
Interview: Sheila Jones



U.S. human rights crusader warmly welcomed by India

Sheila Jones is a well-known political leader in Illinois. A former candidate for the Democratic Party's Senate nomination, she ran in 1987 for mayor of Chicago and was campaign manager for Janice Hart and Mark Fairchild, the two LaRouche Democrats who won upset victories in the March 1986 Democratic primary for statewide office. She was interviewed by Ortrun Cramer of EIR's Wiesbaden bureau on Aug. 26.

EIR: You just returned from a two-week tour through India. What can you tell us about the background of the trip?

Jones: Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute and chairman of the Patriots for Germany, proposed a most important challenge to me at the close of July. It concerned an invitation extended by Mr. S.C. Birla, a member of the Fact-Finding Commission of the international Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States, to bring the case of the persecution of Democratic presidential candidate, Mr. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. before the nation of India, with the hope of enlisting the heirs and followers of the Indian freedom movement, most clearly known through Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru's battle for the liberation of India.

Because India under Prime Minister Nehru was the impetus for the Non-Aligned Movement, and at the time of her brutal assassination, our beloved Indira Gandhi was the new head of the Non-Aligned Movement, I was convinced that, had she lived, she certainly would have joined the rallying movement to defend the Third World's inalienable right to development, led by a Lyndon LaRouche administration in the White House. Therefore, given the atrocities being meted out to Mr. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., by the very financial oligarchy which has a battleplan to destroy the sovereignty of republics across this globe, to the point of doing the bidding of Moscow, I accepted this very trying mission. I resolved to do whatever I could, in two weeks, to plead the case for justice for not only Mr. LaRouche and his persecuted supporters, but also that of the entire American population.

EIR: Where did you go, and who were the people you met

with during your travels?

Jones: I began my tour in New Delhi, the capital, and then flew south by Air India, over the Rajasthan Desert, to Auran-gabad, for one day. The next day I went to Bombay, the next day to Cochine, then to Bangalore, and back up to Delhi. From Delhi I took the train to Agra, the home of the Taj Mahal, and then back to Delhi, after one day.

My schedule varied from 5:00 a.m. to midnight each day, averaging approximately 10 meetings per day. These meetings included one-on-one briefings, debates, discussions with Members of Parliament and former Members, top advocates of the Supreme Court, the High Court, attorneys general, trade and commerce commissioners, trade union organizers, farm organizers, schoolteachers, doctors, scientists, professors of law, economics, science, as well as university students and elementary school children. Receptions were constantly spontaneously organized in the lobby of my hotels, and in living rooms and restaurants.

There were many special and endearing experiences in these meetings which capture the flavor of the unprecedented success of this tour. One was my discovery that lawyers in India are not like lawyers in the United States. I met a very important High Court advocate in Aurangabad, who defends poor and landless farmers. At the door of his house-office, tens of people were outside waiting to meet with him into the night. I soon discovered that he was a caring man, more profound than any lawyer I had ever met in the United States. He ran a school for the poor, which consisted of 500 of the most precious children I, in all my years of teaching, had ever seen. I addressed these little children on the issue of true freedom. Present at this meeting were about 30 politicians and trade union organizers who had traveled across the state to see me. When I asked these children to hold onto hope, and the best way to do this is to commit themselves to journeying to conquer the stars and to promise to join me on Mars, the children applauded with smiles and joy. This was a most moving confirmation for me, as an American supporter of Lyndon LaRouche, that the economic, cultural, and technological optimism to which he has dedicated his whole life must and can succeed. This also underscored for all

present the reason Mr. LaRouche is being persecuted by the financial oligarchy.

When I addressed the entire high court in Bangalore, which consisted of over 250 lawyers and judges for the state, I was so moved, by the thirst of the representatives of the population, for Mr. LaRouche's just New World Economic Order, that I recited Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*, only to discover, that as I finished through tears, the assembled gathering were, too, in tears, as they nodded, recalling the power of Abraham Lincoln's words.

