
Soviets on Trial in Paris

LaRouche and the European Labor Party take on the Andropov dynasty

by Claude Albert

Twenty people, including a correspondent of the Soviet press agency Novosti, filled a small courtroom of the Tribunal de Grande Instance in Paris on July 1 to hear the proceedings of the case of Lyndon LaRouche and the Parti Ouvrier Européen (POE—European Labor Party), against the Soviet weekly *Temps Nouveaux*, the French edition of *New Times*. A civil suit for defamation was filed last November by LaRouche and his French associates, against the semi-official organ of the CPSU Central Committee, for the publication, the month before, in all nine language editions of the magazine, of a violent five-page attack describing LaRouche and his friends as “Nazis without swastikas.”

The Soviet defendants included Semyon Rostovski, alias Ernst Henry, a long-time KGB officer; Lev Bezymensky, who belongs like Henry to a close-knit group of Soviet journalistic “experts” in “Nazism” and “fascism”; as well as Aeroflot and a Paris bookstore, subpoenaed as distributors. They were represented respectively, by Bernard Grelon, the associate of Communist lawyer Joe Nordmann, detained in Lyons at the Klaus Barbie trial where he represented the Communist Resistance organizations, and attorneys Cohen and Arlabos.

“This trial is a surprise,” Jean-Marc Varaut, the plaintiffs’ lawyer, opened his argument. Is there a precedent? “Not to my knowledge,” he went on. “This is the first time Soviet defendants have taken a lawyer, as they ordinarily are absent.” It is because of the “specifically protective character of French defamation law,” which holds the journalist as significantly responsible, Varaut explained, that Lyndon LaRouche and the POE have come before a French court to file a suit against an article “of great violence, in which everything said is most surprising,” published in “what is called in proper French a propaganda organ.”

Presenting Lyndon LaRouche and his worldwide movement to the three judges of the Première Chambre hearing the case, Varaut spoke of the American politician’s “anti-malthusianism” and “original position in favor of a new world economic order.” A series of associations have been created

in the world, he said, the Anti-Drug Coalitions, the Fusion Energy Foundation (FEF), the Club of Life, the Schiller Institute, “the goal of this whole movement being to defend Mr. LaRouche’s ideas.” Referring to LaRouche’s proposals to fight drugs, Varaut stressed that these rapidly triggered the hostility of the “marijuana legalization lobby.”

“I know Mr. LaRouche,” he went on. “I do not share all of his political positions, but he is a remarkably cultivated man with whom I have had philosophical discussions of great interest. Although I do not agree with him on Aristotle, I have much admiration for the very remarkable translation of Plato’s *Timaeus* into English which he had published.

“It is from this philosophical standpoint that Mr. LaRouche is opposed to religious Zionism,” Varaut explained. “What has led him to oppose certain decisions or political initiatives of the Israeli state has nothing to do with anti-Semitism, which is contrary to the philosophical convictions expressed by Mr. LaRouche,” he said, referring the judges to an article by the plaintiff published in *Nouvelle Solidarité* of Oct. 29, 1979, under the title “My Policy toward Judaism and Zionism.”

In 1982, Lyndon LaRouche was led to “violently oppose Soviet policy and took a stand in favor of the new anti-missile weapons,” Varaut continued. “And it was immediately after that, in 1983-84, that he became the target of repeated attacks in the Soviet press: For example, on Nov. 15, 1983, *Izvestia* called LaRouche’s associates “troglodytes”; on March 12, 1984, the same publication described them as “neo-fascists” led by a “Führer” and “using the methods of the Italian Black-shirts and the German Nazis”; on April 6, 1984, *Pravda* described an FEF conference in Paris on beam weapons as a “colloquium of murderers” and “cannibals”; on Sept. 30, 1986, *Sovetskaya Kultura* wrote that “the LaRouchists had contact with the Ku Klux Klan and the American neo-Nazis.”

A ‘world system of slander repetition’

Such “belated” attacks—the Soviets, prior to LaRouche’s campaign for the Strategic Defense Initiative, had

shown interest in the FEF's work on laser research and in the "LaRouche-Riemann" econometric model—occurred "at a politically coherent time," said Jean-Marc Varaut. These attacks are propagated via the Soviets' "satellites," "transmission belts," by "the fellow travelers," and "those who do not even know that they are traveling." This "world system of repetition" was used after the murder of Olof Palme, when the rumor was put out internationally that the POE was behind the killing.

And yet, Varaut underlined, "French justice had put order" into all of that, with a number of rulings, over the past five years, condemning the authors of similar slanders against the LaRouche movement, as, for example, in cases pitting the latter against the *International Herald Tribune*, Dr. Claude Olievenstein, or the weekly *L'Événement du Jeudi*. Similar rulings have been made by West German courts over the same type of slanders, such as against *Der Spiegel*, the WDR radio-TV channel, or a journalist, Paul Langenberg, whom the Soviets cite as a source, and whom the Aachen court reproached with "not having done serious research" on the POE before writing on it.

