

LaRouche on TV: 'Impeach Tom Ridge!'

by EIR Staff

With the report on Aug. 21 of the first documented death caused by Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge's draconian cuts in the state medical assistance program, the importance of Lyndon LaRouche's call for the impeachment of Ridge became apparent to many people who might, in the past, have thought that it was an "exaggeration" to compare Ridge to the Nazi war criminals convicted at Nuremberg.

Earlier this year, Ridge pushed through state legislation which deprived 220,000 poor and disabled citizens of medical benefits, saying that this was necessary to "balance the budget." LaRouche's Presidential campaign has circulated hundreds of thousands of copies of a pamphlet calling for Ridge's impeachment, citing studies which show that such measures will lead to the death of an estimated 3,500 people within six months.

On Aug. 12, GOP Presidential candidate Bob Dole announced that Jack Kemp would be his running mate, finishing off Ridge's hopes of getting the nomination. Ridge had reportedly been among Dole's top three choices, but the pressure from LaRouche's campaign made him too much of a political liability, GOP sources say.

The battle intensified on Aug. 24, when LaRouche, a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, delivered a telecast speech on cable network WWOR-TV, in a previously suppressed program titled "Impeach Governor Tom Ridge, for Nazi-Style Crimes Against Humanity." LaRouche's half-hour TV broadcast was originally contracted to run on more than a dozen stations throughout Pennsylvania, in the first two weeks of August. But, at the last minute, corrupt officials at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), citing the outrageous assertion of Democratic National Committee Chairman Donald Fowler that LaRouche was "not a bona fide candidate," arranged to have almost all the broadcasts cancelled. Only one Philadelphia station ran the show as scheduled.

The program shown on WWOR-TV was advertised in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and could be accessed by cable subscribers throughout Pennsylvania, as well as in many other states.

The telecast begins with film footage of the Nuremberg trials and the executions which followed them, as the announcer declares: "The Nuremberg trials went on for 15 months, and, bit by bit, these exponents of mass murder moved closer and closer to the hangman's noose. Twenty-

one were found guilty, and ten were executed, but the misery and horror they spawned lives after them."

LaRouche then says: "This is what we have hung people for at Nuremberg. And what we're accusing Ridge of, is a crime which differs in no sense."

How is it, LaRouche asks, that we in the United States, came to tolerate a fellow like Tom Ridge as a governor of a great state? How is it, that we have tolerated the *Contract on Americans*, which is the real name for Newt Gingrich's program?

"This man, under the pretext of balancing the budget, with other resorts at hand, set out to kill people, knowing, number one, that this *would* kill people, in mass murder. How do you like 3,500 people, is that good enough for mass murder? Would you execute a man who went out with a machine gun and killed 3,500 people? He did it.

"Not only did he *know it*, that he was doing it, but he *knew* it was a crime, because we caught him at it once, we played a part in defeating the bill he was pushing. . . . That is mass murder; and, that is what we called at Nuremberg a *crime against humanity, a capital crime against humanity.*"

First documented victim

According to a report in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on Aug. 21, Wilzon Lescay, a 51-year-old legal immigrant from Cuba, was thrown off the public assistance rolls on July 29, as a result of Governor Ridge's policies; Lescay suffered from mental disabilities, and was under treatment for depression and schizophrenia. On Aug. 7, Lescay hanged himself from the banister of a staircase at his residence at 15th and Bainbridge Streets in South Philadelphia.

Lescay was laid off last winter, and began collecting unemployment benefits, but he continued to look for work. "He was not a lazy person at all," said Sister Angela Newman, manager of the residence for once-homeless men, where Lescay had lived since May 1993. "He wasn't just sitting around the house. He was always out looking. . . . He went out every day on interviews. This is the sad part. When he tried and tried and tried and was not getting anything. . . ."

Forty-eight hours after the *Inquirer* story hit the newsstands, Department of Public Welfare (DPW) Secretary Feather Houstoun announced that three provisions of Ridge's medical cuts, known as Act 35, were being suspended, including two changes in residency requirements and the clause denying benefits to immigrants.

Houstoun said that the State Attorney General's Office "advised DPW not to enforce these three provisions, pending its review of their constitutionality." Her Aug. 23 news release said that DPW "will contact all recipients whose benefits have been denied or discontinued." She said that retroactive payments will be made for anyone who was cut off, and that those individuals denied benefits can reapply and become eligible from the date of original application. "All other provisions of Act 35 remain in effect," however, the statement emphasized.