

# IMF severely criticized in Armenia

Anno Hellenbroich, director of EIR Nachrichtenagentur in Wiesbaden, Germany, was invited by Armenia's Union of Constitutional Rights (UCR) to visit the Armenian capital of Yerevan. The UCR's 11th party convention took place on Oct. 10. More than 200 party members, representatives of other political parties, and radio, television, and print media, were in attendance.

The convention drew considerable public attention because two party representatives, the chairman, Hrant Khachatrian, and his deputy, Haik Babookhanian, publisher and former chief editor of the largest opposition newspaper in Armenia, *Iravunk*, were elected to the Parliament on May 30 as part of the "Iravunk ev Miabautiun" (Justice and Unity) coalition, which won a total of seven seats.

Khachatrian and Babookhanian have participated in numerous international conferences of the Schiller Institute, and have been interviewed by *EIR* frequently in the past. (See *EIR*, June 18, 1999; Jan. 9, 1998; March 22, 1996; Aug. 4, 1995; June 25, 1993.)

The convention speeches by Khachatrian and Baboo-

khanian, both reelected to their party posts by large majorities, underscored the mood of mobilization within the party. Khachatrian called on the party to assert "inalienable rights with power," which means, to protest the catastrophic economic situation, with all of its immense social problems. The party is actively asserting itself in public life.

In 1996, there was massive manipulation of the Presidential elections, and a number of members of the government have been involved in corruption. Khachatrian's party and its newspaper, *Iravunk*, have won great respect among the population for their incorruptibility, their firm position on constitutional and human rights, and their defense of Armenia's sovereignty, especially in respect to the contested issue of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan.

## 'What tasks lie ahead?'

In his speech, "The Present Global Crisis—What Tasks Lie Ahead?" Hellenbroich described the disastrous consequences of the conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He quoted from a greeting by Lyndon LaRouche

## Armenian political figures back LaRouche

October 21, 1999

Dear voters of the U.S.A.,

Among the candidates in the U.S. Presidential elections in 2000, American economist, philosopher, known public and political figure Lyndon LaRouche is expanding his political movement. Respected citizens of the U.S.A.: Obviously, you are aware of his activity better than we are, but, taking into consideration the significance of the Presidential elections of the U.S.A., not only for the internal life of the U.S.A., but for its implications worldwide, including the political processes in the Caucasus and Armenia, it is our responsibility to make you acquainted with our point of view, based on the experience of our last decade of observations.

We have no doubt, that all the scientific prognoses of

LaRouche—concerning the deepening of the world financial crisis, the reorganization of geopolitical blocs, the rising and deepening of political and military contradictions—are coming true. From our own experience, we can insist that most of the contradictions could be restricted, if LaRouche's proposed economic and political recipes were put into effect.

The theory advanced by LaRouche explains not only the sources of the worldwide crisis, but also proposes solutions, and ways to recover from it. It is obvious, that the ideas and proposals of Lyndon LaRouche are not under the control of the international oligarchy and financial organizations such as the International Monetary Fund.

We call on you to join your efforts to Mr. LaRouche's campaign, to step into the 21st century, as citizens of a peaceful and developing world.

In the name of the Union of Constitutional Rights of Armenia,

Hrant Khachatrian and Haik Babookhanian

Deputies of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia

to the Chinese people on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, in which LaRouche, in view of the global financial and economic collapse, demanded that more intelligent people and political leaders participate in implementing a policy of reorganizing the financial system, and for economic reconstruction. Hellenbroich emphasized the importance of LaRouche's election campaign for President in America for overcoming the dramatic worldwide economic crisis, with which the Armenian population also has to struggle.

In view of the fighting in the Northern Caucasus, occurring only a few hundred kilometers from Armenia, and against the background of tensions with Azerbaijan, as well as the effects of the blockade against Armenia (initiated by Azerbaijan in 1993 and observed by Turkey), Hellenbroich severely criticized the reemergence of the 19th-century British geopolitical "Great Game" strategy, a concern shared by many in the audience in view of Armenia's geographic position. Hellenbroich's call for the establishment of a "New Bretton Woods" global financial system in the context of a Eurasian development strategy, originally a call to President Clinton which was initiated by the founder of the Schiller Institute, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, and a leading Ukrainian Presidential candidate, Natalia Vitrenko, was roundly applauded.

Most of the discussion concerned the social problems in the country, and many younger members of the party addressed the problem of the unbroken wave of emigration. In recent years, nearly 1 million people, out of what was once a population of 3.7 million, have left the country for, primarily, Russia, the United States, France, or Iran.

The final communiqué of the convention reflected these concerns, and criticized in particular the bad effects of the policy imposed by the IMF. Local elections will be held soon, and so the party issued a call for its members to work on expansion of the party base throughout the country.

Hellenbroich also had the opportunity to hold several other discussions with representatives of the government and Parliament.

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## Interview: Hrant Khachatryan

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# The oligarchy is trying to destroy our economy

*Hrant Khachatryan is president of the Union of Constitutional Rights (UCR) in Armenia. The UCR is the leading political party within the Iravunk ev Miabautiun (Justice and Unity)*

*electoral slate, which included Khachatryan and his colleague Haik Baboookhanian, who were elected to Parliament on May 30. Both are longtime friends of the LaRouche movement. Mr. Khachatryan was interviewed on Oct. 10 by Anno Hellenbroich, who visited Armenia to attend the UCR party convention.*

**EIR:** Mr. Khachatryan, I would like to congratulate you on your reelection as president of your party, and I would like to ask you, what are your thoughts now, after the May elections, being back in Parliament, and with the tenth anniversary of the formation of your party, today? What is foremost on your mind?

**Khachatryan:** These were party elections for the leadership, and the party itself is supported by 86,000 people, voters. We have two seats in the Armenian Parliament. The members of our party today confirmed their choice of leadership. This was an ordinary meeting of our party.

We now have 11 years of experience behind us, and we have a very concrete program, a very well-known style of activity. Our views on events and developments are based on the idea of self-determination of nations, the right of unification of separate nations, for peaceful solutions of different types of conflicts, for stability.

**EIR:** In the next weeks of your political campaign for local and regional elections, what role will the economic issue play? I understand that, in some speeches at the party convention, the conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund were strongly attacked. Will this be part of your campaign?

**Khachatryan:** The economic situation has a great influence on politics. There are some ideas, such as those coming from the oligarchy, to destroy the economic structures of sovereign countries, to have more control over these countries, and over the leadership of these countries. We have experienced this over the last seven or eight years.

We used to be a country with a potential to industrialize, but we have lost most of this potential. The electronics sector of our economy, which was quite powerful, has been destroyed, and this is also the case for chemicals and raw materials processing. The structure of our agricultural sector has also been destroyed. Armenia is now a net food importer. We also import tools.

And, this is so in all of the former Soviet countries, which are suffering the same problems.

According to our analyses, these are problems which come from the same geopolitical centers.

Now, unfortunately, the societies and populations of these countries cannot be organized to defend themselves, to win their rights to survive, to work. What Armenians need today is, first, to have the right to work, to gain some income.

**EIR:** Regarding the enormous crisis which has developed in Chechnya and Dagestan: What is your response to the voices