

Martin O’Malley and the Institution of the Presidency

by Debra Hanania Freeman

June 1—On Saturday, May 30, former two-term Baltimore Mayor and Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley made his candidacy for the Democratic Presidential nomination official. Writing for Bloomberg News, Mark Halperin noted that the speech could very well serve as a “game changer” in the 2016 Presidential campaign.

O’Malley delivered his remarks standing atop Federal Hill, historic as a lookout post both during the War of 1812 and for Union troops during the Civil War. During better economic times, it also overlooked what was once a vibrant industrial port—a point that did not go unnoticed in O’Malley’s remarks.

Although he addressed issues that ranged from the need for a new national security policy to immigration reform, O’Malley’s emphasis remained consistent with what it has been from the start: the need to rebuild America’s real economy. He didn’t hesitate to address the recent riots that swept Baltimore following the death of Freddie Grey, but refused to reduce the issue, as so many so-called progressives have, to solely a racial one, saying:

What took place here was not only about race... not only about policing in America. It’s about



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Martin O’Malley at his kickoff rally in Baltimore, May 30, 2015

everything it is supposed to mean to be an American. The scourge of hopelessness that happened to ignite here that evening, transcends race or geography. Witness the record numbers of young white kids killing themselves with heroin in suburbs and small towns across America.

And, while Hillary Clinton has refused to criticize Obama, O’Malley made no excuses for Obama:

The hard truth of our shared reality is this: Unemployment in many American cities and in many small towns across the United States is higher now than it was eight years ago. The vast majority of the American people are poorer than they were eight years ago. And it isn’t getting

better. It is getting worse. We can't run away from the truth. Conditions of extreme and growing poverty, create conditions for extreme violence. We have work to do....

Naming the Enemy

O'Malley laid the blame squarely on the dominance of Wall Street:

Our economic and political system is upside down and backwards, and it is time to turn it around. What happened to our economy,—what happened to the American Dream,—did not happen by chance. Nor was it merely the result of global forces somehow beyond our control. Powerful, wealthy special interests here at home have used our government to create—in our own country—an economy that is leaving a majority of our people behind. An economy that has so concentrated wealth in the hands of the very few, that it has taken opportunity from the homes of the many. An economy where a majority of our people are unheard, unseen, unneeded, and left to conclude that their lives and labors are literally worth less today than they were yesterday.... And will be worth less still tomorrow....

We are allowing our land of opportunity to be turned into a land of inequality. Main Street struggles, while Wall Street soars. Tell me how it is, that not a single Wall Street CEO was convicted of a crime related to the 2008 economic meltdown. *Not. A. Single. One.* Tell me how it is, that you can get pulled over for a broken tail light in our country, but if you wreck the nation's economy, you are untouchable.

This is not how our economy is supposed to work! This is not how our country is supposed to work! This is not the American Dream! And it does not have to be this way!

The presentation went beyond platitudes. He identified that the real substance of what is so commonly referred to as the American Dream, is the commitment to progress and to the future, above all else, stressing that before one can craft a solution to a problem, one has to understand the problem and its cause.

Our economy isn't based on money; our economy is people,—all of our people. The American system measures success by progress; by the growing prosperity, productivity, and security of our people,— all of our people.

We must put our national interest first, and that means putting the general welfare of the vast majority of our people first. But we cannot rebuild the American Dream here at home, by catering to the voices of the privileged and the powerful.

Look: It is high time that we were honest. They were the ones who turned our economy upside-down in the first place. And they are the only ones who are benefiting from it. Yes, we need to prosecute cheats, but we also need to act pre-emptively to restore stability to our banking system. How do we do that? There is ***no way around it!*** We need to reinstate Glass-Steagall, and we need to do that immediately. If a bank is too big to fail without wrecking our nation's economy,.... then it needs to be broken up before it breaks us ... again.

By the time O'Malley started naming names, the crowd's enthusiasm had reached a fever pitch. The candidate paused for the extended ovation before saying:

Listen, let me tell you a true story. I think most people know that Goldman Sachs is one of the biggest repeat-offending investment banks in America. Recently, back in March, Lloyd Blankfein, the CEO of Goldman Sachs, let his employees know that, as far as Wall Street reform is concerned, he'd be just fine with either Jeb Bush or Hillary Clinton.

Oh, I bet he would.... My friends, that should really tell us something.

