

## LaRouche blasts 'railroad' in Alexandria trial

by Nancy Spannaus

Having whisked through jury selection in less than two hours, on Nov. 21 Judge Albert V. Bryan started the loan fraud and tax conspiracy case of *U.S.A. v. Lyndon LaRouche et al.* in Alexandria, Virginia. Bryan's actions, including the rulings he has made to limit the defense in its attacks on government harassment and financial warfare, led chief defendant and prominent political leader Lyndon LaRouche to comment, "Judge Bryan is an efficient administrator, but he's running the court like a railroad."

Following the opening statement by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kent Robinson, which claimed that the case had nothing to do with politics, the seven defense attorneys all countered with opening presentations on the fact that it is the LaRouche political movement's political enemies, including the government, who are responsible for the movement's financial problems, including the inability to pay back loans.

On trial in Alexandria with LaRouche, are fundraisers Michael Billington, Paul Greenberg, Joyce Rubinstein, and Dennis Small, along with National Executive Committee members of the philosophical association established by LaRouche, the NCLC: Edward Spannaus and William Wertz.

### Government interference

In the first opening statement for the defense, attorney Brian Gettings, representing William Wertz, laid out the central thrust of the defense's argument against the loan fraud conspiracy. The evidence will show, Gettings argued, that the defendants had every reason to believe that they would be able to pay back the loans, taken in the "loan years" of 1984 and 1985, based on the growing support for their political movement.

But they were not allowed to do so. First, there was the

raid of October 1986, and then the forced bankruptcy. The only thing you can conclude is that if the defendants had been left alone, they would have been able to pay, but they weren't.

Gettings substantiated at some length the income/loan profile of the organizing over the years. The evidence will show, he said, that total income, from sales of publications and contributions, was growing substantially up through 1983; in fact over the years from 1979 to 1983, the total income was \$50 million, mostly from sales and contributions. When the heavy reliance on loans began, it was also accompanied by continued growth in traditional income and contributions. Loans never came close to exceeding the income derived from publications.

Will Wertz, Gettings said, had every reason to believe that the positive trend would continue, and that loans would be able to be paid back. But by early 1985, the loan situation had become critical, and Wertz became aware of it. His response was to make an all-out effort to lessen the dependence on loans and pay them back.

Some people in the organization at this point just quit and walked away from the problem—like government witness Chris Curtis. But Wertz had every expectation that it could be turned around. Gettings then described the decreasing amount of loans, and efforts to obtain forgivenesses.

The sticking point, however, came with the federal government's intervention, the October 1986 raid, "which all but destroyed any hope they had of paying it back." This not only smashed income, but increased expenses, for things such as lawyers, for example.

There is no evidence of fraud here, Gettings concluded. Despite the raid and the bankruptcy, they bounced back. In

fact, since 1979, they raised over \$150 million—the real context for the \$30 million in loans the government talks about. “Things would be very different today, if they were just left alone,” Gettings concluded.

### **Political enemies**

Michael Reilly, attorney for Paul Greenberg, directly answered the question in the *U.S.A. v. LaRouche* case as to why loans were not repaid by the defendants, in his opening statement. Reilly said that the defense would show that it was a series of unexpected attacks, including by the federal government, that prevented the repayment. Other attackers named were the FBI, state officials, NBC-TV, the ADL, and the big banks.

Reilly then explained why these agencies would oppose the LaRouche political movement. First, because that movement attacked the most powerful forces in the country in an attempt to improve the country. Second, because they went after those things they considered immoral in a harsh way. And third, because the attacks began to be successful—through successes like the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and the Illinois electoral victories.

It was this set of attacks, especially through the media, that interfered with business contracts and other sales expectations. And, in fact, the defendants said so at the time, with the letters sent out to lenders. The government, of course, says the defendants didn’t mean what they said in the letters—they just were lying because they didn’t intend to pay back the loans. But the government took every scrap of paper out of the defendants’ offices in 1986, which showed that in their most private conversations, they were discussing scrambling to repay loans, and saying they couldn’t because of the attacks on them.

In sum, this is not a case about money, as the government claims, but a case about politics. That’s why the money was raised, and how it was prevented from being repaid, Reilly concluded.

### **The government is lying**

Attorney Odin Anderson, speaking for Lyndon LaRouche, ripped the government’s characterization of the NCLC and Lyndon LaRouche to pieces in his opening statement. Directly countering the government’s claim that the NCLC is a criminal conspiracy, and the authoritarian personality theory on which it is based, Anderson was eventually suppressed by the prosecution and the judge.

Anderson began with a discussion of LaRouche’s commitment to dedicate his life completely to his philosophical and political ideas, a life consumed with constant work. He outlined Lyn’s beginning in politics by opposing the New Left: “He tried to recruit young people who would want to save Western Civilization, not destroy it as the New Left was trying to do.” And that’s what the NCLC is all about.

But the NCLC’s dedication to the principles of industrial

progress and reform of the international financial institutions caused LaRouche and his friends some problems, Anderson continued. LaRouche went on a number of people’s hit lists. He also, of course, is on a lot of people’s Christmas Card lists, as he has won associates and friends from around the world, particularly the Third World. Anderson also detailed the C = 256 campaign in the field of music, and noted that the Soviet Union is among LaRouche’s greatest enemies.

Several lies about LaRouche were directly dispelled. First, that he was responsible for the loan policy. Instead, LaRouche said as often and as loudly as he could, that loans had to be curtailed. Second, that LaRouche wanted loans not to be repaid. To the contrary, LaRouche said as often and as loudly as he could to anyone who would listen that it was “suicide” not to pay back loans to political supporters. And the government knows it.

Anderson devoted the remainder of his remarks to attacking the government’s “ludicrous” tax conspiracy charge. LaRouche never hid his situation, Anderson first noted. Second, he lived in a situation of physical threat, arising first from the Weathermen types, then the Communist Party USA, and later the dope lobby. This created a situation where he was a guest and/or prisoner in places created to preserve his physical welfare, but not only used by him.

Anderson then attempted to counter the Marxist-based authoritarian personality theory being used by the government in portraying the NCLC as a conspiracy—which drove the prosecution into frantic objections, which were sustained by the Judge.

## **This case is about ideas and their suppression**

Kenly Webster, attorney for Edward Spannaus, told the court in his opening statement at the *U.S.A. v. LaRouche* trial that the only reason his client was on trial, was that he was part of a political movement which powerful people wanted to suppress. The focus of this political movement was a battle for the minds of men and women, particularly on the issues of the War on Drugs, the Strategic Defense Initiative, the International Monetary Fund, AIDS, and classical culture. These were controversial ideas, Webster said, and they resulted in major attacks.

The evidence will show, he went on, that most of the defendants’ time was spent on intelligence gathering and writing. These were people devoted to spreading the ideas of their political movement.

As for Ed Spannaus, besides writing on the legislation necessary to stop drug money laundering, the American Sys-