

EIR Investigation

How the press runs extortion for the ADL

by Michele Steinberg

In a May 12 appearance on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America," 1988 presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. told interviewer David Hartman that Associated Press is assisting the international drug lobby in an extortion operation against his supporters.

Asked "To what extent do [the news media] represent you correctly or incorrectly?" LaRouche replied:

"I sampled 6,500 pieces of coverage of me in print media, around the country, during a period of approximately the last 30 days. In most cases there was very little coverage of anything I actually said. . . . But there was a tremendous amount of repeat of wild, fictitious, sometimes outright lying reports emanating and traceable to the drug lobby, Dennis King and company. So the news media . . . has not given the American people a direct representation of anything I stand for. . . . For example, Associated Press recently—an AP reporter was caught in assisting an extortion operation—Willie Welch—against my organization and supporters."

LaRouche was referring to a national pattern of threats, slanders, and harassment, directed by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, with Dennis King, a reporter for the drug lobby's house organ, *High Times* magazine, and run as a "private" arm of the corrupt U.S. Attorney's office in Boston, Massachusetts, headed by William Weld, offspring of the drug money-tainted Weld banking family. The primary targets of this extortion have been supporters of Lyndon LaRouche's Presidential campaigns, and candidates who are running for elected office on the program of the National Democratic Policy Committee, the political action committee associated with LaRouche.

Most recently, this drug lobby apparatus, working with the San Antonio, Texas Democratic Party, turned its venom on Donald Varella, an NDPC-backed candidate who received the highest vote total in the election for chairman of the county Democratic Party, and was expected to win easily in

the upcoming run-off election. After threats against his family, Varella announced his withdrawal from the race, saying that he had been informed that the "smears would continue." The operation against Varella has been traced to top Democrats such as San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros, who pushes legalizing drug economies in Ibero-America.

But the most blatant case of extortion in this anti-LaRouche campaign is the case of Charles R. Zimmerman of Sarasota, Florida, an elderly man who was threatened because of his support for LaRouche. Zimmerman financially contributed to LaRouche's 1984 presidential campaign, and to the Fusion Energy Foundation, a scientific organization which advocates "Manhattan project" crash programs for the development of fusion energy, and the Strategic Defense Initiative. LaRouche helped to found FEF.

On April 26, the 79-year-old Zimmerman was the subject of a national wire story by Welch, a story, which was in fact designed by the Anti-Defamation League's Irwin Suall. Because of his support for LaRouche, Zimmerman had been pressured, under threat of being hauled to court by his bankers for an action to declare him "incompetent," to turn control of his finances over to his bank. The bank, North Carolina National Bank of Florida, which is described in the publication *American Banker* as operating with "the fury of a bank robber given five minutes alone in the vaults at Fort Knox," has been implicated in questionable campaign contributions to Florida bank regulator Gerald Lewis, cousin of the Florida and Ohio-based drug banker Marvin Warner.

How the ADL operates

According to sources close to the Anti-Defamation League, a systematic financial warfare operation against LaRouche associates was activated in late 1985, when the ADL concluded that a Boston grand jury witchhunt against LaRouche's campaign committees, and his political associ-

ates, run by Weld for the last 19 months, was failing. The ADL operation has several stages and centers of activity, which work closely with the Boston U.S. Attorney's office:

First, large contributors are identified by agents working for the ADL, through Federal Election Commission records, and from information from attorneys working for drug-linked institutions such as First Fidelity Bank of New Jersey, and the National Broadcasting Company. Names of contributors are cross-checked with several anti-LaRouche operatives, including Dennis King and other *High Times* reporters, for further information and identification. King is a stringer for the ADL's Irwin Suall, who has attempted to insert himself as an "expert witness" into the Boston Weld investigation.

ADL lawyers and personnel are deployed to harass relatives of contributors, spreading the ADL-concocted lies that LaRouche is a "neo-Nazi" and the like. The relatives are told to pressure contributors to withdraw support from LaRouche. Similar contact is made with contributors' bankers and attorneys. The contributors' names are fed to a stable of reporters, such as the above-mentioned AP reporter Welch, for public exposure and further pressure.

