

---

# A Rare Moment in History

**Speed:** We're going to hear now from Mike Billington, and Mike is going to tell you a bit about himself. He is, as is listed here in your program, *Executive Intelligence Review* Asia Editor. He's the author of a book called *Reflections of an American Political Prisoner*. Mike was offered,— I say it and he has to say it—after two trials, one trial for which he served 2-3 years, he was offered a plea bargain, which would have meant that he would have simply time served. No time would have been additional.

All he had to do was claim to be guilty of something of which he was not. A lot of his friends would have had a big problem. And Mike decided, "You know what? I don't think I'm going to do that." Despite the fact that his own attorney asked to be replaced, despite the fact that Mike said he would replace him, the judge in the case refused to do that; and Mike was given a 77-year sentence. He served eight years of it. Is that the price you have to pay for integrity in this country?

Now if it is, I will submit to all of you, as you listen to him, you think about whether or not that's the kind of country you want to live in. Mike Billington.

**Michael Billington:** Thanks, Dennis. If any of you have a sense that calling for the exoneration of Lyndon LaRouche is a pipe dream, or that Trump would never do this, I want you to put that out of your minds. And I'll try to prove that.

This is a rare moment in history for many reasons. But one, which I will address, is that this is, in fact, the time that the exoneration of LaRouche is both possible, absolutely necessary, and will transform not just the nation, but the world, forever. And I want to try to convey that in as clear a way as I possibly can.

Let's start by looking at the fact that just last week,

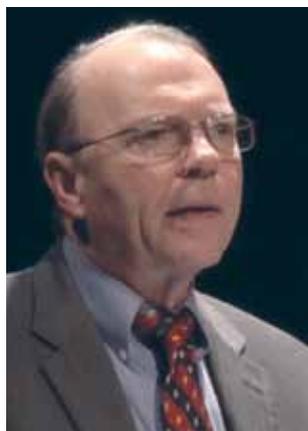
Donald Trump pardoned or commuted the sentences of 11 people. Some of them were people who, like myself and my co-defendants, were innocent and were illegally and unjustly charged and tried and sent to prison. Others did commit crimes, but they were subjected to outrageous sentences, not just to silence them, but to terrorize other people. The fact that Trump did this, and that he also addressed quite publicly and at some length the Roger Stone case, and the fact that, as he said, "He will probably be exonerated one way or another," means that this is very much on Donald Trump's mind.

And I'll mention that Roger Stone, who is someone who has quite publicly addressed Lyndon LaRouche as one of the greatest minds of the 20th century, has interviewed him, has spoken at our conferences, is very well known to the criminal network in the criminal justice system who have run the entire operation against Trump, against Roger Stone, and others. And I'll come back to that.

One of the people released by Donald Trump was Rod Blagojevich. I will convey, in brief, some of what he said the day he came out, where he and his wife and his two daughters met outside the house. He addressed the fact, first of all, that there was no way to thank President Trump for freeing a man from a charge which he had not committed; there was no way to thank him. He said that Trump is a very firm leader, a very tough leader, but also has a huge heart. And that releasing Blagojevich was an act of kindness, which people had to recognize.

He then went on to say, to the people of Illinois who had elected him twice as Governor, "I did not let you down. I would have let you down had I given into this; had I admitted guilt to something I didn't do; if I had gone along to save myself from this 14-year sentence"—of which he served 8 years. He then quoted from a Supreme Court Justice, Justice Stephen Breyer, who said that the idea that people in politics and the political world could be charged criminally for what they're supposed to do as politicians is one of the greatest threats to America today. Breyer said, "Prosecutors armed with this potential are a grave danger to our system of government." And Blagojevich said he learned that the hard way, as many of us did.

But I think it's extremely important that you have people at that level directly addressing the broken criminal justice system that has existed, he specifically said, since 1994 when the federal crime bill was passed,



LPAC-TV

Michael Billington

which was a disaster. He described it as a racist and illegal act.

