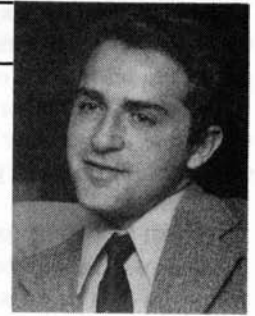


Interview: Philip Valenti



LaRouche campaign got a boost in Penna. primary

Lyndon LaRouche's Democratic presidential campaign received a significant boost in the Pennsylvania primary April 28. With 98% of the vote counted, LaRouche received 21,600 votes, or 2%, finishing fourth of the six Democrats on the ballot. Meanwhile, LaRouche supporter Philip Valenti received 47,070 votes in a five-way race for the Democratic U.S. Senate nomination.

In congressional races, LaRouche Democrats Tony Hadley and Constance Komm received about 2,400 votes and 3,000 votes respectively.

In Philadelphia, LaRouche was credited with over 5,000 votes, compared to only 280 votes in 1988! His vote totals were particularly impressive in the black neighborhoods of the city. In the 32nd ward in predominantly black North Philadelphia, he received 6.5% of the vote. In one voting precinct in that ward, he received 67 out of the total 189 votes cast (35%), and in another, 42 out of 173 votes cast (24%). In the nearby 19th ward, 6.3% of the vote went to LaRouche. In other precincts in the black community, LaRouche received 58 out of 146 votes cast (North Philadelphia), 55 out of 248 votes (West Philadelphia), 38 out of 214 votes (Southwest Philadelphia), 25 out of 116 votes (Germantown), and 41 out of 169 votes (West Oak Lane).

Also in Philadelphia, Valenti outpolled Allegheny County District Attorney Bob Colville for U.S. Senate. Colville had been endorsed by Philadelphia Mayor Ed Rendell.

EIR interviewed Mr. Valenti about the Pennsylvania results on May 4.

EIR: Mr. Valenti, why are the Pennsylvania results so significant? After all, it's only 2% for LaRouche.

Valenti: First of all, no one can claim that "the voters didn't know he was with LaRouche." Our vote was not a random one, nor the result of chance.

If we had left the vote to chance or wishful thinking, then I doubt Mr. LaRouche would have ever out-pollled Harkin and Kerrey, whose names have been branded into the minds of the people, while most voters still didn't know LaRouche was on the ballot! [Harkin and Kerrey each trailed LaRouche by over 1,000 votes—ed.]

With this vote, a potential LaRouche "army" of over 20,000

Democrats has surfaced in this state. Naturally, this does not include the many Republicans and Independents who support LaRouche but who could not vote in the Democratic primary, let alone those not yet registered to vote at all.

EIR: You say the vote was not the result of "chance." Are you saying that mass distribution of literature alone secured the vote?

Valenti: As Mr. LaRouche has pointed out in the past, mass literature distribution is like an "artillery bombardment" in war, to "soften up" an area and allow your "infantry" to advance. Nothing works without the "infantry" on the ground.

Ron Wiczorek, the farmer who carried his district for LaRouche in the South Dakota primary, pointed this out earlier this year. He said that the key was for some person in the community to stand up for LaRouche, even without a lot of publicity, so others would have someone to rally behind.

After all, these elections are really a phase of "people's war." This "people's war," or "cultural warfare," is ultimately won or lost in "hand-to-hand combat," in the person-to-person organizing that goes on every day.

In Pennsylvania, our volunteers systematically telephoned every contact who had recently expressed interest in the LaRouche campaign. We explained that even a 5% vote for LaRouche would give us a chance to upset the Bush-Clinton nightmare, since there are still 12 more primaries after Pennsylvania.

This process resulted in a list of over 800 individuals, each of whom pledged to turn out from 5 to 50 votes. Then, the "hand-to-hand" combat began with their friends and family members. Most people kept a list of prospective LaRouche voters, called them back once or twice, gave them some literature and made sure they got to the polls election day.

Beyond these numbers, there are a significant group of Democratic Party leaders and activists, who are terrified and disgusted by Clinton, and who mobilized for LaRouche like their lives depended on it.

EIR: Mr. LaRouche has said that the mass entertainment and news media is the most corrupt element of our government. What role did the media play in the Pennsylvania campaign?

Valenti: To the extent we had our own army of supporters out there personally organizing other individuals, the media could not stop our core vote.

