

Jeffords's Defection Shakes Bush Administration to Core

by Nancy Spannaus

No sooner had the U.S. Supreme Court majority decided that George W. Bush should be made President of the United States, back on Dec. 12, than Democratic political leader Lyndon LaRouche threw down the challenge to the American people. A Bush Administration will be a disaster for the United States and the world, he said, and will rapidly be on the way to self-destruction: concerned Americans and international leaders have to create a situation, domestically and internationally, whereby sane heads can *dictate* to President Bush what policies are acceptable, and which are not.

It took a few months for the lesson to sink in, a few months in which LaRouche and his wing of the Democratic Party were the only visible leadership mobilizing to stop Bush's insanity within the United States. Meanwhile, the ugly truth about the lunacy and arrogant incompetence of the Bush Administration began to have its effect internationally, even in capitals which had tried desperately to convince themselves that Bush would be a tolerable, if not a positive change. Then, on May 24, the dam finally broke, as it inevitably would, with Jeffords's announcement.

What must be understood is that the switch of Vermont's senior Senator, James Jeffords, out of the Republican Party, to "Independent" status, was no fluke or accident. It was part of an orchestrated agreement behind the scenes, a pattern of activity among national and international forces who have finally decided that action must be taken to contain the Bush Administration. Bush and his administration brought this reaction upon themselves.

What Bush Is Good At

In remarks made shortly after the Jeffords announcement, 2004 Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche

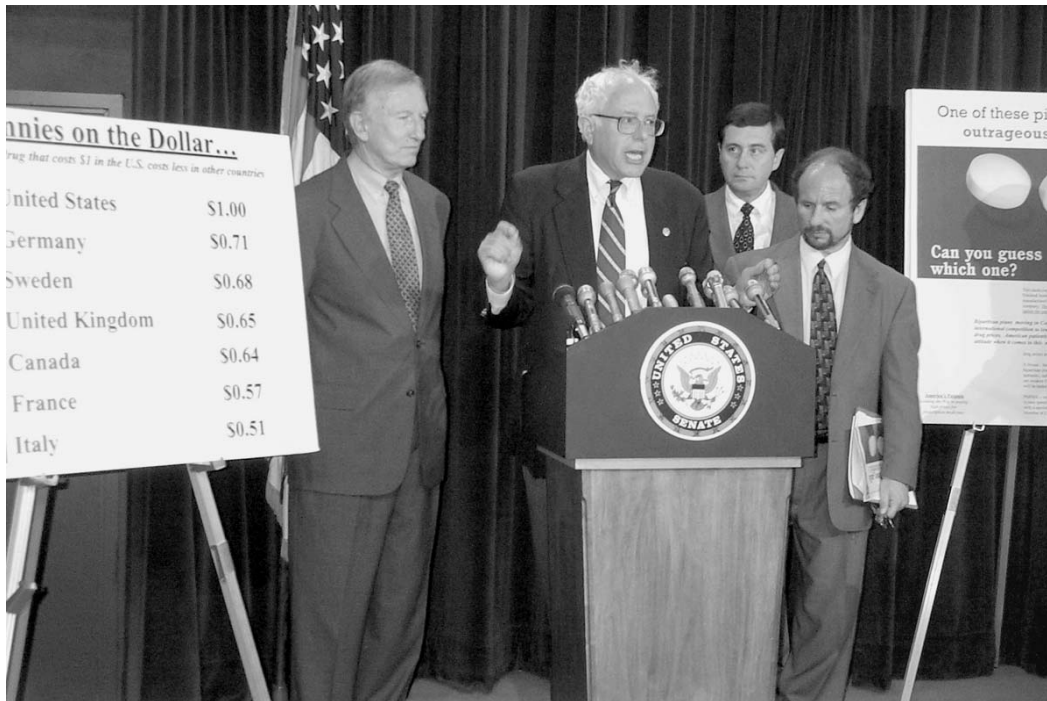
noted that the Vermont Senator's move was undoubtedly just the first of many defections, because President Bush would continue to do what he is good at, making mistakes.

