

NBC faces a \$60 million libel suit by The LaRouche Campaign

Democratic Presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. sued the National Broadcasting Company for \$60 million on Feb. 10, in a defamation and conspiracy action filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. Defendants named in the lawsuit, in addition to NBC, are NBC reporter Brian Ross, NBC producer Pat Lynch, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith, Abbott Rosen, Dennis King, and Chip Berlet. Rosen is a Chicago ADL official; King and Berlet describe themselves as freelance journalists. Berlet has been an editor of, and King a contributor to, *High Times* magazine, which promotes the use of drugs.

Not named in the suit, but under investigation, are high-ranking officials of the Democratic National Committee around party-boss Charles Manatt. Manatt and his henchmen have been working with whomever they can muster to stem LaRouche's growing influence in the Democratic Party. The extent of their desperation was reflected in part by a Manatt policy memorandum leaked by DNC political director Ann Lewis this month—a memo which a Washington state news broadcast characterized as a warning against the LaRouche Democratic “mutiny” in the party (see *EIR*, Feb. 21).

The activities of Manatt and his associates, however, represent only the partisan political end of the larger conspiracy at issue in the NBC lawsuit. NBC's defamation campaign against LaRouche was ordered at the highest levels of the Anglo-American political establishment—an establishment which is determined to force President Reagan into an appeasement posture vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. As might be expected, NBC's defamation effort against LaRouche involves illicit cooperation by U.S. and foreign intelligence agents—a fact which will be fully documented in discovery proceedings in the lawsuit.

Conspiracy against the campaign

LaRouche is suing NBC for its Jan. 30 NBC Nightly News Special Report which was broadcast throughout the United States. In the program, reported by Brian Ross for NBC, LaRouche was accused by NBC and Ross of leading a cult, a hate group which engaged in violent tactics. Defendant

Rosen was paraded across the screen by NBC to libel LaRouche as an advocate of the theory of “Jewish conspiracies.” The intent and effect of the NBC and Rosen statements was to defame LaRouche as anti-Semitic. In order to promote the broadcast, NBC ran advertisements for the Nightly News spot throughout the United States on Sunday, Jan. 29 and Monday, Jan. 30. The promotional ads similarly accused LaRouche of leading a hate group and engaging in violent tactics.

The conspiracy count of the complaint charges that all the defendants engaged and continue to be engaged in a conspiracy to destroy the LaRouche presidential campaign. The conspiracy involves a national media defamation campaign through which the conspirators are attempting to create the climate for bad-faith law-enforcement investigations of LaRouche. In addition to crippling LaRouche's campaign, the conspirators have undertaken their illegal actions in order to undermine LaRouche's capacity to influence the Reagan administration to adopt the national emergency measures LaRouche has proposed, according to the lawsuit.

Defendants ADL, Rosen, Berlet, and King are charged with knowingly producing false information concerning LaRouche to NBC—including the defamatory statements utilized in the NBC Nightly News broadcast. Each of these defendants has been previously sued by LaRouche for libel. According to LaRouche Campaign spokesmen, the smear campaign waged by these defendants over a seven-year period is a result of LaRouche's national campaigns against drugs and the drug lobby. Rosen and the ADL have become especially desperate in their smear tactics following demonstrations of support for LaRouche's policies in Israel. LaRouche has recently supplied economic and other policy initiatives opposed by the political faction led by former Israeli Minister Ariel Sharon.

Defendants Lynch and Ross have been placed in charge of producing a series of national defamations for NBC which are aimed at the LaRouche presidential candidacy. The Nightly News feature by Ross was intended to be an advertising and promotional piece for a longer feature being produced by Pat Lynch for NBC “First Camera.”

Manatt's maneuvers

According to sources within the DNC's Washington, D.C. headquarters, a top-secret emergency meeting of attorneys took place in the DNC office during the week of Jan. 31 to plot out a plan of action to stop the growing challenge of the "LaRouche Democrats," who have already fielded a 1984 slate of 2,500 candidates through the National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC).

At the secret meeting a decision was taken for the DNC to formally participate in what the source termed a "take-apart story on the LaRouchies" on NBC-TV's "First Camera." Despite the caution of the DNC lawyers at the meeting, who warned against "dignifying the LaRouche group as a major political movement," Manatt deployed DNC executive Lynn Cutler to grant a libelous interview against LaRouche to NBC-TV. The report from Manatt's own headquarters was that the meeting "talked about tactics of how to put some distance between us and them." The lawyers advised circulating lies and slanders against the LaRouche Democrats in "careful language such as, 'Well I have read that they are crypto-Nazis' or 'It's my opinion that they are right-wing Nazis' and so on." The attorneys are trying to restrain Manatt from being specific and driving hard, lest the DNC "draw a suit and give them more ammunition."

According to information available to The LaRouche Campaign, the NBC defamation was ordered by such leading lights of the Eastern establishment as NBC chairman Thornton Bradshaw. Bradshaw is a major figure in the Aspen Insti-

tute—a think tank which proposes appeasement of the Soviet Union and economic policies creating genocide conditions in the Third World. The Aspen Institute and NBC are bastions of support for the policies of Henry Kissinger.

According to further information available to The LaRouche Campaign, NBC's efforts against LaRouche have been backed by Henry Kissinger, James Jesus Angleton, a former CIA official, officials associated with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service. Such intervention into an American electoral campaign by intelligence and law-enforcement agents is illegal.

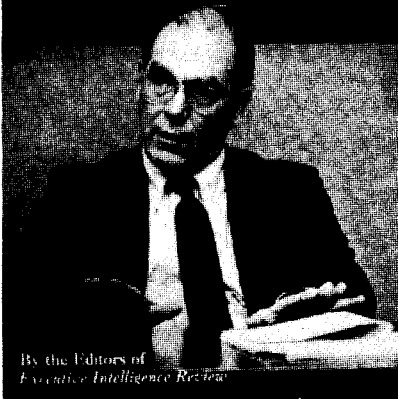
Following the NBC libel, LaRouche issued a debate challenge to Bradshaw that has since been circulated nationally through 60-second paid radio spots in major-city market areas including New York, Pennsylvania, California, and Washington, D.C.

Said candidate LaRouche: "I challenge Henry Kissinger's crony Thornton Bradshaw to face me on a national TV news feature to defend himself against his network's using libels cooked up by members of the drug pushers' lobby, such as Chicago's Chip Berlet and New York's Dennis King, to conduct the dirtiest campaign against a Democratic candidate ever to appear on the television news media."

Bradshaw has yet to reply.

NBC, however covered the filing of the lawsuit in a Nightly News item on Feb. 15th. Interestingly, NBC's coverage of the lawsuit focuses on the fact that the lawsuit names and impeaches the sources for Brian Ross's NBC news feature.

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