

Virginia Tech Killer Was *Another* Video-Game Fanatic

by Michele Steinberg and Anton Chaitkin

Lyndon LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche have been right since Columbine. You won't stop school shooting sprees *until* the multibillion-dollar video-“game”-killing-simulator industry is stopped from brainwashing youth.

On April 16, within moments of the news reports that mass shootings had occurred on the Blacksburg campus of Virginia Tech, Lyndon LaRouche, chairman of the LaRouche Political Action Committee (LPAC), flagged the incident as a major national, and international security event. LaRouche noted that the event would shape policy in a major way—especially by those forces in the United States, around Vice President Dick Cheney, who would wish to use any type of security alert as a means to further their police-state powers to silence political opposition—as happened in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Within hours of the Virginia Tech killings—where 33 people died, and at least 15 more were injured—LaRouche outlined “critical questions” to be pursued in the investigation of the incident—questions that were framed by the campaign led by LaRouche, and his wife Helga Zepp-LaRouche, chairwoman of the Civil Rights Solidarity (BüSo) party of Germany to expose the video game industry for mental genocide, or “menticide,” in both brainwashing young people with a cult of violence, and also training them to kill at the same time.

In the campaign that Mrs. LaRouche led in the aftermath of the Columbine killings in Littleton, Colorado in 1999, the video games were identified and exposed as what they really are: “killing simulators,” that are used to produce shooters on “automatic pilot,” in the military and in law enforcement.

Commenting on the Virginia Tech shootings, as the event was breaking, LaRouche stressed that the pattern and profile is what is important to unlock the truth behind the incident.

- Were the shootings random, or aimed at specific targets?
- What was the level of accuracy and skill: How many shots were fired at each victim; i.e., reports that most victims died from one shot indicates a very high level



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A player in the World Cyber Games Counterstrike final. Virginia Tech killer Cho Seung-Hui was a fanatical player of “shooter” video games, especially Counterstrike. This fact has been suppressed in media coverage of the April 16 mass shootings.

of accuracy.

- Was there video or Internet shooting training involved? Helga Zepp-LaRouche’s campaign against the youth violence had included interviews and discussions with retired Lt. Col. David Grossman (see below), who had identified that violent “point-and-shoot” video games not only had a mentally damaging effect on young people, but also sufficed as shooter training for rapid-fire, sequenced attacks on moving targets—exactly as occurred in Columbine; Paducah, Kentucky; Portland, Oregon; Erfurt, Germany; and the 1997 killings in Port Arthur, Tasmania, Australia. In all these cases, the video training played an important part.

- Was the level of apparent planning, and skill reflective of a military and/or law enforcement training?

- What were the flaws in the security procedures? It had been reported that there were bomb threats on the campus in the several weeks prior to the shooting—was this related?

- Was there a breakdown of security procedures on April 16, after the first early morning shooting—and if so, why? At one point on the day of the shooting there was a “lockdown” of the campus, which was then lifted. In the span of two hours between the first killing at a dormitory, and the killing of more

than 30 students and professors, at a classroom building about half-a-mile away, the assailant, Cho Seung-Hui, a 23-year-old student on campus, was able to move between the two locations, unnoticed under the camouflage of the “normal” movement of students.

But that security breach could be the least of the problem.

Coverup of Video Training Continues

Less than 24 hours after LaRouche posed these questions, the *Washington Post* answered LaRouche’s concerns in a very curious way. In a profile of shooter Cho Seung-Hui published on the Internet, *Post* reporters had obtained eyewitness information from his high school classmates, detailing that Cho had been a fanatical player of “shooter” video games, especially one called “Counterstrike.”

But then, the reference to Counterstrike was stricken from the printed version of the article, and removed from later Internet postings, and *Washington Post* reporter David Cho, who had interviewed the high school associates of Cho Seung-Hui, was not even listed as an author or contributor of the final article.

What had happened is that the powerful “video-game in-

LaRouche: The Risk of Violence Was Foreseeable

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. issued the following statement to the LaRouche PAC website on April 18.

