
LaRouche's Enemies Are Panama's Enemies

The 'monstrous' drive to overthrow Panama's leadership

by Mario Parnther

The following testimony was presented by Mario Parnther, member of the national directorate of Panama's ruling PRD party on Sept. 10, 1987, before the hearings of the Fact-Finding Committee of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States, in Arlington, Virginia. The committee heard witnesses from four continents on Sept. 9-11, on the political persecution of presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche and his associates. (See EIR, Vol. 14, Nos. 37 and 38.) Mr. Parnther's speech has been translated from Spanish, and subheads have been added.

First of all, I would like to express, in the name of the Panamanian people, our admiration for the history and culture of the American people, and our certainty that both our peoples are in mutual solidarity when dealing with the national interests of our respective nations.

The American nation was forged in the heat of the pioneer spirit, and shaped through a battle for national liberation to overcome its colonial status. Through that battle, it became a free nation, beautifully expressed by the Declaration of Independence, while perfecting the rights of its citizens with the first 10 amendments to the Constitution.

The people of the world owe a vast debt to statesmen like Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, among others, who knew how to lead their own people along the true paths of freedom, independence, and democracy.

And yet today, it would appear that some Americans within the Reagan government would like to ignore and betray their own glorious historic past.

And they deny that past when a secret or parallel government, outside the democratic institutions of the United States, conducts the fascist persecution of presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, merely because he seeks an understanding of the best interests of the Latin American people, consonant with the era in which we live.

The actions against Lyndon LaRouche, we feel, correspond to the fact that his activities represent the best of the humanist spirit and political philosophy of the founders of that great nation which is the United States, who never thought to keep other nations from the opportunity of living freely.

The campaign against Panama

We wish to testify here, that Project Democracy, courageously denounced by presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, has unleashed against my country a monstrous campaign to destabilize and overthrow the government and leadership of the Panamanian Defense Forces.

What are the reasons for this decision?

Some astounding accusations have been made against Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega—from drug trafficking (despite public acknowledgement by the DEA for the brilliant "Operation Pisces"), through arms trafficking, to being a double agent for the United States and Cuba, to responsibility for the assassination of an ex-guerrilla linked to the drug trade, Hugo Spadafora. A powerful propaganda machine has been put into place to make these slanders believable around the world.

However, so far there has not been a shred of evidence to sustain these barbarous accusations.

The real reasons have to do with the absolute refusal that Commander Noriega gave Admiral Poindexter, Elliott Abrams, and Oliver North, when they demanded that he cease his efforts in favor of the peace sought by the Contadora Group.

There is also another reason. Commander Noriega upholds the historic commitment that the Defense Forces guarantee the surrender of the Canal in the year 2000, as stipulated by the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, which today men like Jesse Helms—another sinister figure of Project Democracy who conspires against Panama—seek to disavow.

Project Democracy will never forgive Commander Noriega for his efforts in favor of the Contadora Group, nor his identification with [Peruvian] President Alan García, nor his refusal to favor the Contras.

They will also never forgive him for upholding dignity and national sovereignty, nor for identifying with the right to self-determination of peoples, and for relations among nations within the framework of mutual respect.

This Project Democracy decreed a campaign to overthrow the government and command of the Panamanian Defense Forces, creating a Civilian Crusade and a Modelo

[local democratic movement] group, led by wealthy oligarchs and by opposition parties such as the Christian Democratic Party, which have publicly admitted that they are sowing chaos, anarchy, and economic destabilization to achieve their sinister purposes.

Crimes in the name of 'democracy'

We wish to testify here that in the name of democracy, they seek a coup d'état; that in the name of democracy, they violate the law and create violence; that in the name of democracy they have appealed to the U.S. Senate to sponsor economic sanctions that affect the development of my country and condemn my people to hunger; that in the name of democracy, documents of the banking commission are falsified to cause a run on savings and investments in the financial center; that in the name of democracy, a powerful network of newspapers and magazines that have never before dealt with political matters, published disinformation; that in the name of democracy, bad Panamanians are prepared to keep Panama from receiving the Canal; that in the name of democracy, they seek to betray the social conquests of my people, that were bequeathed by Gen. Omar Torrijos when he made it possible for the Armed Forces to join the people's cause, to understand that meeting the vital needs of the people is essential for the nation to live in peace.

In the name of this misunderstood democracy, they want the Defense Forces to betray the people, so that it will again defend the interests of those who work for the secret government sponsored and led by Project Democracy.

It is therefore clear that the campaign is against more than Noriega or the Defense Forces, or the government of President Delvalle; it is against the decision of the Panamanian people to be free of all colonial or neo-colonial tutelage, free to exercise its rights as a friend of the United States, with free will, independence, dignity, and national sovereignty.

It would appear that the dark forces behind Project Democracy have adopted the belief that "common sense is the least common of the senses"; they have ordered the destabilization of a stable government; they have ordered the sabotage of democracy in my country; they have done everything possible to prevent peace in Central America and to encourage war; and they have violated the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, which were approved by Panama and the United States to eliminate a situation of such sensitivity and conflict in Latin America.

What would be the fate of the continent if such designs are successful?

The U.S. secret government

These horsemen of the apocalypse run a secret government in the United States called Project Democracy, and have shown their colors in the Irangate scandal, which demonstrated how, while slandering democratic and progressive governments, they are in fact the ones who traffic in drugs,

weapons, and human lives, behind the backs of the Senate and the Congress, outside the democratic institutions of the United States.

What right do those who make up the secret government have to destroy my country?

What right do they have to destroy the admiration with which the people of the continent regard the United States?

What right do they have to distance their nation from other nations of the continent?

Last July 1, the OAS overwhelmingly supported a resolution in favor of Panama, and against the interference of the Senate in its internal affairs. Seventeen votes against the sole negative vote of the United States, which has never been seen so isolated in the continent-wide organization.

LaRouche restores American image

In view of these serious errors that demonstrate a dangerous ignorance of the reality of our countries, it is fortunate that a man like Lyndon LaRouche has emerged, to denounce such historic errors as Project Democracy and the deformation of the image of the United States achieved by "secret governments" that do not represent the wishes of the U.S. electorate.

Panamanians will never understand or accept that a few U.S. politicians are worried about the fate of newspapers that incite violence and fratricidal warfare, while in the United States they shut down a newspaper, a magazine, directed by Lyndon LaRouche, for the mere fact that they denounce the sinister machinations of Project Democracy against democracy in the United States; we will never understand how they can shut down Lyndon LaRouche's companies as a means of persecuting him, while protecting confessed drug- and arms-traffickers.

We wish to testify that Lyndon LaRouche was perhaps the first to present himself to the Senate to pronounce in favor of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, encouraging a similar inclination within U.S. society. He has also told the truth about the conspiracy against Panama, in proof of which I would like to present the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States with a Spanish-language reproduction of the study, "Who seeks to destabilize Panama, and why?" which appeared in last Sunday's edition of *La República*; concrete evidence of his absolute commitment to the truth on Panama. The document has been well received in my country.

Gentlemen: We will never understand how, for political reasons, the rights of presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche—contained in the First, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendments—can be thus violated.

Excuse me if I conclude by using this opportunity to reaffirm my country's determination to reconquer its full independence in faithfulness to Torrijos's thought: "On our feet or dead, but never on our knees!"; and of Noriega, his successor: "Not one step backward!"