### The LaRouche Case

Lyndon LaRouche, long before that, was convicted and served 5 years of a 15-year sentence, from 1990 to 1995. He could have been exonerated by President Clinton; Clinton was considering it. Literally tens of thousands of leading citizens of this nation and from around the world wrote to Clinton, calling on him to pardon and exonerate Lyndon LaRouche; but he didn't. He did make sure that LaRouche was released after the first parole potential, after five years. So, he served 5 years of that 15-year sentence.

When he was released, he organized in Virginia a [forum](#) before a panel of very distinguished jurists and political leaders and others, testimony on the LaRouche case and on other cases of the misuse of the criminal justice system—in particular, the Fruehmenschen case, which was the official FBI doctrine that any black elected official was, by the fact that of being black, more prone to corruption and therefore it was legitimate for them to be investigated. I want to read some of what Lyn said himself in his [testimony](#) to that hearing. He said—and this is long before 9/11—this is back in 1995:

We have, in my view, a system of injustice whose center is within the Department of Justice, especially the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. The problem lies not with one administration or another, though one administration or another may act more positively or more negatively. You have permanent civil service employees ... who are coordinators of a nest of institutions in the Criminal Division, which show up repeatedly as leading or key associates of every legal atrocity which I've seen.

In my case, when the time came that somebody wanted me out of the way, they were able to rely upon that permanent injustice in the permanent bureaucracy of government, to do the job.... Always there's that agency inside the Justice Department, which works for a contract, like a hitman, when somebody with the right credentials and passwords walks in, and says, "We



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

*Lyndon LaRouche testifying at hearings to investigate misconduct by the Department of Justice, Tysons Corner, Virginia, July 31, 1995.*

want to get this group of people." Or, "We want to get this person." And until we remove, from our system of government, the rotten, permanent bureaucracy which acts like contract assassins, using the authority of the justice system to perpetrate assassination, this country is not free, nor anyone in it. [applause]

Odin Anderson, Lyn's lawyer, then presented a series of documents which we had obtained through Freedom of Information from the FBI, and I'll just briefly mention, it included the idea of putting out false leaflets under the LaRouche organization's name, going back into the 1960s and 1970s. It included Henry Kissinger's letter to the head of the FBI saying, can't you get this guy? He's being very obnoxious. A letter from the Director of the FBI to some of his subordinates, saying let's investigate him. We don't know where his money comes from; let's investigate him as being funded by a foreign hostile force, which then calls into being Executive Order 12333, which basically says that if somebody is financed by a foreign hostile force, you can throw the Constitution out and do whatever you want. And others of this sort. So, this was well documented.

Then, Ramsey Clark spoke. Ramsey Clark, I'm sure most of you know, was the Attorney General of the United States under President Johnson. He became our lawyer for the appeal when we were first convicted in

the Federal case. Here's what he said, first of all, in a letter that he wrote to Janet Reno, then the Attorney General—the same position he had held:

This case, I believe, involves a broader range of deliberate and systemic misconduct and abuse of power over a longer period of time, in an effort to destroy a political movement and leader, than any other Federal prosecution in my time or to my knowledge. A tragic miscarriage of justice.

In testimony at the same hearings where Mr. LaRouche spoke, he said:

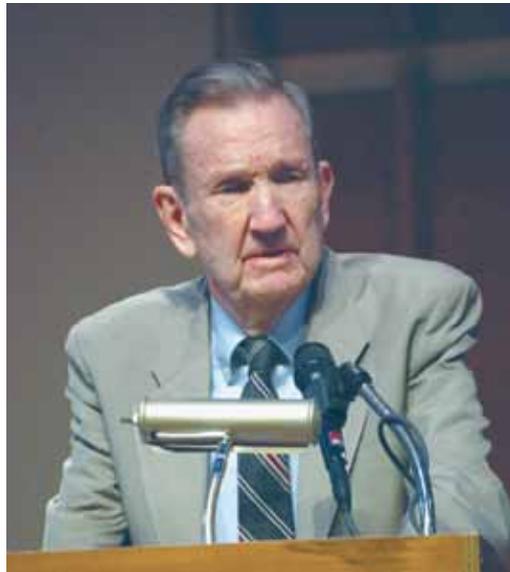
In what was a complex and pervasive utilization of law enforcement, prosecution, media, and non-governmental organizations focussed on destroying an enemy, this case must be number one. The purpose can only be seen as destroying more than a political movement; more than a political figure. It is those too, but it is a fertile engine of ideas and a common purpose of thinking and studying and analyzing to solve problems regardless of the impact on the status quo or on vested interests. It was the deliberate purpose to destroy that at any cost.

