

Bevel vows: Pike statue will come down

The Rev. James Bevel, the renowned leader of the civil rights movement and vice presidential running-mate of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., addressed a demonstration of some 125 people protesting in front of the Washington, D.C. statue that honors Confederate general Albert Pike—the Satanist, Freemason, and founder of the Ku Klux Klan. The statue *will* come down, Bevel told the rally; and the United States will once again come to represent morality and hope, rather than thuggery and violence in the world.

Bevel compared the “prophet” LaRouche to Noah, with his warnings of the Flood. Today, the flood of war and chaos and the AIDS pestilence has hit. But our committed struggle will prevail over the forces of evil, he said.

On the day of the Nov. 3 election victory of Bill Clinton, LaRouche and Bevel pledged to continue their campaign unabated (see *EIR*, Nov. 20, page 66). A major aspect of this is the fight to take down the Pike statue, which is a symbol of everything that is wrong with our government today. The statue is being defended by the Scottish Rite Freemasons, the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (ADL), the KKK, and the National Park Service Police (who arrested Bevel on Nov. 13 for leading a nonviolent protest at the statue).

Reverend Bevel took his campaign to Europe and to several U.S. cities at the end of November and early December, while other campaign activists were conducting national tours, rallies, and lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill and elsewhere.

As a result of such activity, the city councils of New Orleans, Louisiana, and Birmingham, Alabama passed resolutions early in December, demanding that the statue be demolished. Similar resolutions had already been adopted by Buffalo, New York, and Newark, New Jersey.

A resolution sponsored by Councilman William P. Lightfoot, the “Albert Pike, Ku Klux Klan Memorial Statue, Removal Resolution of 1992,” is pending before the District of Columbia city council, and is a very hot issue in the nation’s capital. The Washington rally was addressed by, among others, D.C. Councilman Harry Thomas, a member of the national leadership of the Prince Hall Freemasonry (the African-American Masons, who have played an important role in exposing the racist General Pike).

Who will act?

In his ongoing national tour, Reverend Bevel is putting everybody on the spot, in his inimitable hard-hitting, but

loving, manner.

He spoke on Dec. 6 to the executive board of the National Conference of Black Mayors, meeting in Hilton Head, South Carolina, with 60 mayors and advisers in attendance. He challenged the mayors to become activists and to reverse the violence and crime engulfing our cities. He reminded them that the civil rights movement, of which he was a prime author, was responsible for the fact that they are in office today, and, in that sense, they were his children. They have a responsibility to do what is right, not to squander the opportunity that has been made for them. He laid out before them a series of initiatives, of which the removal of the Pike statue was first and foremost.

In Los Angeles on Nov. 30, Reverend Bevel addressed the Baptist Ministers Conference, preaching the message of the day, a very polemical statement to the 50 ministers attending. “Brothers,” he said, “I assume we here are all disciples of the Lord; isn’t that true? Well, Jesus said to His disciples, ‘You are the salt of the earth, but when the salt loses its taste, it should be trodden in the dust.’ Now I think we have lost our taste, our saltiness.”

Reverend Bevel proceeded to tell the Biblical story of Nehemiah, who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonians had brought down the wall and attacked not the Babylonians, but the Jews, saying, “You have sinned and the walls have crumbled down.” In the same way, Bevel said, the walls have crumbled around Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, New York, and other cities in America. He described the qualities needed for leadership, and criticized the ministers for being full of hate, when what is needed is love.

At a luncheon meeting with over a dozen leaders of the African-American and Hispanic communities of Los Angeles, the issue posed was how to rebuild the cities, in accord with what Reverend Bevel has called his “Exhibit A” perspective. Speaking to campaign workers on election day, he had called on them to take one American city and make it into “Exhibit A,” a model of how a citizens’ movement can change the world. The Los Angeles meeting ended with many participants plotting how to get Reverend Bevel back just as soon as possible to organize their associates. One union leader said, “Just give me a week’s advance notice, and I’ll fill a gymnasium.”

Other meetings were held with students at area colleges and universities.

Reverend Bevel concluded his southern California campaign tour by addressing a packed house of LaRouche-Bevel campaign activists and supporters. Using the lesson of the Sermon on the Mount, he challenged them to face up to those personal flaws that prevent them from measuring up to the standard set by LaRouche—the hate and lust that prevent people from functioning at the highest level. “Man in the image and likeness of God can run government,” he said; “pimps and whores cannot. Are you with me, or am I making you angry?”