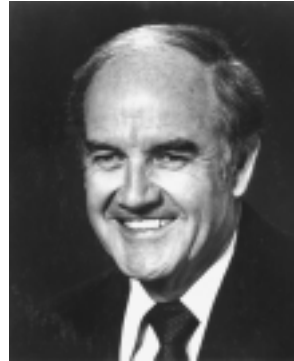

Interview: Sen. George McGovern

'Katrina Could End The War in Iraq'

George McGovern, who as a World War II bomber pilot was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, represented South Dakota in the U.S. Senate from 1963-81, and in the House of Representatives from 1957-61. As the Democratic Party's Presidential Candidate in 1972, he was defeated by the incumbent Richard Nixon. President John F. Kennedy appointed



McGovern as the first director of the U.S. Food for Peace program in 1961. He also served as U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization in the Clinton Administration. In 2000, he was awarded the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom, and in 2004, he was awarded the French Legion of Honor, France's highest military honor.

Senator McGovern spoke with EIR correspondent Nina Ogden by telephone on Sept. 1.

EIR: I want to let you know that Lyndon LaRouche just released a statement called "Our Tsunami Was Called Katrina!"

McGovern: This is a terrible catastrophe. New Orleans is below sea level. They can't just wait for it to dry out. They are talking about thousands of deaths.

EIR: In his statement LaRouche talks about 100,000 lives in jeopardy from the combined direct and indirect effects of the negligence of the Bush-Cheney Administration in the mishandling of the disaster.

McGovern: Yes, I can see that. Look at how they mishandled Iraq—they have created insurgents and suicide bombers. I have been talking to some people about this Hurricane Katrina bringing about the end to the war in Iraq. Bush will have to bring home the National Guard and Reserve troops whose families have been affected by the disaster. He will *have* to bring them home to relieve their families who are victims of the disaster. He could bring them home in advance of bringing all Guardsmen and Reservists home. We should admit that this disaster is worse than 9/11.

EIR: A friend of mine in the Middle East said that, if they could, Bush and Cheney would blame the hurricane on bin Laden. You know we put out LaRouche's "Guns of August" statement to stop Cheney's plan for bombing Iran with mini-nukes in supposed retaliation for a Reichstag Fire type of second 9/11.

McGovern: Cheney is a dangerous man. After 9/11, he and Bush squandered the goodwill and sympathy of the nations of the world and went to war against the people of Iraq. Now we have the sympathy of the world again. Bush should not squander it again. He should bring all the National Guard and Reserve troops home to do the jobs they were trained to do. They would willingly use their training to help in this unprecedented national emergency. They were not trained to be mucking around in the deserts of Iraq, shooting people.

You know, I was visiting in Montana and the Governor was making public statements to the effect that he needs the National Guard back in his state to be fighting forest fires.

If Bush will bring home the National Guard and Reservists, who shouldn't have been there in the first place, he can make clear to a sympathetic world that it is the first step in his exit policy, and then quickly withdraw the rest of the troops. He can ask his father for advice about ending a war.

It should even be clear to the President that our nation's sentiment is turning against the war. Look at the completely unexpected support for Cindy Sheehan. One person can make a big difference. You, yourself, make a big difference, you know.

So, the horror of Hurricane Katrina can bring us to our senses and bring our troops home and end the war in Iraq.

EIR: What precedent do we have of the government taking action in a disaster like this one?

McGovern: There is no precedent for this disaster! The only precedent, in terms of the loss of lives, jobs, infrastructure, and so forth, as the result of the mishandling of what was already a dangerous situation, is the crash of 1929. Then President Roosevelt acted to save the nation and to save the common good. He even closed the banks and then opened them up again, fit to serve the people and the nation. He passed regulations against the crimes of speculation. He gave people hope against their worse fears.

And our government should be doing immediately what FDR did. We should be immediately reviving Roosevelt's WPA [Works Progress Administration] and CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps], under the guidance of the Army Corps of Engineers. We would be creating jobs for the people who now have nothing and we would be reconstructing otherwise-lost towns and cities, otherwise-lost to disaster. We would give our people their lives back. We'd have cities of hope, instead of a war zone of looting and misery, and we wouldn't have a people lost to fear and despair.