

Editorial

Reversing the Man-Made Catastrophe

The United States is facing the most decisive test of its life, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. How we respond to this crisis, will determine whether we are still a great nation, one with the credibility to deal with the even larger global catastrophe which decades of neo-feudal globalization, and the impending collapse of the world monetary system, portend.

It's crucial to underscore the point that Lyndon LaRouche makes in his Aug. 31 statement with which we lead our issue: Although Katrina was clearly a natural disaster, the *greater* catastrophe was caused by the unnatural conduct—the negligence, the lack of leadership, the twisted priorities—of the pair of incompetents (to put it mildly) whom the American population permitted to be elected into office. The *malfeasance* of President Bush, and his controller Vice President Dick Cheney, made a very damaging event into one which could take hundreds of thousands of lives, and become truly a global cataclysm not only for the United States, but for the planet as a whole.

Indeed, it took more than this Administration's four-and-a-half years in office to create the conditions for the current scope of the disaster in the Gulf Coast region, and nationally. Decades of de-industrialization, the shift to the services economy, and disinvestment in infrastructure contributed to making southern Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama a nexus of miserable poverty, at the same time ensuring that the infrastructure (hospitals and transportation come to mind) for handling such an expected storm-event did not exist.

But these problems could have been overcome if we had not suffered an even more dangerous decline over the last 40 years: the moral and cultural decline in our nation's commitment to the Constitutional principle of the General Welfare. It is that commitment, inspired by leadership which comes forward to mobilize the nation around an urgent recovery effort, which must be immediately activated, so that we can deal with the rest of our deficiencies.

It surely must have struck many, both in the United States and elsewhere, that there is one individual on the scene who epitomizes the kind of leadership which is required to deal with a crisis of this magnitude: Lyndon

LaRouche. The fact that the American population has permitted LaRouche's enemies (who are the same as the enemies of the general welfare of the population itself) to basically blackball LaRouche out of the center of the political arena, is both a national and international tragedy. But the good news is that, over the course of the last year, LaRouche has become an increasingly significant factor within the largely private deliberations of the Congressional Democratic Party leadership, especially in the Senate. And the greater the crises created by Cheney et al.—political, economic, and strategic—the more leading Senators have sought out collaboration and advice from LaRouche.

Thus, as he was being inundated with queries from Senate offices and other members of Congress about how to deal with the post-Katrina catastrophe, LaRouche decided to turn a pre-scheduled Sept. 3 discussion with his international youth movement, into an address to the nation on "Pulling This Nation Together Now!" In that address, which we will publish in our next issue, LaRouche defined exactly what must be done, in order to prevent the dramatic escalation of the current disaster.

One crucial emphasis LaRouche made, was that the Senate, acting in a bipartisan manner and in collaboration with the House of Representatives, must take an active leadership role in defining, and implementing, the measures to be taken. Senator Harry Reid, the Democratic minority leader, had already taken the initiative which was sorely lacking from the White House, when he moved to get the Congress to convene and pass the first \$10 billion Hurricane crisis package. Such an allocation, in LaRouche's view, will be only the beginning, as the necessary reconstruction measures are likely to cost up to \$100 billion, before they are done.

Under this perspective, it is possible, of course, if not likely, that Cheney and Bush will not only fail to be helpful, but that they will act directly contrary to what is required, including possibly through activation of the war plans that Cheney already has in place. In that case, their blatant malfeasance in the Hurricane disaster should become cause for a long-overdue impeachment. The future of our nation and the planet call for no less.