

Demise of Gore campaign clears the way for LaRouche

by Debra Hanania-Freeman

A tumultuous week in the drive for the Y2000 Democratic Party Presidential nomination came to a dramatic close on Sept. 29, when Vice President Al Gore, who until a few months ago was considered unstoppable in his drive for the top spot on the Democratic ticket, called a press conference to announce what he called "radical changes" in his campaign.

Appearing before the Washington, D.C. press corps, the Vice President tried to put a positive spin on the Gore camp's mounting hysteria over gains made by the campaign of former New Jersey Senator Bill Bradley, who is now even with Gore in most polls, and ahead of him in third-quarter fundraising totals. Saying that he wanted to take his campaign for the Presidency "directly to the grassroots and directly to the American people," Gore announced that he would be shutting down his campaign's national headquarters on K Street in downtown Washington, in order to "move this whole campaign, lock, stock and barrel, to Nashville."

A visibly shaken Gore went on to tell the stunned audience that he had instructed his campaign staff to contact the Bradley campaign "to challenge my opponent for the Democratic nomination, Bill Bradley, to a series of debates on specific issues, a lot of them. . . ." Although the Vice President seemed desperate to convince those listening that what he was announcing was "a brand new campaign," the universal response was that the press conference amounted to "last rites" for Gore's Presidential bid.

Washington insiders have been predicting the death of Gore's candidacy all summer, but during the course of the ten days prior to Gore's announcement, the story dominated the U.S. press. One cartoon pictured the Vice President dressed as a jockey, lying on the ground, while a forlorn Democratic donkey with a riding crop in his mouth tries to rouse the

candidate. Two observers stand in the corner; one of them remarks, "It's no use beating a dead jockey."

The cartoon is typical of others that began appearing the day that New York's retiring Democratic Senator, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, called a press conference to announce his endorsement of Bradley. Moynihan told the press, "There is nothing the matter with Al Gore, except that he cannot be elected." The next day, Philadelphia Mayor Ed Rendell accepted the post offered him by President Clinton as the new chair of the Democratic Party, and promptly withdrew his earlier endorsement of Gore, saying that he wanted to be "scrupulously neutral."

The *New York Post* said that the Rendell move was "fueling speculation that top Democrats are hedging their bets." Another leading Democratic operative, who is very close to the President, said, "Ed Rendell endorsed Gore because he thought that was what Clinton wanted him to do. But, he's been up in Philadelphia. He came down here and obviously got the message clearer."

As rumors continue to grow that the President is putting out the unofficial word that Democrats are free to "follow their conscience" on whom to endorse, the list of former Gore endorsers also grows.

By Sept. 27, *Time* magazine hit the newsstands with a cover photo of Bill Bradley and the headline, "The Man Who Could Beat Gore." A caption reads, "Bill Bradley has the brains, the bio, and the bucks. . . ."

Television coverage following Gore's press conference showed clips of a man who seemed to be unraveling before the eyes of the nation. He stumbled over questions, and repeatedly said that he would go back to Tennessee, "because every campaign in which I've been successful has been based in

Tennessee.” When one journalist pointed out that those were campaigns where the only votes that counted were from Tennessee, the Vice President appeared confused.

The choice is *not* between ‘Coke and Pepsi’

Gore repeatedly lied that “there are only two candidates, Coke and Pepsi.” But, despite Gore’s desire to wish away the candidacy of Democrat Lyndon LaRouche, the fact is that the most serious blows to Gore’s Presidential hopes have come from the campaign of LaRouche, who was certified for primary campaign matching funds on Sept. 30.

Members of LaRouche’s campaign apparatus were highly visible at several key meetings held in Washington, and in both cases, did serious damage to the Vice President’s credibility. Thousands of likely Democratic voters who were in Washington for the Congressional Black Caucus’s annual legislative conference were shocked when LaRouche campaign workers exposed the fact that Gore’s cronies at the Democratic National Committee had asked a Federal district court panel to declare the Voting Rights Act of 1965 unconstitutional, rather than apply it to the DNC. When the same material was presented at the DNC meeting itself, the vast majority of committee members not only had no idea that their leadership had gone to such extremes to try to nullify LaRouche’s support among Democrats; they were horrified. Even those who insisted that they didn’t agree with LaRouche’s policy outlook, conceded that disagreement was one thing, but that disenfranchising voters in an attempt to maintain control of the party apparatus was not only unjust, but suicidal.