The risk, if not the date, of the Virginia Tech shooter's actions was foreseeable, if he was, as reported, both a veteran of training by means of relevant types of video games and with correlated types of personal habits. As early as 1999-2000, this was a clearly foreseen risk, as emphasized, in public reports delivered by Germany's Helga Zepp-LaRouche in Germany, the U.S.A., and Brazil, in 2000.

Relevant forms of aberrant behavior associated with

habitual use of relevant types of video games, are a sign of such a risk. The capabilities exhibited by the shooter show that exactly such a foreseeable risk was present, waiting for the set of circumstances to set off the relevant type of event, as at Columbine earlier.

Unfortunately, there has been a lobby for the types of video games which either promote such aberrant mental states through video shooting games, or sociologically morbid other forms of children's and adolescents' video-based play-habits. These types of well-heeled lobbies have promoted the preconditions for a foreseeable increase of this type of behavior among adolescents and young adults.

Despite Mrs. LaRouche's investigations and reports, there was little effort to deal with what had already been demonstrated, by 2000, to be a serious threat of outbreaks of this sort of terrorist activity. Now, at last, the problem must be treated seriously.

dustry" had struck—running a major campaign to remove any reference to the game Counterstrike or any other video-game references from the major media coverage.

For over a decade, the video-game industry has been able to protect itself—with the help of powerful elected officials, like Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, from interference in the brainwashing of youth.

In the day following the April 16 Virginia Tech shootings, the "industry" was at it again, protecting their operations, including with an all-out media and Internet assault on attorney Jack Thompson, who had exposed the Counterstrike connection to the current case, even as he had exposed earlier connections of the Counterstrike game to deadly school massacres. Thompson was the attorney for victims of the Paducah shootings.

LPAC's Record

Leading the fight again, is Lyndon LaRouche, through his political website, www.larouhepac.com, which immediately established the record. On April 18, LPAC published this item:

"The following was reported April 17, 2007 by *Washington Post* reporters Debbi Wilgoren, Sari Horwitz, and Robert E. Pierre, under the headline,

"'Centreville Student Was Va. Tech Shooter':

"'. . . Several Korean youths who knew Cho Seung-Hui from his high school days said he was a fan of violent video games, particularly Counterstrike, a hugely popular online game, in which players join terrorism or counterterrorism groups and try to shoot each other using. . . .'

"'Just such a phenomenon has been reported by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, and by *EIR*, since 1999, in analyses and interviews with experts on mass shootings in recent years.'

"The above report was obtained by searching the washingtonpost.com website for the word "counterstrike." But this reportage was removed by the *Post* in the article as published—the article to which the reader is directed when clicking on the above search result. The final article is headlined, "'Student Wrote About Death and Spoke in Whispers, But No One Imagined What Cho Seung-Hui Would Do,' with the byline, 'by Ian Shapira and Michael E. Ruane, *Washington Post* Staff Writers, Wednesday, April 18, 2007.'

"*Executive Intelligence Review* has established an international reputation for expertise on the subject of the role of these violent video-games in producing cold killers.

"In the case of the April 26, 2002 massacre at the Johann Gutenberg Gymnasium in Erfurt, Germany, 16 people were killed before the shooter, Robert Steinhäuser, committed suicide. *EIR* reported May 10, 2002, the shooter's "mind had been conditioned by his obsession with killer video/computer games, such as "Ninja," 'Doom,' and 'Counterstrike' (produced by the notorious firm, Sierra Entertainment). When he carried out his massacre, he was dressed in black with a black mask, imitating the Ninja warriors found in such killer games. A police raid on Steinhäuser's room found many such killer video games."

These are not "games," they are "killing simulators," and training devices used by law enforcement SWAT teams, and military training. The role of video games in the Cho Seung-Hui shootings cannot be covered up.

The following special report from the archives of *EIR*, the Schiller Institute, and the election campaigns of candidate LaRouche, gives crucial background to policy makers, law enforcement, and families.

As LaRouche says in his April 18 statement (see box), it is "Time To Deal With the Violent Videogame Lobby."