"Well, I've got news for Mr. Blankfein and the bullies of Wall Street: The Presidency is not a crown to be passed back and forth by you and your friends between two royal families. It is a sacred trust to be earned from the people of the United States, and exercised on behalf of the people of the United States. And the only way we are going to rebuild the American Dream is if we re-take control of our own American government away from these people.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Lyndon LaRouche addresses a Washington, D.C. conference on beam weapon defense April 13, 1983.

Who Is His Opposition?

It is Martin O’Malley’s willingness to base his campaign on just such a policy that has gained him the enmity of the establishment media, but even they felt obligated to give prominent coverage, not only to the announcement of his candidacy, but to his forthright attack on Wall Street and insistence on the restoration of Glass-Steagall. *Newsweek*’s headline was: “Attacking Clinton and Wall Street, O’Malley Launches Presidential Bid.” Its article noted that it was O’Malley’s attacks on Wall Street and Goldman Sachs, and his reference to the “two royal families,” that “drew roars from the young, diverse crowd, making it his biggest applause line of the day.” Indeed, LaRouchePAC organizers who carried large placards stating GLASS-STEAGALL NOW, were greeted with almost uniform support. A number of those listening to O’Malley, in-

cluding several media and press outlets, sought out LaRouche organizers for a more in-depth explanation of Glass-Steagall.

Not surprisingly, it was the London *Economist* that led the charge against O’Malley. In their May 30 column, “O’Malley flat,” they make no mention of his attacks on Wall Street or his call for the restoration of Glass-Steagall (something they clearly see as a *casus belli*), and instead focused on the recent Baltimore riots, saying that they “have unsettled his ambitions, as has Bernie Sanders entering the race.” The column goes on to conclude wistfully:

It is doubtful that Mr. O’Malley will make any dent in Mrs. Clinton’s commanding lead.

The same race-baiting line about the Baltimore riots and O’Malley’s “Zero Tolerance” police policy, was played widely in other U.S. media, including *Time*, Associated Press, the *Washington Post*, and National Public Radio, both before and after his announcement.

Prior to the Saturday kickoff event, there was constant media hype predicting large protests by a heretofore unheard-of group that claimed that it was O’Malley’s policy as Baltimore Mayor that led to the riots. And, their ten to fifteen protesters were given prominent press coverage, despite the fact that none of them were local community activists, or organizers of the protests following the death of Freddie Grey.

What none of that coverage noted, however, was that Martin O’Malley served as Mayor from 1999 to 2007, long before the recent charges levelled at Baltimore’s policing policy. They also failed to mention that O’Malley’s “Zero Tolerance” policy followed the administration of Kurt Schmoke. It was under Mayor Schmoke that George Soros’s drug policies not only dominated City Hall, but turned the city into a virtual free zone for local drug gangs, with one of the highest homicide rates in the nation. O’Malley coupled his crackdown on the drug gangs with “Stop the Killing” marches and vigils through some of the city’s worst neighborhoods. Mayor O’Malley’s policies enjoyed broad support from community leaders and the black clergy. Several of those leaders were present at the Saturday event to recall that it was in that period, with O’Malley’s help, that they successfully took their neighborhoods back from the drug gangs.

Enter Lyndon LaRouche

In recent months, American economist and statesman Lyndon LaRouche has made no secret of the fact that he considers O’Malley to be the only qualified candidate for the Presidency to have emerged so far. In a discussion with supporters May 28 (see “Fireside Chat,” this issue), Mr. LaRouche said:

O’Malley is, on the scale of things, the most prominent figure who might save this nation, as President. Now, that would mean he would have to have not just himself; he would have to have a team. Because a single person as President is not a very effective person. Because the other guys may be going in the other direction.

LaRouche went on to explain:

So, therefore, the problem is, we have to have, always, we have to have two things: guts, and the teamwork to create a leadership,—a political leadership, a practical leadership,—inside the United States. And we have to pull people together and get them to decide they’re going to stick together for that mission.

It is precisely that shaping of the institution of the Presidency that has played a crucial role in LaRouche’s work during the entire post-World War II period. LaRouche’s key role during the Reagan years, as the intellectual author of Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) policy, has been well documented in this journal. But, the question of just how one shapes the institution of the Presidency is little understood. It doesn’t happen as a result of whispering in a President or would-be President’s ear. It happens first, instead, in the crafting of a policy that addresses the crucial questions facing the nation at that moment, but then in successfully organizing people,—both those in various positions of leadership and, very importantly, the population at large,—to come together with the needed depth of understanding and passion to fight for that policy.

