

LaRouche is innocent, as Captain Dreyfus was

by Friedrich-August von der Heydte

Friedrich-August von der Heydte, a well-known German professor of constitutional and international law, sees remarkable parallels between the infamous "Dreyfus Affair" in the 1890s in France, and the political persecution of Lyndon H. LaRouche in the United States.

Alfred Dreyfus, the son of a Jewish merchant who became a captain in the French Army, assigned to the Ministry of War, was framed up in 1894 on espionage charges, convicted, and imprisoned on Devil's Island off the coast of French Guiana. His cause was taken up by, among others, the writer Emile Zola, who was himself sentenced to a year in prison for libel following the publication of his famous open letter, "J'accuse." In 1899 Dreyfus was pardoned, but he fought for a retrial which fully exonerated him in 1904.

Everything that could be found out about the trial against Lyndon H. LaRouche, has been yet another painful reminder that the exploitation of the judicial system for the achievement of political ends, is unfortunately a method used repeatedly today in the West as well as in the East. The "LaRouche case" is a glaring example of how, in the United States also, the judiciary is abused for the dispensing of "political justice."

On closer examination of the behavior of the U.S. authorities toward LaRouche, there emerge strong parallels to the infamous Dreyfus Affair in France, which has gone down in history as a classic example of a political trial.

Just as LaRouche was, the French captain Alfred Dreyfus was deprived by the structure of the trial procedures, of any opportunity to prove his innocence, and facts critical for his defense were excluded from the trial. In both cases, the harshness of the punishment betrayed the authorities' actual intent, namely, to hold the defendant, who was condemned for political reasons, in prison for such an extended period that for simple biological reasons alone, he would no longer be able to influence the political process.

In both political trials, the prosecution consistently denied the political background of the accusations. LaRouche's actual "crime" seems to consist in the fact that he has created a financially and otherwise politically independent force which stands outside of the Establishment's strictly controlled political framework. Since that is hardly a punishable offense in a democratic state, an indictment had to be constructed which would make it possible to convict him under criminal law. After the first trial before a federal court in Boston collapsed, because even the court was unable to deny its political dimensions, a new trial with a virtually identical indictment was set up in Alexandria, Virginia, thereby taking advantage of the American federal system.

Role of the media

Some further parallels should be pointed out between the Dreyfus Affair and the LaRouche case:

In both cases, despite massive efforts, the initial criminal



A banner unfurled before the Opéra in Paris in January 1989. Beyond being one of the most clamorous cases of injustice in the last century, the frame-up of Alfred Dreyfus tore France into warring factions for over a decade, and was part of the process that set Europe on the road to World War I.

investigations led nowhere. Then the media were “drawn in,” and, playing on the growing wave of anti-Semitism and anti-German revanchism in France at the end of the 19th century, managed to stir up a witchhunt campaign and create a “pre-judgment,” such that additional pressure by the General Staff and the government finally led to an indictment against Dreyfus. Similarly today, in the United States there is scarcely any political figure more hated by the media than LaRouche.

Up to the trial’s conclusion, Dreyfus was almost certain that he would not be convicted, since despite falsified documents, the evidence against him was quite scanty. A handwriting expert had even confirmed that the famous “Border-eau” document could not have been written by Dreyfus. Nevertheless, the crushing verdict was delivered after only one hour’s deliberation. It was similar with the trial in Alexandria: On the basis of the judge’s instructions to the jury, the defendant could expect at least partial acquittal; and yet the jury unanimously found him and his six associates guilty on all 48 counts—which would work out to a total of approximately 10 minutes of “deliberation” on each count.

Rush to judgment

Both proceedings were rushed to their conclusion, as is typical for political trials. The period between the issuance of the indictment and the final conviction in both cases, was only a few weeks. LaRouche was indicted on Oct. 14, 1988 and was pronounced guilty on Dec. 16, 1988; Dreyfus only

learned that he was charged with treason when he was arrested on Oct. 15, 1894, and was convicted on Dec. 22, 1894.

In the court martial trial against Dreyfus, exculpatory material was suppressed, and documents were introduced as evidence which had been manipulated by intelligence services, and whose source was concealed by citing regulations on classified materials. The defense did not have complete access to the documents upon which the indictment was based. Only years afterward, was Dreyfus able to prove that the essential documents which led to his conviction had been forged, and that the prosecution’s star witness had committed perjury. Judging from the currently available published information, one is hard put to fend off the impression that here, too, there are parallels to the trial against LaRouche.

In both cases, the courts rushed to carry out the sentence, in order to deprive the accused of the ability to influence events. Even after the convictions, the press campaigns—now snide and triumphantly gloating—did not subside, but rather the contrary.

In order to disprove the accusations which to him were beyond belief, Dreyfus presented himself before the trial fully conscious of the fact that he had done nothing wrong. The fact alone that Lyndon LaRouche, although he was well aware of the political character of the trial against him, did not become a fugitive from justice—though he could have easily done so—is a convincing demonstration that LaRouche has a clear conscience.