

Editorial

The crucial question

Whether the Clinton administration will right the egregious miscarriage of justice which has kept Lyndon LaRouche and his associates in federal and Virginia state prisons since 1989, is now a burning question among leading circles in most countries of the world. How, they ask, can the United States credibly speak in favor of human rights when Lyndon LaRouche is held a political prisoner?

On March 31, former Judge Carlo Palermo, now a member of the Italian Parliament, raised a formal parliamentary inquiry. It read: "Whereas Mr. Lyndon LaRouche, American citizen, born in Rochester [New Hampshire] on Sept. 8, 1922, now 70, an economist and former Democratic candidate to the presidency of the U.S.A., has been serving for four years, in a prison in Rochester, Minnesota, a sentence of 15 years given to him on Jan. 27, 1989 by Judge Albert Bryan of the Alexandria, Virginia court. The indictment counts were: mail fraud conspiracy, mail fraud, conspiracy to obstruct the IRS; and they concerned the repayment of electoral loans for Mr. LaRouche (a candidate at that time) for a total of \$294,000;

"Whereas an administrative crime of such a dimension is never punished in the U.S.A. with such an excessive sentence, unless other motivations intervene which . . . cannot be other than the political activity always exercised by him [LaRouche];

"Whereas LaRouche is continuing to serve the sentence despite the fact that he is over 70;

"Whereas since his jailing, Mr. LaRouche has been undergoing, despite his age, heavy work in the kitchen and in the laundry for several hours a day, which was not even suspended after he underwent surgery in 1990, and despite his precarious conditions of health;

"Therefore,

"The president of the Council of Ministers [prime minister] and foreign minister are asked whether they do not think it fit, in defense of the rights of man to be affirmed everywhere, to manifest to the President of the United States, respecting their mutual national competencies, the advisability of reexamining the position of prisoner Lyndon LaRouche with the aim of allowing his liberation from prison."

In all, 224 parliamentarians, 1,300 notables, and 15,000 citizens from around the world have added their name to similar requests directed to President Clinton. From Italy alone these include such notables as Sen. Flaminio Piccoli, Sen. Emilio Molinari, Sen. Carmine Mancuso, Cardinal Edouard Gagnon, and around 50 more representatives of the Italian Senate and the European Parliament.

The challenge to the glaring abuse of human rights by the Bush administration in the case of LaRouche is also hot news throughout Ibero-America. On April 1, the Peruvian Congress' Human Rights Committee took up the LaRouche case. Cong. Roger Cáceres, who heads the committee, forwarded a letter to the speaker of the Peruvian Congress which states:

"By agreement of the Committee on Human Rights and Pacification, [over] which I have the honor to preside, I ask that the minister of foreign affairs be instructed that, through diplomatic means, a request be presented to the government of the United States for a detailed and precise report regarding the repeated charges of human rights violations we are getting from numerous citizens of this country and from other nations of the world, regarding the abuses and violation of the human rights of American politician Lyndon LaRouche and his movement, as is detailed in the attached documents.

"It should be noted that it would be something inadmissible for the aforementioned government to raise any objections, observations, and demands regarding human rights in our country, if within the United States itself there are such grave and delicate situations, which more than justifies that at the very least we are provided the information requested."

Sixty-one congressmen from Ibero-America have sent or signed letters to the U.S. government deplored this abuse of justice. A similar response has come from parliamentarians from the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. The one country whose leaders are strangely silent is the United States. It is about time that Americans wake up to the fact that this is not a case which can be swept under the rug. The world awaits an answer from the new U.S. administration.