

LaRouche candidates: movement of principle

by Marianna Wertz

In a major victory for human decency, the referendum which would have imposed the country's most stringent death penalty on the nation's capital, was defeated by a nearly 2 to 1 margin on Nov. 3. The galvanizing force behind the surprisingly strong defeat handed to the death lobby was the presidential campaign of Lyndon LaRouche and the Rev. James Bevel, which put more leaflets, posters, organizers, and telephone calls into Washington, D.C. than any other organized group against the death penalty. The LaRouche-Bevel campaign also addressed dozens of churches, and distributed more than half a million leaflets against the death penalty referendum. Two thousand posters were put up, and tens of thousands of pieces of other LaRouche literature were put into the hands of D.C. voters.

The campaign's highly publicized effort to bring down the statue of Ku Klux Klan founder Albert Pike had linked that Confederate tradition with the imposition of the death penalty, creating a huge scandal in the largely black population of the District. A petition calling for the removal of the statue was also signed by a majority of the D.C. City Council, ministers, and other activists in the District and from around the nation. Councilman William Lightfoot introduced a resolution against the Pike statue into the D.C. City Council, which is scheduled to come up for a vote on Dec. 8.

Speaking to a packed victory celebration in Leesburg, Virginia on election night, Reverend Bevel said that the death penalty initiative was soundly defeated because "we're bringing principles to government. . . . If you establish yourself as a movement of principle, when people are ready to move on principles, they come to you."

Dozens of candidates fielded

This "movement of principle," as Bevel called it, fielded dozens of candidates for local, state, and federal office, who campaigned with the LaRouche-Bevel ticket in support of a return to the American System of political economy to end the depression, replacing the Federal Reserve System with a national bank, a real war on drugs that targets the drug banks, and the abolition of the death penalty. While only one outright victory was achieved, several scored double-digit votes, and proved that the LaRouche movement is a viable nationwide alternative to establishment politics.

Highlights of the election results for the candidates running with LaRouche-Bevel included:

- Bob van Hee won the city council-at-large seat in Redwood Falls, Minnesota.
- Marcella Franklin won 33% of the vote for state representative in St. Louis, Missouri, with 20,000 votes.
- Alice Robb won 39% in a three-way race for state assembly in California.
- Alan Ogden won 3.3% for U.S. Congress in a three-way race in Virginia's 10th C.D. Ogden scored the highest number of votes (6,800) that a candidate running as an independent in this district has ever received.
- Gerald Berg won 17% for U.S. Congress in Virginia's 7th C.D.
- Stan Bentz won 4% for U.S. Congress in a seven-way race in Minnesota.
- Rosemarie Love, a former Cook County, Illinois commissioner, won 2.2% for U.S. Congress in the 7th Congressional District.
- Hubert Bankston won 15% for chairman of the board of county commissioners in Walker County, Alabama.

The LaRouche movement fielded candidates in a total of 16 states, mostly running as independents. They were strongly represented in the Midwest, including Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota, Indiana, and Illinois; and in the West, in California, Washington, and Idaho.

Uplift the population

In his election eve speech, Reverend Bevel called on the campaign's supporters to continue the fight against the death penalty in the District of Columbia by making that fight "Exhibit A." The defeat of the death penalty in Washington should become an example for how principles could be reestablished in the country as a whole, he said. "The people of the District of Columbia can give the Congress and the Supreme Court an example of how principles are the basis of government.

"We had to mobilize the whole town. We did an effective job. Now we have to show people it is as easy to stop murder in the streets as to vote down the death penalty."

Bevel maintained his optimism that, with the impetus built up by the victory of principle on the referendum, the challenge to stop the mayhem in our nation's cities could, and must be met. He again insisted the *only* way to stop the murder in the streets is through uplifting the population.

"We now have to go into D.C. and so impact the city that it has to change," he said. Now, thanks to the way we approached the Pike statue and death penalty campaigns, "all the doors are open to us, while everyone else takes a two-year vacation."

Bevel concluded, "There is a government on the shoulders of Christ. People are frail and helpless. The ship of state is in a storm with nobody controlling it. We have to come up with the insight to address the problem in this nation."