

Clinton falters, as LaRouche breaks out

by Kathleen Klenetsky

Less than six weeks before the Democratic Party is slated to hold its presidential nominating convention, evidence is mounting that some major surprises could be in the works, including the jettisoning of Gov. Bill Clinton as the Democratic Party presidential nominee.

For the past two months, conventional wisdom, as peddled by the media, has insisted that Clinton has gained an unbreakable hold on the nomination. But like all conventional wisdom during unconventional times, it bears little relationship to reality. The truth is that Clinton, despite his continuing victories in the primaries, has not only failed to consolidate his political base; he is also increasingly beset by questions concerning his suitability as the Democratic standardbearer.

Syndicated columnist David Broder, who hobnobs with the Democratic Party establishment, sounded the death-knell for Clinton's candidacy in a column published in the May 22 *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. Broder speculated that Democratic delegates may dump Clinton at the convention unless something dramatic occurs before then. Clinton is not getting the bump upwards in the polls that Democrats usually get after wrapping up the nomination, Broder noted, citing a recent Cable News Network-Time poll showing that only 41% of Democrats would vote for him against President Bush and Ross Perot.

With Perot's declaration of candidacy expected to grab much of the media attention between now and the convention, the "whole story line" of the election could change in a way "that could be crippling to Clinton's credibility," wrote Broder. "Unless the governor can find some way to upgrade his standing—and his prospects—dramatically between now and the July 13 opening of the Democratic convention in Madison Square Garden, the story line for convention week coverage inevitably will become: Will the Democrats jettison Clinton?"

Over the past few weeks, there has been a marked increase in the number of Democratic officials who have come out voicing unease or outright opposition to Clinton. These include black party officials in the Midwest and elsewhere, which could spell disaster for Clinton since his success heavily depends on the black vote.

Various scenarios are being floated in the event the Democrats do dump Clinton, and the names of potential alternative candidates, such as Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.) or Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W. Va.), have started to surface. In California, where the June 2 primary could either make or break Clinton, state Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, a long-standing backer of Mario Cuomo, has called on Democrats to vote for Ross Perot, in the event the party doesn't dump Clinton in favor of someone else.

Despite Perot's lack of qualifications for the presidency, and his own strong connections to the Eastern Establishment, his candidacy does reflect the deepening anger most Americans harbor toward the "system" and their dissatisfaction with both Clinton and Bush. In the Washington State primary, for example, Perot received a whopping 20% write-in vote. Perot is drawing support from both Clinton and Bush, and is creating such an uproar that White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater recently called him a "monster."

The crucial point in all this is not to figure out which scenario is "correct," but to understand that the Democratic nomination is now wide open. As one Washington insider told *EIR*: "Don't believe any of this stuff about Clinton having the nomination wrapped up. You don't hear much about it in the press, but there are very few people in the Democratic Party's upper echelons who want Clinton as the nominee. The nomination is up for grabs, and there are a lot of surprises in store between now and the convention."

LaRouche breakout

One of those surprises is the significant increase in support for Lyndon H. LaRouche, the political prisoner of George Bush whose presidential campaign has been subjected to a near-total media blackout. Leading into the primaries, the LaRouche campaign had been hitting hard at Clinton for his barbaric use of the death penalty, and for his membership in the Trilateral Commission.

In Slick Willie's home state of Arkansas, LaRouche took 3% of the vote, over 13,000 votes, and in Idaho, 4%. These results far surpass LaRouche's votes in the previous primaries, and represent an important breakout for his campaign. LaRouche received more votes than Bush in over 50% of Arkansas's counties.

LaRouche's returns are especially significant, because Ross Perot's battalions had pushed hard in both states for a strong "uncommitted" vote. Thus, the increase in LaRouche's vote can't be attributed to a generalized discontent with the political system per se, but indicates a quantum leap in positive support for LaRouche and his nation-building program.