In discussions regarding the violations of Mr. LaRouche and his supporters, all were shocked that in America, free speech is not insured. They were shocked that the right to life and the pursuit of the welfare of the individual are not insured. The question which ended all meetings, was: "What is to be done? What do your Mr. LaRouche and you want us to do? That is what we must know, for from your discussion, time is of the essence!"

EIR: What was the response of the people you met with? If you compare them to the usual response of Americans to the same problems, do you see any differences?

Jones: Besides shock, I saw pain, agony, and sorrow, as the people I spoke to began to slowly realize that what happens with the U.S. Project Democracy's violations of Mr. LaRouche and his supporters, was directly tied to the future of the developing sector, given the genocidal policies of the World Bank and IMF, which the United States is supporting and implementing, not only against the Third World, but against the United States' own population and allies.

When I met with the former President of India, Zail Singh, he told me: "India must cease to be a nation concerned with only her borders. . . . She must become a nation concerned with the entire world!" This is a major difference from politicians in the United States, I think. I found this sentiment to be rather general. Unlike the pragmatic, chauvinistic American citizen—I now can say without feeling personally insulted—I never was asked: "What does this have to do with me . . . with India . . . I can't be bothered with your problems, we have our own!" To a political organizer, like myself, this was quite a powerful statement of the character of the Indian people.

EIR: Besides the work on behalf of the Human Rights Commission, what has impressed you most during the two weeks in India?

Jones: Lyndon LaRouche has often stated that we should view poverty as an opportunity—an opportunity for improvements, growth, progress. What impressed me most, was the sense of optimism in the population. This most concretely hit me in a profound way, on two occasions. One was when I saw Nehru's planetarium, in which there is an incredible monument to India's great scientific potential, living and breathing in the hearts of many Indians. Nehru built this

planetarium, to give India a future and goal which would steer the nation from poverty to progress. I saw the model of the space rocket India launched, as well as the actual manned satellite India and Russia launched together. When I saw this, I said: "My God! I know that we can win and end the misery of this globe of ours, because I've seen it!"

This was further underscored by Indira Gandhi's statements on science and the need to eliminate superstition and backwardness:

"Science fights superstition. The notion that some races or religions or castes are superior to others is superstition. The unquestioning of reverences of everything old is superstition. The belief that a system of thought appropriate to one historical situation is of universal validity is a superstition. Science, on the other hand, is attuned to change. For various reasons, superstition is entrenching itself and finding new supporters. Without the help of science, I see little hope of checking the virus of religious hatred. Scientists and technologists should make it their mission to spread the scientific temper so that our forward march is not blocked by obstacles of superstition."

EIR: What is the message you are bringing back to your own country?

Jones: I simply want to say to my country: The hearts and minds of so many depend on the American population being greater than its own destiny . . . a destiny now which will eliminate all that the Founding Fathers held dear in their ruthless fight to establish a republic to be the beacon of liberty to the rest of the world. The great thing that we have done in establishing this republic, is on the verge of becoming a dim shadow of a memory, unless we can develop the sense of the *punctum saliens*. Deep in my heart I do believe that we can only overcome, if Lyndon LaRouche's right to wage a campaign for a New Just World Economic Order, as only he can do, is ensured and respected.

On the future work of the Human Rights Commission in India, a rapid follow-up process has begun to get scores of testimonies on behalf of Mr. LaRouche, to be read at the upcoming September Washington and Paris Human Rights Commission hearings and conferences. In India, also, there is complete openness, from the people I have met, to organize educational chapters for Mr. LaRouche's economic and cultural policies, as well as the openness for establishing a Schiller Institute. Also, there exist several opportunities to build children's choruses and orchestras.

I am holding very select and targeted press conferences in the campaign states of Mr. LaRouche's presidential campaign, as well as in Washington, D.C. and Boston, Massachusetts. Also forums and classes on the work in India. I see my mission in India as a potential major turning point for the U.S. LaRouche campaign workers and supporters to get a more sensuous view of what Mr. LaRouche means to the developing world.