It is an irony that the Vice President has suddenly found his enthusiasm for policy debate. His so-called challenge to Bradley to debate him on “specific issues” comes at the same time that LaRouche’s Committee for a New Bretton Woods has released a 90-minute videotape of an extended dialogue that LaRouche conducted, over the Labor Day weekend, with a distinguished panel of American state legislators and trade union leaders in the context of his Presidential campaign. The full transcript of the exchange appeared in last week’s *EIR*, and is also available on LaRouche’s campaign website (www.larouchecampaign.org). The panel’s offer to conduct a similar exchange with candidates Gore and Bradley has, at least so far, gone unanswered. Indeed, given the continued accelerating crash of the global financial system, and LaRouche’s unique expertise as the world’s leading physical economist, it is unlikely that either Gore or Bradley is anxious to stand against him in a policy debate.

The labor vote

It is no secret that Gore’s flailing campaign has pulled out all the stops in an attempt to secure the endorsement of the AFL-CIO, when the group meets in Los Angeles this month. Gore staffers, speaking on the condition of anonymity, have said that if Gore fails to secure the endorsement, it will be

almost impossible to keep the campaign afloat.

But, such an endorsement seems unlikely. Gore is widely viewed as a traitor to labor for his role in strong-arming a Democratic Congress to vote for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). And, most trade union leaders readily admit that even if Gore operatives succeeded, by whatever tactics, in securing the AFL-CIO endorsement, they are not at all confident that they could translate that endorsement into actual Gore votes from trade union members.

And, although Bill Bradley strikes a far more sympathetic chord among union members because of his opposition to Gore’s hated welfare reform policy, the fact remains that Bradley is also an unswerving supporter of the free-trade policies that have broken the wage level of American workers. And, he has done nothing to distance himself from the mythology of the “great economic recovery” that infuriates voters who are forced to work two and more jobs in order to survive.

Adding to Gore’s uphill battle, a 25-minute version of LaRouche’s aforementioned dialogue, highlighting LaRouche’s exchanges on policies most closely identified as of interest to American labor, is being made available to all delegates to the AFL-CIO convention, and is said to set a standard and depth of discussion that especially Gore must *avoid*, if he is to win any support at all.

The next step for LaRouche

It was well known that Gore operatives in the Democratic Party’s Washington bureaucracy had planned to use the September DNC meeting to effect changes in Party rules to lock out a LaRouche candidacy. But, according to DNC members in attendance, no change in Party rules was enacted. Meanwhile, the LaRouche campaign is submitting its delegate selection plan to various states, as part of LaRouche’s participation in the vast majority of Democratic primary elections. And, LaRouche himself continues to keep a heavy schedule of media appearances, as he prepares for this next, undoubtedly hotter phase of the Presidential campaign.

Documentation

FEC certifies LaRouche for primary matching funds

The following press release was issued by LaRouche’s Committee for a New Bretton Woods on Oct. 1.

Yesterday, the Federal Election Commission announced that it had certified Lyndon LaRouche’s principal campaign committee as eligible to receive federal matching funds for the Y2000 Presidential primary campaign.

LaRouche is seeking the Democratic Presidential nomination, along with Vice President Al Gore, and former Senator Bill Bradley. Bradley's campaign was certified on March 25. Mr. Gore's campaign was certified the same day as LaRouche's.

To become eligible for matching funds, candidates must raise a threshold amount of \$100,000 by collecting \$5,000 in 20 different states in amounts of no more than \$250 from any individual. Other requirements for eligibility include agreeing to an overall spending limit, abiding by spending limits in each state, using public funds only for legitimate campaign-related expenses, keeping financial records, and permitting an extensive campaign audit.