So, this is what the LaRouche case was, and was it was recognized as such increasingly by many people. That's why they had to destroy him and try to poison his name in the media, to prevent these ideas from being placed at the accessibility of the American and world populations.

Clearly, it's exactly this same network that went after Donald Trump. I don't think I have to explain that; it's pretty obvious.

### **The Billington Case**

In terms of my own case, I think to get at that, I want to say something else about Roger Stone. You probably all watched the raid; the great raid on Roger Stone's



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

*Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, speaking at the Schiller Institute's 30th Anniversary Conference in New York City on Jan. 15, 2014.*

house. A 66-year-old man with no criminal record, attacked at 5 a.m. or something like that; with, of course, CNN standing out there. Everybody watched this "horrible criminal" being put in handcuffs and dragged off.

Well, I'm very familiar with that scene. On October 6, 1986, the day we've called the Great Panty Raid in Leesburg, Virginia, armed forces from many different law enforcement agencies raided our offices, and surrounded Lyndon LaRouche's residence. And when my wife got up that morning and was taking the garbage down to the end of our lane, she saw a whole slew of armed men in police

cars—and CNN—ready to come in; for some reason, not coming in immediately.

So, we called our neighbors, John and Renée Sigeron, who happened to live near us at that time, and said, "Why don't you come over while we wait 'til they come in and arrest me?" So, we were sitting there watching *The Marriage of Figaro* on a video, when the men finally decided to come running up the road with their guns drawn and surrounded the house. They pulled me out and put me in chains and took me off, and so forth. Why? And CNN. My wife came out and said, "Get the hell off my yard, you have no right to be here."

This is something that was going on then, and is going on now. In my case, there was something of this deep state—so-called—directly involved. A fellow named Oliver North—some of you probably remember—who was, at that time, running through the Iran-Contra operation, a scam in which our government was arming terrorists in Nicaragua. And the planes unloading the guns that were being shipped down to them, just as North's operation was shipping weapons to al-Qaeda in Libya and so forth, were coming back loaded up with cocaine.

We exposed that. That this was a drug-running operation, and that Oliver North—the good friend of Henry Kissinger and others—was running this scam. Then we found out that Ollie North was also running around raising huge amounts of money—stealing

really, huge amounts of money from people, telling them that this was to fight communism; it was to save America, and so forth. When in fact, it was financing arms-running and drug-running.

One of the people they scammed was somebody who was a major contributor to us, and with whom I was in regular contact. Oliver North told her that bad people were trying to undermine her doing good things; therefore, she should let her phone be tapped, which was done. They monitored our calls. This was not just to get me, but it was to be fully on top of what exactly we were doing as an organization at that time.

So, I think that's the reason I was hit particularly hard with the indictments. I was indicted both in the Federal case and in the Virginia state case. The "Railroad" as we called it, went forth; we were all convicted. I won't go through the ugly details, but it's worth reading. [See Billington's [book](#) about it.] I got three years in the Federal case. And then, as Dennis explained, I was told in the state case, in which I was charged with crimes that could have resulted in a sentence of up to 90 years, that I simply had to lie, and—pffft!—I could go home.

That didn't happen. And as a result, I got a 77-year sentence. Many of the people I met in prison, when I said I had a 77-year sentence, asked, "How many bodies do ya got?" [laughter] So, I did not. I want to read something that Dennis read at a previous event and which really struck me, from Martin Luther King. Dr. King said:

You may be 38 years old, as I happen to be. And one day some great opportunity stands before you and calls you to stand up for some great principle, some great issue, some great cause. And you refuse to do it because you are afraid. . . . You refuse to do it because you want to live longer. . . . You're afraid because you will lose your job, or you are afraid that you will be criticized and will lose your popularity, or you're afraid that somebody will stab you, or shoot at you, or bomb your house, so you refuse to take that stand.