The defendants, Varaut then said, are accusing Mr. LaRouche of "nit-picking" and suing all the press around. Proof that it is not true, said the plaintiffs' counsel, is that when an article is published which is "severe, critical, even hostile but objective and not going overboard by distorting the facts," such as that published by B. Brigouleix in *Le Monde* of April 16, 1986, the POE does not sue the publication, nor does it demand a retraction. "I have had the opportunity to see," Varaut reported bitterly, "the use which the Soviets make of 'nit-picking neurosis' when that term was applied to Leonid Plyouch, whom I went to Kiev to defend."

The adversaries, trying to "dodge the debate," claim that the POE in France lacks standing to sue them because, as such, it is not affected by the *New Times* attack, contrary to the European Labor Parties in Sweden and West Germany and organizations associated with LaRouche in the United States. But, Varaut underlined, "The POE exists as a movement inspired by Mr. LaRouche's ideas, and it is these ideas which are being put on trial and which mean that the POE must be considered as a single movement." Mr. LaRouche's lawyer also noted that, despite the Soviets' claim, his client was personally targeted by the slander and therefore had standing to sue for damages.

The Platonic 'golden thread'

Returning to the issues of the debate, Varaut declared that "the facts" of which Mr. LaRouche and his movement are accused, "have never been proved." Lyndon LaRouche is said to have denied the existence of the Nazi Holocaust. To this, Varaut answered by quoting John Weber, a leading member of the Jewish community in California, saying, in a speech he gave at a founding conference of the Club of Life in 1982, that "Lyndon LaRouche and his organization, a

gathering of Jews and Christians, have done more to explain, elucidate, and keep alive the memory of the Hitlerian holocaust in the non-Jewish world than the Jews themselves."

LaRouche is accused of racism in that he would call for a "golden race." In fact, Varaut explained, "he is alluding to the golden, silver, and bronze souls as Plato defined them," and he is also referring to the Platonic notion of the "golden thread," found in Plato's *Republic*, "the golden thread which everyone weaves, in different ways, throughout one's existence, and which represents the highest praise of the human individual."

Concerning the charge of "Nazism," Varaut referred the judges to the speech which Marie-Madeleine Fourcade, head of a Resistance network during World War II, gave on "The Myth of Hitler's Legal Seizure of Power" at the Club of Life conference in Paris in February 1983. "This is the same Marie-Madeleine Fourcade," said Varaut to the judges, "whose recent testimony at the Barbie trial in Lyons, moved me as it must have moved you." But "one is always somebody's fascist in the Soviets' eyes," he added, "even if, for that, they rely on the writings of a journalist like Dennis King, which have twice been ruled against in West Germany."

"One cannot help noticing that there is a strange conjunction between the advocates of drug decriminalization and the Soviets of *New Times*," Varaut went on. "Both are engaged in the same campaign of systematic libel against Mr. LaRouche."

To illustrate the Soviets' method of slander-by-amalgamation, the plaintiffs' lawyer came back several times to the virulent assertions of Ernst Henry, who called the LaRouche movement a "typical product" of the CIA "used for subversion operations, including terrorist ones," and surrounded by "fascist parasites."

Varaut concluded by calling on the Court to judge the article as libelous, to condemn the authors to substantial damages and order them to publish the ruling in two French national dailies. If the Soviets comply, Varaut added wryly, maybe this will be a sign of "New Times."

The cost of attacking the Soviets and the KGB

In the name of the defendant journalists and editors of *New Times*, Nordmann's associate Grelon started his argument with a revealing admission: The incriminated article, he said, is "an answer to the extremely numerous and violent attacks Mr. LaRouche has been launching against the Soviet Union, the KGB, and some important Soviet personalities since 1979." *New Times* is not the "initiator" of articles hostile to Lyndon LaRouche, and in fact, according to Grelon, the Soviet publication has "only taken him on in a moderate fashion compared to a number of assertions published in the Western press."

The Soviets' lawyer, as examples of such attacks, mentioned that according to the "LaRouche organization," "the

AIDS virus could have come out of a Soviet laboratory with the aim of destroying the West"; "Since 1967, Yuri Andropov, then head of the KGB, has been pulling the strings of world terrorism"; Khomeini was "put in power by KGB agent Kim Philby"; and "Khrushchev congratulated Mao Zedong for having weakened the American army in Vietnam with drugs."