From the outset, it was clear that Bush was not in control of his administration, or much of anything else. In addition, his own insane delusions, buttressed by the hysterical determination of the financial establishment and the Southern Strategy robber barons to maintain their control in the deepening financial crisis, colored the whole administration, including those, like Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who had shown some degree of rationality in the past.

This administration, chosen by an establishment which was fully aware of its character, was determined from the beginning to assert its irrational will. Recall that at a photo opportunity with Congressional leaders Dec. 18, President Bush "joked" that "If this were a dictatorship, it'd be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator." After which time, he proceeded to act in pursuit of precisely that aim.

The record, in retrospect, is stunning. First came the appointment of former Sen. John Ashcroft, an outfront pro-Confederate and advocate of judicial police-state measures. This appointment, as LaRouche uniquely pointed out, reflected the dangerous "Yahoo" base of the Bush Administration, the stratum of so-called religious fundamentalists from which Ashcroft hailed, and which reflects the closest thing to an indigenous American fascism that exists.

With this move, Bush signalled the intent of the administration to impose Hitler-style "crisis-management" conditions in the midst of the inevitable economic and financial crises on the horizon. It was an in-your-face appointment, on which the President refused to budge. It was followed



The pivotal party-switch of Sen. Jim Jeffords (here, opposing pharmaceutical super-profits with Vermont's Independent Rep. Bernie Sanders), was an individual decision, but also a sign of a much broader shift in both parties, in reaction to the Bush madness, and sparked by Lyndon LaRouche's leadership of the forces against it.

by a series of Bush decisions to use his slim majorities in the Senate and the House, to ram through his anti-Roosevelt budget and labor legislation. He then spit in the face of California and the nation, when they demanded relief from devastating power blackouts and energy prices brought on by deregulation and price-gouging by the President's Texas energy cartel friends.

At the same time, the Bush Administration was working overtime to offend both America's traditional European allies, and most other nations in the world, primarily Russia and China. The unilateral breaking of treaties, the insistence on pushing through an unserious, but politically destabilizing National Missile Defense system, the provocation against China through the deployment of the aerial spy mission and the handling of the resultant accident, and, above all, the flagrant backing given by the Bush Administration to the murderous provocations of the Ariel Sharon government in Israel, all led to growing uproar among governments worldwide, against this irresponsibility and worse.

Clearly the first united action against the Bush Administration—the removal of the United States from the United Nations' Human Rights Commission—was only a shot across the bow.

An Emerging Coalition

It's one thing to complain and object to the Bush Administration's craziness; it's another to have an effective strategy and alternative to that policy.

From the beginning, Lyndon LaRouche laid out a strategy

for revival of the virtually dead-and-Gored Democratic Party, around a rejection of the Ashcroft dictatorship policy, and a set of positive policies toward global reconstruction, and defending the general welfare at home.

The mobilization LaRouche led to get a filibuster in the U.S. Senate against Ashcroft, contrasted sharply with the capitulationist attitude of the Democratic leadership in the Congress, from then-Minority Leader Sen. Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) on down. And it succeeded in winning sufficient votes against Ashcroft to make a filibuster possible, although the Senate leadership muffed it.

Even before the Ashcroft vote occurred, LaRouche had called for an expanded mobilization, to build the clout to rally the American population against Bush on the issue of energy deregulation, and the health-care crisis, specifically the threatened closedown of the only public hospital in the nation's capital, D.C. General Hospital. The expansion of the forces involved in this movement has reflected the fact that there is no other national leadership of the Democratic Party other than LaRouche, and that sane Republicans also have had no other place to turn.

LaRouche had also laid out, early in the year, the deeper process of which the second Bush Administration was a part, namely, the Southern Strategy alliance of the Confederates and the Wall Street bankers, which began a little more than 30 years ago with the Presidential campaign of Richard Nixon.