The Clinton Case

The Clinton Presidency was an instructive case in point. When Clinton ran for his first term as President, Lyndon LaRouche was a political prisoner serving a

fifteen-year term in federal prison. Clinton was not viewed with particular favor by those in the LaRouche movement, save for a general agreement that almost anyone was better than Bush, who was instrumental in LaRouche’s illegal incarceration. When Clinton actually won the Presidency, LaRouche’s supporters continued to bombard Washington, D.C. with demands for LaRouche’s exoneration and an end to his incarceration. State legislators and civil rights leaders were joined by delegations of parliamentarians and legal experts from all over the world. Thousands of petition signatures were delivered to the White House. Prominent figures from the United States, and from virtually every continent, lent their names to ads in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

In 1988, just prior to his incarceration, Lyndon LaRouche had given a press conference at West Berlin’s Kempinski Bristol Hotel, on “U.S. Policy Toward the Reunification of Germany.” He forecast the collapse of the Comecon economies, and elaborated a “Food for Peace” policy for transforming East-West relations, centered on rebuilding the economy of Poland, so that “the desirable approach to reunification of Germany, can proceed on the basis a majority of Germans on both sides of the Wall desire it should.”

A year later, in December 1989, from his prison cell in Rochester, Minnesota, LaRouche commissioned a group of scientists and other specialists from the Schiller Institute to work out an economic program for Europe, known as the “Productive Triangle.” In January 1990, “The Productive Triangle, Paris-Berlin-Vienna: Locomotive for the World Economy,” was published in German. This geographical area, a spherical triangle approximately as large as the territory of Japan, encompassing the industrial regions of northern France, western and eastern Germany, and parts of former Czechoslovakia and Austria, was envisioned to serve as a locomotive to restart the collapsing world economy.

The “Triangle” program aimed at stimulating the economy of eastern and western Europe following the fall of the “Iron Curtain,” by means of large projects for the modernization of infrastructure in transportation, energy, water, and communications. These projects, to be financed chiefly through state credit at low rates of interest, would stimulate the demand for investment goods over the long term, secure employment, and favor the creation of modern industrial factories. The



Chris Desley

A LaRouche movement rally in defense of the Clinton Presidency in Sacramento, Calif. on Jan. 7, 1999.

backbone of the triangle was to be an integrated system of high-speed and magnetic levitation rail, to be used for transport of both passengers and freight. The transportation network was to be expanded with roads and waterways, linked by automated freight-transfer systems. The urban centers would be connected with magnetic levitation lines.

During the five years of LaRouche's incarceration, his wife, Helga Zepp-LaRouche travelled the world building a vast network of support, including in Russia and the nations that had previously comprised the Soviet Union.

When LaRouche's supporters in the United States finally made successful contact with Clinton Administration officials in the effort to win his release from prison, it turned out that what had captured the attention of the new President, more than any other single factor, was that policy. It was the beginning of an infor-

mal collaboration that ultimately led to Clinton's insistence on the need for a "New Financial Architecture," a policy that mirrored LaRouche's decades-long fight for a New Bretton Woods. It also made Clinton a target of the London/Wall Street-centered financial oligarchy that ultimately orchestrated his impeachment. Although they succeeded in formal impeachment proceedings, Clinton managed to hold on to the Presidency.

When, in 1998, it was learned that Joe Lieberman, then a Democratic Senator from Connecticut and later Al Gore's Vice Presidential nominee, was organizing a Democratic Congressional group to visit Clinton and demand his resignation, the LaRouche movement launched the "Committee to Save the Presidency," pulling together a broad coalition of state legislators from across the U.S., and exposing who and what was really behind the London-based war on the very institution of the Presidency. Later, close Clinton associates gratefully acknowledged that it was largely that effort that saved Clinton's Presidency. But, unfortunately, the institution itself, which was already infected with the likes of Al Gore, who was consistently working against the embattled President, had been seriously weakened. It was during this period that a badly distracted Clinton signed the repeal of Glass-Steagall, something he today acknowledges was a grave error.

Later, during both John Kerry's 2004 Presidential campaign and then Hillary Clinton's 2008 campaign, the informal collaboration continued, and indeed intensified. Most of the specific details of that collaboration are subject to agreements of confidentiality, but they are nevertheless obvious in terms of policy direction, both domestically and internationally.

Coming back to the present situation, there is no question that so far, O'Malley has exhibited both the courage and the understanding to qualify for the Presidency. But there is much work that has to be done, not only in pulling together the components of a team for governance after the 2016 election, but for what must essentially serve as a transitional Presidency right now, taking power away from Barack Obama, whose current policies could very well lead us to nuclear war.