LaRouche, said Grelon, "is trying to use the legal system to make credible the idea that he is a serious party." His claim to represent the POE in different countries proves that he admits, Grelon argued shamelessly, that he is not only the "thinker" behind these parties, but that "the POE does not function according to a democratic principle." Thus, said the Soviets' attorney, "since LaRouche decides and the POE implements," this means that LaRouche is indeed a "Führer" in Germany, "Führer being the exact translation into German of the English term leader."

What is LaRouche's method? According to the Communist lawyer, using typical Stalinist sophisms, it involves first "constant defamation." The victims of this defamation: British peacenik "Emma Rothschild and her father" Lord Rothschild, "accused of being KGB agents"; *High Times* writer Dennis King, accused of being an agent of the "drug lobby" along with American journalist Mark Nykanen; German Green leader Petra Kelly, characterized as a "dirty whore"; "Jewish organizations," accused of being "foreign agents"; the "IMF," accused of "killing more people than Adolf Hitler"; Prince Charles, a "degenerate." While certain paranoids are harmless, said the Communist lawyer, LaRouche is "dangerous" because he seeks to "play a role in world society" and desires to "govern the world."

LaRouche, Grelon had the gall to assert, "ceaselessly sues the Western press" because in "his system freedom of speech is denied." "The right to criticize, to make value judgments, must be fully exercised," said the Soviets' lawyer. Grelon called upon the French court to be inspired not by French law, which delimits the freedom to slander, but by German and American common law, which recognize the notion of "value judgments" and "honest opinions." In short, statements that a French court would judge as libelous in the absence of proof of their veracity, should be treated as an irreproachable "value judgment." The Soviet defendants went further, claiming that the statements made in *New Times* were not merely honest opinion but truthful! Hence their misuse of a 1980 New York Supreme Court ruling which refused to characterize Anti-Defamation League allegations that LaRouche is anti-Semitic as slander: The Soviets grossly distorted even this, claiming that the New York Court ruled that LaRouche is anti-Semitic, although in two previous cases, French courts have ruled that this was not the conclusion reached in that case, and could not, in any case, have any bearing on the question of proof.

Grelon then plunged into a diatribe made of fallacies of composition, quotations out of context—sometimes quoting

only a couple of words!—to make his case: "LaRouche uses the mask of anti-Zionism as a necessary cover for anti-Semitism. . . . Like all anti-Semites, LaRouche has his 'good Jews' . . . all of the characteristics of anti-Semitic prose can be found here." After quoting Goebbels (in the only full-length quote of his entire diatribe) the lawyer for the most anti-Semitic country in the world today, called upon the French court to actually define LaRouche as an anti-Semite.

Furthermore, said Grelon, "the word Nazi is considered slanderous" but "I am not certain that it is." Perhaps it were better to consider it as a "value judgment," as is often the case in the use of the word "fascist," rather than a statement about a precise act. In the *New Times* article, Grelon said absurdly, LaRouche "is not identified as a Nazi in the Hitlerian sense," although such a comparison "would be appropriate given LaRouche's totalitarian politics." There is no charge of a specific act, and the "worrying practices of LaRouche" provide an excuse, that "of truth," to the defendants.

"Ideology is the essential element of totalitarianism and fascism," said Grelon. "With LaRouche it is founded on paranoid delirium, megalomania, in which a closed system is built in which all adversaries are necessarily enemies. That is the same as Nazi ideology." The idea of "supermen," the "cult of the chief" are fundamental elements of his ideology and that of "the fascists who surround him." Other characteristics of "Nazism": "violence" and the "will to eliminate his adversaries," to "name names."

Then, in a great display of confusion, Grelon affirmed that the "Golden Souls" mentioned in LaRouche's writings are references to the "Greek myth of the Golden Race" to "justify a particular elite." "This Greek myth is not a Platonic myth but a Hesiodic, pre-Socratic myth aimed at explaining the relations between heroes and men and how the cycle of time intervenes into human affairs." Having said this, Grelon went on to attack the "remarkable intellectual mixture of LaRouche who references Plato, Leibniz, St. Augustine, and Charlemagne."

Further, it is not libelous to say that "a member of the POE was arrested in Sweden because he was suspected of assassinating Olof Palme." After all, "mentally unbalanced people commit criminal acts in all parties. . . ." Using his by-now evident implacable logic, Grelon added: If neo-Nazi provocateurs tried to infiltrate the Swedish POE, as the POE claims, this proves—does it not?—that "the party's ideas attract neo-Nazis."

Lawyer Arlabos, representing one of the distributors of *New Times*, the *Livre du Maison Etranger*, argued that it should be removed as a defendant given that the article's authors were represented. Although it appears in bold type in all issues of *New Times* that "*New Times* is distributed worldwide by Aeroflot," the lawyer for Aeroflot, Mr. Cohen, argued that there was "no proof" that Aeroflot actually distributed this specific issue.

The decision will be handed down on Sept. 30.