The Southern Strategy enemies of the United States' true republican tradition have increasingly become a popular enemy-image—starting with now former Senate Majority

Leader Trent Lott (Miss.), a “former” member of the Southern racist Citizens Council, and extending to the Texas-based energy cartels—and arrogantly pushed aside any opposition. It should not be surprising, therefore, that, when Jeffords announced his resignation from the Bush-led Republican Party, the move was widely reported as the result of the backfire of the Southern Strategy run amok.

And while the Yahoo base of the Bush Administration is certainly screaming about their loss of the Senate, its fervor for the Bush Administration is somewhat constrained as well, in the face of the blatantly Bush-backed energy ripoff.

It would be a mistake to see the resistance to Bush as purely domestic, however. Longtime allies of the United States within the Western European elites, have been visibly unnerved by the take-no-prisoners blundering of the administration. They have had two reactions: first, to move more openly around establishing new partnerships with the nations of Eurasia; and second, to discreetly collaborate with their counterparts in the United States. Editorial comment from certain British press outlets, in sharp disappointment with young Bush, is very notable in this regard.

In effect, the process which LaRouche called for in the early days of the Bush Administration has now been put into effect. The Bush myth of absolute power is gone, defeated in large part by the operations which LaRouche has set into motion. The beast is still dangerous, and the road will be rocky, but the path is open for the imposition of sane policies, LaRouche’s global and domestic policies, in the weeks and months ahead.

Jeffords’s Switch Means New Policy Dynamic in Senate

by Carl Osgood

When Sen. James Jeffords (I-Vt.) announced, on May 24, that he would be leaving the Republican Party to become an independent, he made it very clear that his departure was over issues of policy and outlook. “Looking ahead,” he said, “I can see more and more instances where I will disagree with the President on very fundamental issues—the issues of choice, the direction of the judiciary, tax and spending decisions, missile defense, energy, and the environment.” Jeffords said that the biggest issue for him was education. Whereas the Republican Party once stood for opening the doors of public education for all, he said, “Now, for some,

success seems to be measured by the number of students moved out of public schools.”

Indeed, it seems that it was the education issue that drove Jeffords over the edge. Jeffords told reporters on May 22 after a meeting with President George W. Bush at the White House, “I told him that I firmly believe he would be a one-term President.” His comments apparently came in reference to the Bush Administration’s education proposal, which the Senate has been debating on and off for the last two weeks.

The policy issues which Jeffords enumerated, are the issues which the Democrats intend to take the lead on, once they assume formal control of the Senate on June 5. The transition to majority status means that the Democrats will control the legislative agenda and, therefore, not only be able to bring their legislative priorities to the Senate floor, they’ll also be able to significantly disrupt the policy agenda of the Bush White House.

On the organizational front, Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) will become Majority Leader, all the committee chairmanships will be taken over by Democrats, and the Democrats will gain a one-vote majority on every committee. Some of the more significant committee shifts include the following: Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), a strong critic of the disastrous 1996 “Freedom to Farm” Act, will take over the Agriculture Committee. Robert F. Byrd (D-W.V.), the dean of the Democratic Caucus, will become chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), a critic of Bush’s missile defense proposals, will take over the Armed Services Committee. Levin will also head up the Senate Permanent Investigations Subcommittee (SPIS), and as such, has already announced that he will be investigating the huge reported profits of the oil industry and their relationship to high gasoline prices. Also on the energy front, Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) will chair the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which will now be taking up legislation on electricity price caps. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) will take over the Foreign Relations Committee from the mercurial Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), and Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) will become head of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Kennedy has announced that he will be moving patients’ rights legislation and an increase in the minimum wage as soon as possible.

Most significant of all, perhaps, is the shift in the Judiciary Committee, which will be taken over by Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.). Leahy has indicated that his Innocence Protection Act, which is intended to reduce the danger of wrongful execution in capital cases, will be a major item on his agenda. Even more important, however, is that the Democrats will now be vetting Bush’s judicial nominees. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), a member of the committee, warned, a few hours after Jeffords’s announcement, that “we will not have nominations of right-wing after right-wing after right-wing judges. Judges will have to be moderate.” One rumored