good career-management to become what Mr. Reagan might view as an expendable embarrassment to his self-image. Perhaps a few old friends, or, for a while, a Donald T. Regan, could persuade the President to change his policies. Admittedly, as the public record shows, fellows in the position of a McFarlane or Poindexter would find it smart career-management to put up a show of being "an outstanding team-player." That much in the way of extenuating circumstances, I would grant them.

Extenuating circumstances or not, when you act like a

clown, you are a clown. Clowns like that go on my list of people who are never to be assigned to duties in which the well-being of a military unit, or our nation has to rely on the honesty of their expressed judgment.

Let's call this the lesson of Goethe's *Faust*. Let us call these fellows modern Fausts. Let us call the temptations of career-management, Mephistopheles. If you sell your soul to Mephistopheles, for whatever price, it is your soul that you have lost. Anyone betraying principles for sake of a Faustian pact with influence and power, can turn themselves into schlemiels in the way these fellows did.

I have often seen people make a first crucial step in compromising an important principle for such Faustian reasons. Then, I have witnessed the accelerating spiral of their intellectual and moral self-degradation after that first step was taken. Generally speaking, one who does not pull back from that first step of self-degradation is never to be trusted again.

EIR: Who do you see as the principal targets of investigation in the Contra scandal?

LaRouche: Project Democracy, the officials of the National Endowment for Democracy, Elliott Abrams, some in the Justice Department involved in the Irangate and Contra cover-ups, and Armand Hammer's crony, Charles Z. Wick. Abrams and Wick are at the center of culpability in the Contra operation as such. What McFarlane, Poindexter, and North did, was to plug some veterans from the regular intelligence services into the middle of a Project Democracy operation being run through channels controlled by Abrams and Wick's U.S. Information Agency. It is that network of old communists and so-called right-wing social-democrats centered around Jay Lovestone, that is the real problem here, as it has been one of the key problems inside our intelligence and diplomatic institutions for about 40 years. Clean out that nest, and the United States might begin adopting sound policies.

'Project Democracy' retreads old threats

by D.E. Pettingell

The National Endowment for Democracy concluded its "Challenge of Democracy" conference in Washington, D.C. on May 19, with a call to overthrow Third World governments which do not fit the American standard of "democracy." The NED is the public arm of "Project Democracy," the secret government currently under fire in the Irangate scandal.

"It is irrelevant if we have the right to interfere or not,"