Let me give you a good example of how this worked, in the case of a dairy farmer in one rural county. This man had experienced a lot of frustration in talking to his neighbors about LaRouche over the years, but never caved in to the media brainwashing himself. Finally, he hosted two Australian farmers at a LaRouche meeting a week before the election, and 12 people showed up.

He followed up those people and others, and as a result LaRouche came in second to Clinton in his ward, with 24% of the vote! Meanwhile, with no one on the scene to cut through the media blackout, LaRouche was held to just one vote in each of the four neighboring wards.

I think this shows on a small scale what the “peaceful revolution” in East Germany proved on a large scale: No amount of media brainwashing can stop a genuine “people’s movement.”

EIR: Can you say something about the impact of your campaign for U.S. Senate?

Valenti: As it developed, my campaign for U.S. Senate provided some important backup to our supporters on the ground.

I participated in the two debates among the five Senate candidates, which were televised on major network affiliates statewide, and nationally on C-Span. They were also carried by dozens of radio stations, with reports published in every newspaper. Our supporters were ecstatic about these debates, and the LaRouche movement earned much new-found respect in the Democratic Party as a result.

The real lesson of all this, however, is that one supporter made all this good media coverage possible. The Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters had originally planned to exclude me, and only me, from its televised debate. A reporter with the *Philadelphia Inquirer* had previously told me that I was “too insignificant” to mention in news coverage of the Senate race, saying that it was “editorial policy” to exclude my name!

Our supporter, a courageous lady who is an officer of an NAACP branch, called the broadcasters’ chairman, and denounced him for discrimination and suppression of minorities. The very next day, I was invited to participate in the debate, and later joined the League of Women Voters’ debate as well. Among other things, I was able to denounce the *Inquirer* on television as “one of the worst purveyors of racist lies and trash in America.”

Beyond this, I visited 25 counties around the state, talking to local mayors and commissioners about the LaRouche economic program, which resulted in a news article in almost every local newspaper.

At the tail-end of the campaign, several statewide polls were published, and each one had excluded my name from the list of Democratic candidates!

By then, however, most of our supporters took this bla-

tant censorship as a mark of honor.

EIR: I understand that the media characterized you as the only “anti-abortion” Democrat for U.S. Senate.

Valenti: Yes, this was an issue of great interest, since the incumbent, Arlen Specter, was being challenged in the Republican primary by the state legislator who authored Pennsylvania’s law restricting abortion, and also because of the stand of Democratic Gov. Robert Casey. Casey has been crusading nationally to change the Democratic Party’s position on abortion, saying that the party’s “pro-abortion” stand has alienated most of the party base.

In the two televised debates, I said, “I believe that we have *no choice*, but to recognize that human life begins at conception. Therefore, the same moral and legal restrictions against taking human life must apply before, as well as after, birth. I believe we must be very strict on this, and apply the lesson of the Nazi Holocaust. It was determined at the Nuremberg Tribunal, that the Holocaust had ‘small beginnings,’ when the medical profession accepted the idea that ‘some lives were not worthy to be lived.’ I believe that the 28 million abortions since 1973 have likewise devalued human life, and opened the door to euthanasia, infanticide, and genocide today.”

I added that being against abortion is insufficient, and that it is the duty of government to “promote the general welfare,” and to provide productive employment, and promote family formation.

Needless to say, the other candidates had no answer to this argument.

Afterwards, one pro-life group, Lifepac, wrote an open letter, saying: “At the time our Lifepac endorsement flyer went to print, we thought all of the Democratic candidates for the United States Senate were pro-abortion. After watching the televised debate and talking to Philip Valenti, we became aware of our error. Philip Valenti is a Pennsylvania Democratic candidate for the United States Senate with a pro-life stand.”

The Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation, however, put out an endorsement flyer, which listed the four other Democratic candidates as “pro-abortion,” but completely excluded my name!

EIR: Can you explain a bit more what Governor Robert Casey is up to?

Valenti: Casey has refused to endorse any Democratic candidate for President, particularly Clinton. He has said that Clinton is unelectable, and that the party has not adequately addressed the issues of jobs, the national debt, and abortion. He says that he will raise the issue of abortion at the Democratic National Convention.

He’s right, as far as he goes. But the most intelligent, hardest-working Democrats in Pennsylvania are with our movement now, so no change for the better will happen without us helping to lead the charge.