

## Reagan opens door to Constitution's destruction

by Kathleen Klenetsky

President Reagan has opened the door wide to the destruction of the U.S. Constitution, by foolishly deciding to throw his weight behind the movement to convene a constitutional convention.

Sources date Reagan's embrace of the constitutional convention idea to early this year, when certain of his economic and political advisers convinced him that the only way he could persuade Congress to adopt a balanced budget amendment, was through the convention route.

Previously, Reagan took a "neutral position" on the issue, one source told *EIR*. But after the Iran-Contra scandal broke, Reagan shifted his position sharply. Since the beginning of the year, the President has publicly endorsed the convention numerous times, and personally intervened in March to try to persuade the Montana state legislature to become the thirty-third state, out of a constitutionally-required thirty-four—to ratify legislation calling for a convention to be assembled.

Reagan's intervention failed—Montana rejected the convention resolution—but that did not dampen the President's enthusiasm for the idea. During the last week in May, the President gave two major addresses which centered on the theme of the constitutional convention.

In his radio address May 23, Reagan called on the American public to memorialize those killed in the attack on the *USS Stark*, by forcing more "responsible" action on the federal budget. Because of Congress's recalcitrance to enact balanced-budget legislation, said Reagan, the only alternative is to convene a constitutional convention for that purpose.

The President followed that up with a speech to the National Association of Manufacturers May 28, in which he assailed those who say that his economic policies have led to the deindustrialization of the United States—a charge which is absolutely true—and insisted again that a constitutional

convention must be held.

Reagan's decision to make the constitutional convention a key element of his political agenda, highlights most effectively how the President's incompetence in economic matters, and his hysterical refusal to admit that his economic recovery never took place, is leading him into actions which will bring utter ruin on the United States.

First of all, the balanced-budget amendment is a stupid idea in itself. It does nothing to address the fundamental problems of the U.S. economy—the declining tax base, the erosion of industrial and agricultural production—and would effectively prevent the nation from meeting the growing military threat from the Soviet Union. The most popular form of the amendment would permit the country to go into a budget-deficit situation, only in times of actual declared war.

The constitutional convention poses an even greater threat. There is nothing in the Constitution which would limit the actions of the assembly. So, even though President Reagan might want it to produce just a balanced budget amendment, in reality the convention could easily become, by accident or design, a free-for-all which would amend the Constitution out of existence. The potential for a run-away convention is especially great at the present time, because of the powerful movement set into motion by Trilateral Commission member Lloyd Cutler and others to abolish the present form of U.S. government, in favor of a virtual one-party, parliamentary dictatorship.

### A 'lalapalooza' of a mistake

In a statement released May 24, Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche termed the President's endorsement of a constitutional convention a "terrible mistake," one which could prove "fatal to the future existence of the United States." "I like Ronald Reagan," wrote LaRouche,

“but he does tend to make a number of blunders,” and this one is a “first-rate lalalooza.” LaRouche called Reagan’s proposal a “monstrous folly,” which would open the “floodgates to destroy our Constitution,” and vowed, “On this one, I would fight the misguided President tooth and nail.”

The worst thing about the President’s economic policy, is not so much the fact, that he has no grasp of the ABCs of economics, LaRouche said, “but that he refuses to recognize his ignorance of the subject. So, we have a President who insists we must have a constitutional revision to balance the federal budget, after his administration, in six years, has piled up a bigger increase in the federal deficit than all previous administrations in nearly 200 years, combined.”

The reason for this huge deficit is not the lack of a balanced-budget amendment, LaRouche said, but the administration’s fundamental economic errors. “The way to increase the federal government’s revenues without increasing the tax-rates, is to increase the income of U.S. farms, industries, and households. President Reagan’s economic agenda has done exactly the opposite. Farm income has collapsed, industrial jobs are following the Dodo to the exit, the service jobs available are part-time, or bring in about half the income of industrial employment. Where has the growth been? In a spiral of financial speculation, adding up to the biggest financial bubble in history,” a bubble “about to pop.”

To balance the budget, the United States needs an “actual economic recovery,” according to LaRouche, with “farms back into operation, industrial work-places reopened, repairing the nation’s collapsing basic economic infrastructure, and high rates of investment in creating the advanced-technology work-places that will enable the U.S. to compete in the world market.”

The U.S. Constitution contains “all the powers which the President and the Congress need to balance the federal budget: the power to act in ways which stimulate real economic growth. In fact, the Preamble of our Constitution insists on government doing just that. . . . If a person knows how to read, everything absolutely essential is right there in the Preamble.”

The problem is that the Reagan administration “has not exactly lived up to that Preamble—which those folk took a solemn oath to uphold. . . . ‘Establish justice,’ for example: as I look around this country, and as I know personally, the Reagan administration seems not to know what ‘justice’ means. ‘Provide for the common defense’: there, the administration has been a bit better on performance, up to the point they have to choose between defending the nation and defending Gramm-Rudman. ‘Promote the General Welfare’: this administration seems not to know what ‘General Welfare’ is.”

### **The National Taxpayers Union**

It is clear from the the way in which the President has couched his discussion of the convention, that he has been led to believe that the mere threat of a constitutional conven-

tion will be enough to force Congress into adopting a “BBA.”

This ridiculous line was first concocted by the National Taxpayers Union (NTU), the principal group organizing state legislatures on behalf of the constitutional convention call. The NTU was established in 1969 by James Davidson, an Oxford-trained American with an affected British accent. On its board are such luminaries as James Buchanan, the Nobel prize winner in economics (a sure sign of incompetence) and fanatical Friedmanite, along with Richard Lamm, the former Democratic governor of Colorado who thinks the elderly and handicapped should “die and get out of the way.” Sens. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) and Dale Bumpers (D-Ark), and Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.) are among the many members of Congress affiliated with the NTU.

The NTU claims that a constitutional convention will never take place—although they expend an awful lot of time and money to ensure that it does. Instead, says NTU spokesman Sheila MacDonald, the aim is to use the threat of a constitutional convention to “scare” Congress into legislating a balanced-budget amendment.

The NTU argument is complete nonsense. For one thing, they have been only two states short of the necessary 34 for several years—and Congress still hasn’t acted. Will one more state make that much difference? For another, although there are moves afoot in at least five states to rescind resolutions endorsing the constitutional convention, there is a very good chance that the two more states will sign onto the convention before these other states withdraw their approval. According to the NTU, three states could adopt pro-constitutional convention bills this year—California, where the state legislature will hold a hearing on the issue June 10, New Jersey, and Hawaii.

Thus, it seems far more likely that the NTU employs this argument to convince less sophisticated types (including the President) that they can clamber on board the constitutional convention bandwagon, without having to worry about the consequences, since it will never happen. But, of course, it could—and soon.

If Reagan’s embrace of the constitutional convention hasn’t scared Congress, it has surely upset many of his grassroots loyalists. The Eagle Forum, run by conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, has organized a coalition for the specific purpose of halting the convention momentum, warning that Lloyd Cutler and his anti-Constitution allies in the Committee on the Constitutional System will seize control of a convention, to ram through their scheme for transforming the United States into a parliamentary system. “We are extremely disappointed that President Reagan has come out in favor,” a spokesman said.

Similarly, the Daughters of the American Revolution adopted a resolution at its April national convention calling on its members to get their respective legislatures to rescind. The resolution specifically cited Cutler’s CCS, accusing this “powerful group of elitists” of wanting to restructure the Constitution into a “new world order.”