

# Will America Survive the Electoral Race to the Bottom?

by Nancy Spannaus

Aug. 14—Three acts of cowardice over the past week have confirmed the fact that the United States is on a pathway to near-inevitable destruction, unless a radical shift is made before the Democratic National Convention Sept. 3, which is currently on course to ratify Barack Obama as its Presidential candidate. Obama's nomination will consolidate this year's Presidential campaign as a "race to the bottom," as Lyndon LaRouche put it, in which both the Republican and Democratic candidates are unacceptable, in terms of the urgent needs of American citizens.

Should Obama's nomination be confirmed, commented LaRouche Aug. 13, he will have us on the road toward World War III, long before the November election. But the Romney candidacy, now made even worse with the addition of Vice Presidential candidate Rep. Paul Ryan, the loud-mouth advocate of fascist social policies, provides absolutely no alternative to disaster.

What is needed seems like a miracle, LaRouche continued, but "I don't think that the miracle you need is really that miraculous. It's up to somebody to do it. And there are people who can do it," starting with the remaining candidates on the LaRouche National slate (Keshia Rogers in Texas, and Rachel Brown in Massachusetts), and a LaRouchePAC leadership dedicated to an uncompromising commitment to ousting Obama. This will also require that those with political power, face the depth of the crisis, and take their responsibility to act *now*.

It is precisely the failures of leading political figures to take that responsibility over the last week, when they had the clear opportunity—failures typical of those in Congress and others, over the past three years—which raise questions about the ability of this nation to survive.

## I. Congress Abdicates

Despite an overwhelming bipartisan vote on Aug. 2 to stay in session, ostensibly to deal with unresolved problems of the nation, the House of Representatives "voted," "by unanimous consent" on Aug. 7, to reverse itself, and go on recess until Sept. 10. The action, taken under pressure from President Obama, and with the connivance of the House and Senate leaderships, gave Obama a free hand for the military adventures he is pursuing, and derailed the growing momentum for emergency actions in favor of Glass-Steagall banking reform (Marcy Kaptur's H.R. 1489) which had taken off during the LaRouchePAC emergency mobilizations during the last two weeks of July.

What happened? Did the majority of Congress actually change its mind over the weekend of Aug. 4-5? Not at all.

Putting aside the possibility that many Members of Congress, most of whom had already gone to their home districts, did not *know* what was going to happen at 10 a.m. Aug. 7—when Congress had to reconvene under the Constitutional requirement of meeting every



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*Congress went AWOL in August, despite the urgent matters before it—especially revival of Glass-Steagall. At the same time, LPAC mobilized throughout the Summer months to impeach Obama, and to enact Glass-Steagall and NAWAPA.*

three days when in session—the reversal was simply a matter of abdication of responsibility. *No Democrat, or Republican* bothered to show up to what is called the pro forma session, to object to the closing of Congress! If only one Member had done so, Republican Rep. William Thornberry, who was chairing the “session,” would not have been able to declare the recess.

Why? The simple answer is cowardice.

*EIR*'s sources in Washington emphasize that the leadership of both parties never did want to stay in session, and some were even surprised when the vote ended up the way it did, with 89 Republicans joining the entire Democratic delegation to keep Congress in session. In the run-up to the vote, there was a definite sense of shame expressed by many Congressmen, that they had not dealt with the drought crisis, nor the financial crisis. In addition, fears were rising about leaving President Obama “at home alone,” under conditions where he’s moving unabashedly toward once again making unconstitutional war, starting with Syria—a war which could lead toward a thermonuclear confrontation with Russia.

Under Obama’s “deals” with the Republicans, and pressure on the Democrats, however, the vital interests of the United States were set aside, and Congress recessed—even though apparently no one was in the

room but the chairman, the chaplain, and a few functionaries!

## II. Democratic Party Leaders Fold

Before anyone gets self-righteous about the cowardice and venality of Congress, however, they should consider what happened in another setting—the Democratic Party Platform Committee hearing held in Detroit on Aug. 11.

Prior to this meeting of approximately 200 Democratic Party leaders and activists, LaRouchePAC had mounted a concerted campaign to get an amendment added to the Platform which

would fundamentally change its character: an endorsement of the reinstatement of FDR’s Glass-Steagall Act, and, specifically, support for Kaptur’s H.R. 1489, which now has 78 co-sponsors, most of them Democrats. The campaign was successful, and one brave Platform Committee delegate introduced the amendment, while a handful of others expressed their desire to do so as well. (The second group was told their action was redundant, so it was not introduced.)