According to Mel Klenetsky, national coordinator of "LaRouche in '92," the election results "demonstrate a strong and growing anti-Clinton movement in the Democratic Party. The American people feel that neither Clinton nor Bush can provide what is needed at this time of crisis. . . . The base of the Democratic Party will not tolerate a Clinton, who is pro-death penalty and backs the North American Free Trade Agreement."

Klenetsky noted that the two executions Clinton has presided over during the period of the primary elections "show a vicious, barbaric side of this candidate. They reflect Clinton's unsuitability to lead the country in a time of crisis that requires the restoration of traditional Judeo-Christian values of justice and economic development," he said. "Bush exhibited this same kind of barbaric behavior in Panama and Iraq; Clinton now exhibits this same lust for retributive action. Neither Bush nor Clinton can lead the country back to justice and economic progress. For this reason, support for a LaRouche presidency will continue to grow."

Clinton winning—badly

In addition to reflecting an upsurge in backing for LaRouche's candidacy, the May 26 primaries provided an important indicator of just how unstable Clinton's "front-runner" status is. The results contained lots of bad news for Clinton.

First, the uncommitted vote rose to levels that are extraordinary this late in the primary process. In the Democratic primary in Kentucky, the uncommitted vote approached 26%, and in Idaho, 27% of voters cast their ballot for "none of the above."

Those returns alone pose real problems for Clinton. But what happened to him in his home state is a very bad omen indeed. Prior to the primary, the Clinton forces had put out the

word that their goal was to garner an 80% vote for the Arkansas governor. This would put the icing on the Clinton campaign cake, they thought, giving him the appearance of not only being invincible, but, more importantly, of someone much loved by those he has governed. Indeed, polls had forecast Clinton taking 80%, with "undecided" at only 8%.

Despite the best efforts of Clinton's well-oiled machine, he fell far short of his goal, taking only 68% of the vote (and less than 50% in Idaho). Moreover, the Arkansas uncommitted vote hovered around 20%, which was a real kick in the teeth for Trilateraloid Bill.

In the weeks immediately prior to the primary, there were numerous indications that Clinton was in trouble in his home state. Polls showed that his lead over Perot and Bush was slipping. Perhaps most ominous was the result received on the final pre-primary survey, when Arkansas voters were asked, "If Governor Clinton wins the Democratic nomination, should he continue to serve as governor?" Some 75% answered, "No, he should resign."

That response reflected increasing unhappiness among Arkansas citizens with their Rhodes Scholar governor. Just before the primary, in fact, the director of the Arkansas Department of Human Services stepped down under pressure, in what the *Arkansas Democrat* described as "an effort to lift the flagging morale of the agency's 8,300 employees." The DHS, which is the largest state agency, has been targeted by Clinton for budget cuts, demoralizing state workers.

In a repeat of Michael Dukakis's "Massachusetts Miracle," Arkansas's already-impooverished economy is slipping deeper into the economic morass. With a \$40 million shortfall anticipated in Medicaid, the state initiated a furlough program, under which employees must take one day off without pay per week for the last seven weeks of the fiscal year, which ends June 30. Resentment was running high against Clinton over the crisis.

In the weeks immediately prior to the primary, the LaRouche campaign broke through the media blackout in the state. Just days before the election, the state's largest newspaper, the *Democrat-Gazette* prominently featured LaRouche's warnings of the Trilateral election fix. Headlined "LaRouche Supporters Set Rally Thursday at Excelsior Hotel," the article quoted extensively from a LaRouche campaign leaflet: "Once again, you, the voters, are being played for suckers. Once again, the Wall Street bankers and speculators are manipulating the elections, to get you to vote for one of their boys. Once again, the two parties think you will vote for a candidate who is a member of the Trilateral Commission.

"First, it was Carter. Then Mondale. Then Bush, who 'quit' after his cover was blown. Today, Bill Clinton, a Trilateral Commission member, is their new fair-haired boy. . . . Before you vote in the Arkansas primary, get the facts. Then, vote in the Democratic primary for Lyndon LaRouche, the candidate the Trilaterals fear so much they threw him in jail."