
Expose NBC News as Accomplice

LaRouche catches Illinois prosecutor in extortion plot

On Friday, July 6, attorneys for Virginia Independent Democratic congressional candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. and his associates Ron Fredman and Pat Noble-Schenk, announced that they had filed a \$30 million lawsuit against members of a prosecution team who were caught using a false, malicious prosecution as a device in an attempted extortion scheme.

Defendants in the suit are Dennis Schumacher of Ogle County, Illinois, described by the plaintiffs as “a corrupt prosecutor in Illinois and a member of the national multijurisdictional ‘Get LaRouche’ task force”; Patricia Lynch, a journalist for NBC television; and Mary Ann Ploch, the daughter of LaRouche supporter Harriet Driver, who, the suit charges, was in a conspiracy with Lynch and Schumacher to extort money from her mother.

Although only these three are named defendants in this \$30 million case, a mass leaflet circulated throughout the United States by LaRouche for Justice, Mr. LaRouche’s congressional campaign committee, states that “this extortion attempt involves the entire ‘Get LaRouche’ federal, state, multi-jurisdictional task force, including Assistant U.S. Attorney Kent Robinson, formerly of the Alexandria, Virginia office of the U.S. Attorney; the U.S. Department of Justice; and the Anti-Defamation League. The Ogle County case is part of a larger extortion plot against LaRouche and his associates, conducted by the task force,” the leaflet continues.

“President George Bush is sitting on thousands of pages of classified documents which confirm that LaRouche is the victim of this illegal task force,” the leaflet further charges. LaRouche was convicted along with six associates in a scandalously political judicial railroad in Alexandria, Virginia, in fall 1988, and is now serving a 15-year term—tantamount to life imprisonment for the 67-year-old statesman—in the Federal Medical Facility in Rochester, Minnesota.

Recently certified by the state board of elections in Virginia as a candidate for U.S. Congress from the 10th District, in northern Virginia, LaRouche has conducted a high-profile

media campaign, criticizing the Bush administration and Congress for its economic and foreign policies, and making his own positive alternatives known to the public.

He is identified around the district, especially in the Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., as the candidate featured on billboards with a healthy-looking bunch of broccoli, and the slogan “Eat it, George”—a sentiment that is much appreciated as the debacle of the Bush administration’s economic policies becomes more and more evident.

Charges were dropped

The \$30 million suit was filed by Chicago attorney Michael Null, following the dismissal June 1 of criminal charges in which Schumacher falsely accused Fredman and Noble-Schenk of robbing Harriet Driver of Oregon, Illinois. Driver had purchased political literature which expresses the views of Lyndon LaRouche from Fredman and Noble-Schenk.

According to the LaRouche campaign leaflet, “The case was initially conceived as a way of eliminating a LaRouche Democrat, Mark Fairchild, as a contender against Illinois Attorney General Neil Hartigan for the Democratic nomination for governor of the state” in the 1990 election.

There is some background to this: In March 1986, Fairchild had won the statewide Democratic primary for the office of lieutenant governor, defeating the candidate picked by the Democratic Party machine, while another LaRouche Democrat received the nomination for Secretary of State. Their upset victories were announced in headlines all over the United States, and spurred the already existing “Get LaRouche” task force into a frenzy of activity to contain the political movement led by Lyndon LaRouche.

Schumacher’s victim suffered stroke

The initial case involved Mrs. Harriet Driver, a supporter of the LaRouche campaign. The prosecutor in this case, Dennis Schumacher, hounded Mrs. Driver, a senior citizen, trying to get her to make false statements, to the point that Mrs.

Driver had a stroke while testifying. After Mrs. Driver's stroke, the judge declared a mistrial.

It was later revealed that, after Mrs. Driver suffered a stroke, Schumacher, NBC producer Lynch, and Driver's daughter, Mary Ann Ploch, continued to attempt to coerce Driver into giving false testimony against Fredman and Noble-Schenk.

It was also revealed that Ploch, Mrs. Driver's "loyal" daughter, had instructed doctors not to resuscitate her mother if her mother slipped into a coma. All three went to the nursing home where Driver was a patient and pressured her to give an interview to NBC and testify against Fredman and Noble-Schenk. Fragments of the interview were subsequently featured May 21 on a national NBC Nightly News television broadcast attacking LaRouche and his associates.

When Fredman and Noble-Schenk subpoenaed portions of the videotape of these interviews which NBC did not show on the air, Schumacher dropped the charges against them.

Schumacher's baseless criminal charges became a major focus for the "Get LaRouche" strike force's nationwide operations against LaRouche's associates. On numerous occasions Schumacher represented, on the record, that his real aim in the prosecution was to stop the political activity associated with LaRouche. NBC broadcast the charges. Mira Bolland of the Anti-Defamation League, which has coordinated and facilitated the extra-legal witchhunt against LaRouche supporters, was scheduled to appear as a witness for prosecutor Schumacher in the Driver case. Loudoun County, Virginia Sheriff's Deputy Don Moore had testified that this was a test case to bring criminal charges against LaRouche associates in connection with selling political literature.

Malicious prosecution

The civil rights suit charges Schumacher, Lynch, and Ploch with conspiracy, extortion, and malicious prosecution. The suit alleges that the defendants "conspired together to obtain baseless indictments against Fredman and Noble-Schenk for the improper purposes of punishing them for their exercises of constitutionally protected First Amendment political activity, cutting off political contributions to and support of the organizations and activities supporting the political movement led by LaRouche, utilizing an Illinois grand jury and a criminal prosecution to improperly attempt to extort the payment of money by the Plaintiffs to a private individual, and utilizing the discovery mechanism of grand jury subpoenas to obtain information for a private law firm to use in preparing a planned civil lawsuit to harass and intimidate political supporters and contributors to political organizations in support of LaRouche."

In so doing, the complaint continues, "Dennis Schumacher acted outside his legitimate role as a prosecutor in utilizing the grand jury and criminal processes for purposes of political harassment and for promoting a civil lawsuit by a private party."

Interview: Denise Quinn

N.J. group demands: Let the governed rule

Denise Quinn is a first grade school teacher who became one of the initiating organizers of a rally of 10,000 people in Trenton, New Jersey on July 1 to protest Gov. James Florio's tax package. The rally, organized on an entirely grassroots basis, included a motorcade of several hundred cars. Many had festooned themselves and their cars with toilet paper, one of the items taxed under the new laws, and with tea bags, a reference to the Boston Tea Party. The rally organizers have vowed to continue to build the movement until they "straighten out government" and are now engaged in a petitioning campaign to raise the issue of recall of the governor and the legislature. The interview was conducted by Patricia Salisbury.

EIR: I know that you announced at the Trenton rally that that event was only the beginning. What are your current activities and plans?

Quinn: What we are basically doing right now is gathering some petitions which say that we want legislation that will permit me to recall you, the legislator, if I feel you are not representing me. . . .

EIR: Would this also permit recall of the governor?

Quinn: Right, to permit this when the government becomes too big for itself, and becomes a closed system, when the people's voices are not heard anymore. We would like the right to be able to do something about this. We live in a democracy, we don't live in a socialist government or a dictatorship and we feel that we are heading toward that, slowly but surely.

EIR: Is your petition a formal petition for the ballot?

Quinn: No, a petition only carries so much weight in New Jersey. The weight it will carry is that we will show up with hopefully one million signatures and present them to the governor. In his campaign speech, in his inaugural night, where he got elected—I have a copy of that—his last line says, "Keep talking, New Jersey, and I'll keep