

LaRouche campaign gains ground

by Anita Gallagher

Lyndon LaRouche's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination has broken through the bureaucratic cretinism of state electoral and Democratic Party officials and qualified for ballot status in 14 states as of Jan. 30. It has also seized the high ground in the Democratic presidential campaign battlefield with a bold stroke: purchase of a 30-minute prime time television spot for Lyndon LaRouche to address the American people, which aired nationally on Feb. 1.

Nationally televised broadcast

The extraordinary broadcast—in this day of the 30-second “sound bytes” for policy “discussion”—opens with the warning that Lyndon LaRouche is not in the studio in person because he is George Bush's political prisoner. The announcer then walks the audience through the history of LaRouche's opposition to the disaster of Reagan-Bush economic policy, quoting Presidents Reagan and Bush on the “recovery,” and juxtaposing that to 1984 and 1988 footage of LaRouche warning that the United States was in a depression caused by a collapse of physical production, not the stock market. LaRouche calls for nationalizing the Federal Reserve, and creating 6 million new jobs, with 3 million in the public sector, and rebuilding the transportation, water, and power systems of the United States.

The broadcast also contrasts the records of LaRouche and Bush on foreign policy, with clips of LaRouche's 1988 prediction of the reunification of Germany, and warnings of the worldwide food crisis, and attacks “those Democratic candidates who would like to do the same foolish things” as Bush. The broadcast addresses the responsibility of the American voters for the candidates they have elected for the last 25 years, and warns the American people that, should they vote the way they have for the past 25 years, “You will be in this depression for a very long time.”

The broadcast appeared as LaRouche had qualified for ballot status in 14 of the 38 states which hold primaries: Mississippi, South Dakota, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Minnesota, Colorado, Louisiana, Maryland, West Virginia, Oklahoma, Texas, Michigan, and Illinois. Ballot access efforts in other states are in progress.

In Michigan, the LaRouche campaign has cracked the politically motivated refusal of Michigan Secretary of State Richard Austin and the Michigan Democratic Party to acknowledge LaRouche as a candidate “nationally recognized

by the media.” On Jan. 28, the American Civil Liberties Union won an injunction ordering LaRouche's name included in the Democratic presidential primary on March 17. In a hearing before State Judge Peter Houk in Lansing, the ACLU elicited testimony from state elections official Christopher Thomas which appeared to shock the court: that the determination of “a nationally recognized candidate” was based solely on the examination of four newspapers and one magazine for a mere one-month period. The court found the scope inadequate. This marks the first time that LaRouche has succeeded in winning ballot status in Michigan. On Jan. 30, the Michigan Attorney General announced that he would seek to appeal the decision.

On Jan. 30, Florida federal Judge Federico Moreno refused to place LaRouche and three other candidates on the ballot for the state's March 10 primary, in a suit brought by the Florida ACLU. The ACLU will appeal the case to the federal 11th Circuit Court of Appeals immediately.

In Texas, the LaRouche campaign defeated a court challenge to its ballot status by the head of the Texas Democratic Party, Bob Slagle. Slagle has a long history of “dirty tricks” to block LaRouche from reaching his supporters in the Democratic Party—supporters who, in 1988, elected LaRouche Democrat Claude Jones chairman of the Harris County (Houston) Democratic Party. Slagle, in language reminiscent of Chicken Little, argued that LaRouche's election, since he is incarcerated, would precipitate a constitutional crisis. The Texas Supreme Court, composed entirely of Democrats, unanimously ruled against Slagle on Jan. 23, and ordered that LaRouche's name be put on the ballot. The court also rejected Slagle's pragmatic argument that the ballots were already being printed without LaRouche's name, stating, “The fact that the printing of ballots has begun does not extinguish LaRouche's right to appear on those ballots.”

FEC dirty tricks

Where the Supreme Court of Texas has ruled consistently with the U.S. Constitution's explicit pronouncement that to run for President, a person need satisfy only three requirements—be a natural born citizen, be a resident of the U.S. for 14 years, and be at least 35 years of age—the Federal Elections Commission is attempting to create legal obstacles where none exist to deny LaRouche matching funds. On Jan. 15, the campaign submitted papers to the FEC demanding that LaRouche be certified to receive the funds for which he qualified, by the FEC's own admission, more than one month ago. The FEC, which has frequently collaborated with LaRouche's enemy, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, knows that its denial of matching funds could cost LaRouche ballot status in states where “matching funds” are part of the criteria.

Refusals to recognize LaRouche's qualifications for ballot status in Tennessee, Kentucky, Wisconsin, and Connecticut are in the process of being challenged.