On April 13, the *New York Times* carried a front page story, purporting to report on the "finances" of 1988 presidential candidate LaRouche, in the wake of the victory of LaRouche supporters Janice Hart and Mark Fairchild in the Illinois Democratic primary.

The source for the *Times* story was the Boston U.S. Attorney's office, and a so-called public document filed by Dan Small, the prosecutor in the fruitless Boston grand jury investigation. The article, which resulted in federal ethics complaints against Small for illegally leaking grand jury information, was a "signal" for the start of a media drumbeat accusing LaRouche and associates of fraud.

On April 26, William Welch surfaced a national wire story on the case of Charles R. Zimmerman, alleging that Zimmerman had been pressured by the FEF.

Investigations show that it was actually Welch's collaborators in the story who did the pressuring.

According to confidential sources, Welch is working directly with the ADL's Irwin Suall, and with Dennis King, to target financial contributors to political organizations and companies that they say are connected to LaRouche. Sources close to the ADL report that Welch has been "fed" the names of a list of "substantial" financial supporters and gears his interviews to "poisoning the well."

story on Zimmerman, Welch reported on his travels to Oklahoma to interview Nick Anderson, another LaRouche supporter.

Welch is now working with the North Carolina National Bank of Florida, which extorted a "voluntary" agreement that gave them control over Zimmerman's finances, to prepare legal action against the Fusion Energy Foundation. The NCNB has Zimmerman under "house arrest," but set up the interview with him for Welch as part of the financial warfare operation against LaRouche.

Zimmerman, who has been described by FEF personnel as an energetic thinker who fully supports the FEF's international campaign to organize allies' support for the SDI, now lives under virtual prison conditions imposed by the bank. His mail is intercepted and read by his bankers. Telephone calls are screened at a switchboard; unfamiliar callers are reported to bank officials.

Organized crime links

All the operatives in this anti-LaRouche campaign are connected to drug traffic and money laundering. Kenneth Bialkin, chairman of the Anti-Defamation League, is the former partner and attorney for Robert Vesco, a fugitive who now runs a cocaine empire for Fidel Castro out of Cuba. Bialkin is also the attorney for the ADL's bank, Sterling National, which has been implicated in fraud. Another of Bialkin's preferred clients is Israeli mafia figure Shaul Eisenberg.

U.S. Attorney Weld is tied through family interests to the international drug laundromat *Crédit Suisse*, and covered up its connection to the Bank of Boston. Investigations into Zimmerman's bank, the NCNB, show that this bank may be in league with similar forces.

According to Penny Lernoux's book *In Banks We Trust*, the NCNB was approached for a dubious \$40,000 campaign contribution to Gerald Lewis, candidate for the Florida State Comptroller (who regulates banking) in 1982.

Gerald Lewis is the cousin of Marvin Warner, the former ambassador to Switzerland, whose drug financing and fraud resulted in the collapse of a string of Ohio-based savings and loan associations. In the early 1980s, Lewis attempted to block the Drug Enforcement Administration's "Operation Greenback" that nailed Warner's Miami holding, the Great American Bank, for laundering cocaine money from Colombia's Isaac Kattin-Kassin. Warner was never charged in the case. The same year that Lernoux reports the soliciting of dubious campaign contributions from NCNB, and the bank they were acquiring, Exchange Bank of Florida, NCNB won federal and state approval to become the *first* interstate bank to operate in Florida. That deal was a bonanza which made the institution the largest and fastest-growing bank in the southeast United States.

Southern banking insiders say that the race for interstate banks such as NCNB to get into Florida was directly related to the impact of the Florida dope trade that brought billions into the state banks—the worst centers of money laundering in the United States. There is good reason to believe the NCNB benefited from that drug-money influx. One of the banks NCNB acquired in Florida is the Pan American Bank, which laundered funds for Hernán and Roberto Botero, a prominent Colombian cocaine family. The manager of international operations for Pan American, Dalia Rosales, testified in June 1985 that she had transferred the Botero funds to four South American banks. In December 1985, NCNB ownership of Pan American was concluded.