

Australia Dossier by Allen Douglas

An Electoral Shake-Up

LaRouche's associates in the Citizens Electoral Council scored a breakthrough in the Victoria state elections.

A minor earthquake erupted in Australian politics on Nov. 30, in the Victoria state parliament elections. In their first-ever state campaign there, Lyndon LaRouche's associates in the Citizens Electoral Council (CEC) fielded 18 candidates for 88 seats, the fourth-largest slate of all parties; achieved an average 1.6% vote across all seats; and, in the western Melbourne seat of Derrimut, the CEC's Andre Kozlowski scored 8.3% of the vote. The significance of the vote was not lost on the Establishment, even though they misrepresented it as merely a protest vote. On ABC-TV, Antony Green, Australia's leading elections expert, claimed that the high CEC returns represented "a very big protest vote in that seat." The 8.2% in Derrimut put the CEC well over the 4% barrier for state matching funds.

While modest in some respects, the CEC's election results stand out in bold relief when seen in context. With 0.31% of the vote statewide, the CEC whopped the Australian Democrats, who came in at 0.12%, and who have been, for the past 25 years, the leading parliamentary party outside the three "major" parties: the Liberal and the National parties—whose coalition presently rules Australia at the federal level—and the Australian Labor Party. The CEC vote also surpassed the 1999 Victoria totals of One Nation (0.29%), a populist shooting star which briefly recorded votes of 10-20% in the late 1990s.

Also relevant, is that the total election-campaign period was only four weeks long, and that the CEC has been either blacked out of the media for

years, or, when it has been covered, has been subject to vile attacks by the nation's Rupert Murdoch-dominated press. The CEC's vote was uniquely due to old-fashioned "door-knocking" and high-profile street rallies, so that its vote was clearly hard-core. Without the massive funding of the major parties, the CEC concentrated its modest campaign efforts in Derrimut for the last three weeks, which is perhaps Melbourne's poorest suburb. Other CEC candidates mounted even smaller efforts, but, even so, 10 of their 18 candidates polled over 1%.

Thus, where people had a chance to become acquainted with the CEC and its policies, the vote was solid. And the policies were based entirely on the ideas and personality of Lyndon LaRouche. In fact, television coverage of the election night tally room repeatedly showed a group of CEC youth, members of LaRouche's international youth movement, with their "Go With LaRouche!" T-shirts. The high-profile campaigning of the LaRouche youth in Derrimut, with cars with sound systems and the distribution of tens of thousands of leaflets, was the decisive factor in the 8.3% vote there.

The election leaflet used by all CEC candidates featured LaRouche's picture right at the top. After describing the global financial crash driving the Iraq war and the Clash of Civilizations which the "Chicken-hawk" party of Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld hope to unleash, the leaflet offered the only alternative: "One man, the U.S. physical economist and 2004 U.S. Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon H.

LaRouche, Jr., uniquely forecast this present crisis, and offers a comprehensive global solution to it. LaRouche has proposed scrapping globalization, in favor of a regulated New Bretton Woods international financial system of fixed currency-exchange rates, capital controls, government-owned national banking for low-interest financing of industry and infrastructure, tariff protection, and grand infrastructure projects to rebuild the physical economy of all nations."

From there, the flyer outlined the CEC's 1 million-signature campaign for a national bank, for which they have drafted legislation, and for a grand infrastructure-led boom for the nation, inspired by LaRouche's proposals. Indicative of the insanity now ruling politics in Australia, although the nation is in perhaps the worst drought in its history, all parties except the CEC propose to cut back water supplies, and halt construction of any new dams.

Having scored well in Victoria, the CEC's electoral efforts now turn to the state of New South Wales, whose elections are March 22. There, the CEC's N.S.W. State Secretary Ann Lawler will head a slate of 20 or more candidates. She has already begun her own campaign, with a blitz of radio ads, which are appearing hourly on all of the three radio stations that cover her district of Maitland, northwest of Sydney. The first 30-second ad, which ran twice the first day during the nation's most listened-to talk show, featured Lawler announcing: "We are in a depression worse than the 1930s. Only one man has forecast this crisis: U.S. 2004 Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche. LaRouche says: Dump globalization! We need his New Bretton Woods policy of national banking, tariffs, fixed exchange rates, and great infrastructure projects."