According to the traditional procedure, an amendment filed by just one delegate is supposed to be read, and if 15 delegates agreed, would then be taken up in debate at the Aug. 11 plenary session. The Glass-Steagall amendment had more than enough support to force debate, and many more commitments to vote for the amendment, creating a strong likelihood that it would have passed. But that didn’t happen. The reason was that Obama campaign heavies put extraordinary pressure on the delegate who had introduced the Glass-Steagall amendment, and ultimately convinced that delegate to withdraw it. Other amendments not proposed by the core Obama machine were also withdrawn under pressure.

The line that was used in arm-twisting the delegates was that “nothing could be put on Obama’s plate that might lead to him lose the election.” This is, of course, insane, because as LaRouche emphasized, the Glass-

Steagall policy is the *only* actual election-winning policy available.

In the end, there was no discussion or debate on any policy issues, and Cory Booker, the mayor of Newark, New Jersey, who chaired the session, ended with ten minutes of mindless chanting. LaRouchePAC observers noted that many of those attending left disgruntled, but one fundamental point cannot be missed: Despite the courage of those who spoke up for Glass-Steagall before the meeting, no one on the Platform Committee raised a stink about what had been done to deep-six the game-changing amendment, or fought publicly in a situation where the Obama thugs could be forced to back down, or even be publicly exposed. Is that not cowardice?

### III. Labor on the Sidelines

On the same day as the Democratic Party Platform Committee meeting, there was another gathering of leading Democrats, this time at the “Stand Up for America” labor rally held in Philadelphia, Pa. An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 workers from AFL-CIO unions gathered to demand that, as AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka put it in his speech to the rally, *both* party conventions take into account labor’s demands for a “bill of rights” which would protect the working man and woman. The AFL-CIO has formally endorsed the reinstatement of Glass-Steagall, but that was conspicuously not part of the “bill of rights.”

A team of more than 40 LaRouchePAC organizers attended the rally, leading with a direct message from LaRouche, titled, “The Labor of Mankind: Remember President Kennedy” (see below), and circulating a petition calling for support for Kaptur’s H.R. 1489. A few hundred signatures were gathered, and organizers report a virtually unprecedented positive response to the signs for Glass-Steagall, which was presented as the first step to a real economic recovery, which requires the creation of a credit system to start up a major infrastructure project, specifically, NAWAPA XXI. The response to LaRouche’s leaflet was also very positive, provoking a much deeper level of engagement by the trade unionists.

Many of the unionists were characteristically militant in their response on Glass-Steagall. For example, one individual from Long Island, when told that his Congressman, Democrat Steve Israel, had not signed on to H.R. 1489, could hardly contain himself. “I ran a

phone bank for him,” he exclaimed. “I’m going to roast his nuts.”

Yet, as a political force to solve the nation’s problems, the AFL-CIO has stood on the sidelines. Many of the activists there, even those wearing Obama t-shirts, know what evil Obama represents, some of them even coming over to LaRouche organizers holding the famous “moustache” sign, to hold serious discussions. But no call has gone out from the unions to mobilize their base for what must be done: Remove Obama from the Presidency and the Democratic candidacy, in order to clear the way for a candidate who will bring the United States back from the brink of war and disintegration, and institute our Constitutional system of government again.

Where are those with the courage to buck Obama, when the stakes are so high?

### The Question of Leadership

There is no lack of discussion and understanding among Democrats *and* Republicans in the United States today, on the need to take the emergency measure which Lyndon LaRouche called for years ago: restore Glass-Steagall as a means of dumping the bailouts, and taking the private gambling debts off the government’s books. The “Damascus Road conversion” of former Citigroup CEO Sandy Weill, to embracing Glass-Steagall, in the wake of the early July shift by a faction in the City of London, has caused an intense debate on the subject. Once again, former Kansas Federal Reserve president Thomas Hoening has come out to do battle for Glass-Steagall; on Aug. 14, even former Reagan Budget Director David Stockman took to the pages of the *New York Times* to do the same.

What is missing is leadership informed by courage, the courage to take on an insane President willing to threaten to literally destroy his opponents; the courage to take on public opinion; the courage to take on powerful financiers who are still committed to this murderous, bankrupt financial system. Americans over recent decades have shown less and less of that courage—as the pathetic condition of our country attests.

That is the kind of courage which Lyndon LaRouche and LaRouchePAC are seeking to evoke in this country’s political class, at the proverbial 11th hour. John F. Kennedy wrote about it in his *Profiles in Courage*, and lived it until he died. Will America find leaders today who will find the courage to fight?