Once certified as eligible, campaigns may submit additional contributions on the first business day of every month. The U.S. Treasury Department will pay the FEC-certified amounts to the campaigns beginning in January 2000. The maximum amount a candidate could receive is currently calculated to be \$16.75 million.

LaRouche's national spokeswoman, Debra Hanania-Freeman, said that although there was never any question that LaRouche's campaign would be certified, formal certification meant more than an eventual injection of cash resources. "In many states, matching funds certification is an important criterion in determining whether or not a Presidential candidate's name is automatically placed on the primary ballot."

Freeman said she wondered why it took the FEC more than seven weeks to certify the LaRouche campaign's eligibility, and only three weeks to certify Al Gore's submission. One possible explanation for the delay was that LaRouche had more individual contributors on his threshold submission than did the Vice President.

"Lyndon LaRouche already has the largest volunteer force of any candidate, the most active website, and the broadest distribution of in-depth campaign literature on proposed policy initiatives for these crises-wracked times," Freeman said. She noted that the campaign had just released a mass-circulation 90-minute videotape presentation of a dialogue between the Democratic candidate and a panel of distinguished state legislators and trade union officials, who came to Washington over Labor Day to question LaRouche on his views. She said the campaign had also produced a special 25-minute version of the dialogue for delegates to the upcoming AFL-CIO convention in Los Angeles.

"Perhaps now that the LaRouche campaign has been certified eligible for matching funds, Vice President Gore will behave himself, and stop describing the contest for the Democratic presidential nomination as 'a contest between Coke and Pepsi.' I'm sure the Vice President agrees with some of his friends in Buckingham Palace, that it is time to 'shut LaRouche's mouth,'" Freeman said, referring to a threat against LaRouche that was issued through a British women's magazine last month. "But, as the global crises intensify, more

and more Americans are concluding that no one but Lyndon LaRouche has the demonstrated ability to stop the progression toward what would otherwise appear to be inevitable disaster. And, unlike Britain, America is a constitutional republic, with citizens, not subjects. Those citizens are the ones with the right and the responsibility to decide who is qualified to lead in this time of crisis."

If Gore wants to talk. . .

The following press release was issued by LaRouche's Committee for a New Bretton Woods on Oct. 1.

Apparently, in a sharp reversal of tactics, designed to rescue his troubled campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination, Vice President Gore has decided that he does want to debate the issues, at least with former Senator Bill Bradley.

In a press conference Sept. 29, Al Gore announced that he was making "drastic and radical" changes in his campaign tactics, including the relocation of the national campaign headquarters from downtown Washington, D.C. to Nashville, Tennessee, which he described as "moving this campaign lock, stock, and barrel from K Street to K-Mart." He also challenged Bill Bradley to a series of debates on specific issues. In issuing the challenge to Senator Bradley, Gore lied, "There are only two candidates in the Democratic race—Coke and Pepsi."

"Al Gore has spent the last six months using strong-arm tactics trying to circumvent the Democratic Party nominating process, and declare himself Bill Clinton's heir apparent," noted LaRouche's national spokeswoman Debra Hanania-Freeman. "In January of this year, Lyndon LaRouche issued his *Road to Recovery* book in an attempt to focus attention on the crucial policy issues that had to be addressed in this crisis-wracked period. Al Gore wanted none of it. Now, although Gore still seems determined to continue his futile efforts to keep Mr. LaRouche out of the Democratic Party and out of the policy debate, he says he wants to debate Senator Bradley."

"I think it's a fine idea. I wonder, is the Vice President suggesting that Bill Bradley travel to Nashville for the debate? I suppose it could be staged right out there on Highway 65, in the shadow of that big statue of KKK founder Nathan Bedford Forrest. Perhaps Senator Bradley could ask the Vice President to comment on some of the questions that a distinguished panel of state legislators and trade union officials asked Lyndon LaRouche in that three-hour dialogue they conducted with him over the Labor Day Weekend. In fact, I'd like to propose that Senator Bradley ask Al Gore to take the opportunity to explain to the American voters what his views are on that landmark piece of civil rights legislation known as the Voting Rights Act. . . ."