

U.N. gets LaRouche human rights case

The Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations and Helga Zepp-LaRouche, wife of political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche, filed a second petition to the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland on Feb. 2, seeking U.N. action against human rights abuses committed against LaRouche and his political movement by federal, state, and court authorities in the United States. A first petition had been submitted at the end of May 1989, but has yet to be deliberated upon.

The United States has never ratified any of the human rights conventions, and the United Nations can only involve itself against human rights violations committed within the United States under Resolution 1503 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. This requires proof of a "consistent, widespread pattern of human rights violations" in the country. Multiple complaints blaming the U.S. for such violations thereby increases the chances that the human rights bodies might intervene.

For this reason, the petition references a pattern of "unjustified criminal prosecutions against individuals and organizations, that are politically motivated and aim at the elimination of social, political, cultural, or religious minorities," which goes beyond the LaRouche movement per se. The petition cites the attacks upon "dissident" political representatives, holders of public office, independent trade unions, the anti-abortion movement, and the targeting of victims by the Office of Special Investigations in the U.S. Department of Justice.

Supporters of the commission are expected to begin soliciting endorsements both for the LaRouche complaint, and the filing of complaints with the U.N. by persecuted individuals and organizations themselves.

Bases of the complaint

The first section of the complaint relates to violations of Articles 1, 7, 18, and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights regarding the equal rights and personal freedom of each individual, equality before the law, the right to freedom of thought and manifestation of political belief, and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

The complaint concentrated mainly on the "new evidence" discovered since the May 1989 petition. FBI "Do not file" files were discovered to exist. The FBI and CIA use of informants and infiltration of LaRouche-affiliated organizations were documented, as were 11 instances of deliberate FBI dissemination of defamatory material to governments

abroad. The FBI's acting chief of records also revealed that LaRouche has been the subject of a classified file under Executive Order 12333 that created the "secret government" apparatus which came to light during the Iran-Contra affair.

More recent examples of harassment and financial warfare, including an economic death sentence imposed upon the National Democratic Policy Committee, a political action committee representing the LaRouche wing of the Democratic Party, without a hearing of any kind; the freezing of bank accounts of the Constitutional Defense Fund, LaRouche for Justice, and Hamilton System Distributors, Inc. by U.S. Circuit Court Judge George Pratt using the RICO statutes; and the Illinois indictment of LaRouche associates Patricia Schenk, Ron Fredman, and Richard Blomquist on 18 counts of theft, residential burglary, robbery, and intimidation, because they obtained a political contribution, were also documented. Illinois Prosecutor Dennis Schumacher admits his argument that the defendants entered a political supporter's home "with the intent to get money from her," and that their alleged use of intimidation was based on the fact that "they did not leave until they got it" constituted "burglary," was a "novel" charge.

Lack of a fair trial

The second section of the complaint related to violations of Articles 10 and 11 of the same declaration regarding the right to a fair trial by an independent and impartial tribunal, the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in a public trial during which the accused has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense, and the protection against conviction for any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed.

This section dealt with the substantive abuses of law covered in the appeal of LaRouche and six co-defendants, including the arbitrary choice of venue, rush to trial, and the denial of a fair and impartial jury because there was no valid *voir dire* examination of jurors.

The petition reviewed the court denial of defendants' request for exculpatory material, and the granting of the government's pre-trial motion *in limine* which denied defendants' right to present crucial evidence to the jury.

The third section of the petition addressed "violations of Article 5 and 9 regarding the protection against inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and against arbitrary arrest and detention."

LaRouche's life-threatening treatment at the hands of prison officials at the Rochester, Minnesota facility was documented. Also, the barbaric treatment of Michael Billington, who was kept in solitary confinement in Virginia during trial there, and who was put into "The Hole" when moved to the Danbury, Connecticut prison facility, was presented to the U.N. committee.