

LaRouche Spurs Broad Fight Against Bush's Election Theft

by Edward Spannaus

“We’ve got them dead to rights on violations of Federal law, on Voting Rights Act violations,” said Lyndon LaRouche in an interview on a Columbus, Ohio radio station on Dec. 16, in discussing how the Republicans stole the Nov. 2 Presidential election. “That is a crime,” LaRouche continued. “That’s a five-year federal sentence, to be caught doing that crime! Whereas simple vote fraud is more difficult to deal with. *But*, if you go at the criminal violations, which are Federal criminal violations, in terms of election tampering and in terms of Voting Rights Act frauds, then you open up the whole area, you have to investigate the whole territory, in which these crimes have been committed—which means the *entire* question of the vote fraud is now looked at, from that standpoint.”

Since LaRouche, in his Nov. 9 webcast, first called for prosecutions of those who engaged in vote suppression, as violations of the Voting Rights Act (see Debra Hanania Freeman’s testimony, p. 45), the fight against the theft of the Nov. 2 elections has exploded, reflecting a revived sense of combativity within the Democratic Party itself, in contrast to the sense of demoralization which pervaded many circles in and around the Party in the period immediately after the election.

This is seen in the hearings held by House Judiciary Committee Democrats in Washington on Dec. 8, and in Ohio on Dec. 13, in the resolutions proposed and adopted by Kerry Electors in a number of state capitols on Dec. 13, and in the announcement that same day by Sen. Byron Dorgan (N.D.), the chairman of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee, that Senate Democrats will act on their own to carry out oversight and investigations, whenever Republicans attempt to block Congress from carrying out its Constitutional responsibilities. Dorgan said that he expects hearings to be conducted by the Democratic Policy Committee as early as January.

New England Electors Revolt

Meanwhile, Electors in three states—Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont—have taken action questioning the validity of the election process, and urging investigations (see *Documentation*). Proposals for Electors to adopt such resolutions were also introduced in other states.

The Maine electors said in a resolution that “Maine’s four electoral votes are meaningless if our sister states cannot hold elections that are fair, accurate, and verifiable.”

The Vermont Electors are in the process of adopting a resolution which cites the House Judiciary Committee members’ inquiries into Ohio election irregularities, as well as the investigation being conducted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and which calls upon the Vermont Congressional delegation to object to the Electoral Votes from Ohio and other states in any case where there is “evidence of widespread violations of voter constitutional rights.”

The Massachusetts Electors unanimously adopted a resolution calling for an investigation of voting rights violations and vote fraud in the November elections. The resolution calls on Congress “to investigate all voting complaints that might have any validity,” to “remedy any voting rights violations or electoral fraud verified by its own agents or through the courts,” and to “commit their resources to passage of systemic remedies.”

Tom Barbera, the Massachusetts Elector who introduced the resolution, told Associated Press that “I would like us to go beyond that, and not certify the vote until they complete the votes in Ohio and New Mexico. They have their electors electing the President today, even before they certify the recount.” Barbera had been in Pennsylvania working for John Kerry prior to the elections, identifying and registering voters in the Scranton and Wilkes-Barre areas, and he reports that



A protest against certification of the Presidential elections in Columbus, Ohio on Dec. 12. Ohio Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell, who was co-chairman of the Bush-Cheney campaign in the state, did everything in his power to suppress the vote, and has refused to answer questions from 12 members of Congress on the massive Election Day irregularities in his state.

his life was threatened, and his canvassers were assaulted. "I've worked on elections since I was 11 years old and I have never seen anything like this," he said.

Conyers Goes to Ohio

Five days after he had chaired a Dec. 8 Capitol Hill hearing on vote suppression and irregularities during the Nov. 2 elections in Ohio, Rep. John Conyers (Mich.), the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, went to Ohio as he had promised, and chaired a followup hearing in Columbus, in which dramatic new evidence of vote suppression and fraud was presented, at the same time that the Presidential Electors were meeting to cast their votes.

Conyers was joined in the Columbus hearing by Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.), Rep. Tom Strickland (D-Ohio), Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), Rep. Stephanie Tubbs-Jones (D-Ohio), Ohio State Sen. Ray Miller, and two members of the Columbus City Council. Among the featured speakers were Rev. Jesse Jackson; attorney Cliff Arnebeck, who is the lead attorney in the newly filed lawsuit contesting the Nov. 2 election; and Prof. Bob Fitrakis, publisher of the *Free Press* in Columbus.

"The closer we get to Columbus and the Ohio Presidential election, the worse it looks," Conyers said in his statement opening the hearing. "Each and every day it becomes increasingly clear that the Republican power structure in this state is acting as if they have something to hide." Conyers asked why Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell—also the co-chair of the Bush-Cheney campaign in Ohio—had taken actions to prevent citizens from registering, to prevent registered voters from getting ballots, and to prevent lawful ballots from being counted. He also asked why would

there was no "investigation by the state into the huge Republican effort to disenfranchise minority voters" and into other gross irregularities. "There is no right more precious in our Constitution than the right to vote," Conyers stated. "That is why I pledge that this investigation will not end and we will not go away until these questions are answered."

'Texan'-Style Intimidation

Witness testimony provided further documentation of the extent of voter disenfranchisement and fraud.

Explosive new evidence was presented concerning a group calling themselves the "Texas Strike Force," which had checked into a local Holiday Inn, where their accommodations were paid for by the local Republican Party. They

were using pay phones to make intimidating calls to former prisoners who had had their voting rights restored, telling them that they would be reported to the FBI and arrested if they attempted to vote, and sent back to jail. These calls constitute a felony violation of the Voting Rights Act, punishable by up to five years in prison.

Two days later, on Dec. 15, Conyers sent a letter to the FBI and to the Hocking County Prosecutor, asking for a criminal investigation of apparent tampering with computerized voting equipment in anticipation of the scheduled recount. Conyers referred to "inappropriate and likely illegal election tampering," involving a technician for the Triad company which provides computer tabulators for the elections. According to a witness cited by Conyers, the Triad representative "advised the election officials how to manipulate the machinery so that the preliminary hand recount matched the machine count."

EIR has been advised that that allegations of criminal conduct in and around the Nov. 2 elections have been taken to a number of local and Federal prosecutors. Criminal violations of the Voting Rights Act and election laws are likely to figure heavily in challenges that are being prepared to the certification of the Electors from Ohio and possibly other states, when Congress meets in joint session on Jan. 6 to receive the Electoral Votes for the Presidential election. When the Electoral Votes are opened, objections can be made against the validity of those votes; if an objection is made by one member each of the House and the Senate, the counting of Electoral Votes ceases until the objections have been considered by both the House and the Senate, which withdraw into separate sessions for that purpose.