Well, you may go on and live until you are



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

*Beginning October 6, 1986, the Leesburg, Virginia headquarters of the LaRouche organization was searched in a coordinated, two-day raid by hundreds of officers of the FBI, IRS, other federal agencies, and Virginia state authorities.*

90, but you will be just as dead at 38 as you would be at 90. And the cessation of breathing in your life is but the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit.

### **Prison and Classical Culture**

And I can assure you, that my life is proof of that fact: Because I did have to spend a total of 10 years in prison. But I can honestly say, these were the best years of my life. My only problem with my fellow inmates was my trying to convince them that this was the only chance they had in life, where they didn't have to work, they didn't have to support a family, they should learn, they should read, they should not waste away, feeling sorry for themselves. I was given the assignment of China—I mean, 77 years, you've got 5,000 years of history to study; you need 77 years to take that on. [laughter]

But it became a real passion. It was something we needed to do. My co-defendant, Will Wertz, was at the time, translating Nicholas of Cusa, who was the relatively unknown great mind of the European Renaissance era; and I was then reading Confucius and Mencius and another relatively unknown but magnificent figure called Zhu Xi during the Song dynasty in the 12th century, and saw the comparison between what I was reading of Cusa, and what I was reading of these

Chinese philosophers, and was able to pull together a sense of the way in which the great Christian Renaissance of Europe, and the Confucian Renaissance, where Zhu Xi, like Cusa, was restoring the Platonic tradition and the Confucian tradition which had been lost, over the dark ages in both Europe and China.

So it was a profound chance for me to really make great discoveries, which enriched my life, and through my work, hopefully, enriched the world, and made those who put me in prison very sorry that they'd given me the opportunity, to do that.

Lastly, I'll say, there was one particularly profound experience: At one point, another of my co-defendants, Paul Gallagher, and I were in the same prison, and we formed a Classical chorus. So we had a chorus of people—of criminals, some fairly serious criminals, child molesters, murderers—but people who, with one exception had never participated in any kind of Classical music, were totally unfamiliar with Classical music, and had never tried to sing. But we had been trained in some *bel canto* methods, and we began to train them. We sang Bach, and we sang Schubert, and we sang Negro spirituals. And in particular, we sang Beethoven.

Now, this is the Year of Beethoven, our theme is to “Think Like Beethoven.” Many of you may have seen that Helga Zepp-LaRouche, two weeks ago, gave a forum here in New York, from Germany, on *Fidelio*, the great opera by Beethoven: In which the woman, Leonora, dresses as a boy, “Fidelio,” to work for the warden of a prison where she believes her husband is being held illegally, and secretly, by a tyrant. And through this story, she eventually frees her husband. This is a very powerful story; you can imagine why Helga loves this story, with Lyn having been in prison at this time.

I had a similar experience: My late wife, at that time, traveled the world meeting with presidents and world courts, and so forth, addressing this injustice to Lyndon LaRouche.

One scene in this great opera is called the “Prisoners’ Chorus,” where Leonora/Fidelio succeeds in getting the warden to let the prisoners out for just a moment, to get some fresh air. They come out, and sing this all-male chorus called, *O welche Lust*, “Oh, what joy,” to breathe fresh air again. They think about freedom, freedom, freedom—*Freiheit, Freiheit*. But then, they remember that they're being watched, and they sort of skulk back into their cells.

We sang this at the prison, and that, in particular—

the whole thing—but that in particular, that Beethoven principle, had a profound effect on every one of those people. I've told this story before, and I tend to choke up when I say it: But every one of them, at some point afterward, came up to me, to try to express that they had never known of this kind of beauty in the world—and, let alone, that they could participate in the creation of that kind of beauty.

So, when Lyndon LaRouche launched the Manhattan Project here in New York, with the intention of creating a vast chorus that would sing both the Classical repertoire and the Negro spirituals, because these spirituals are not just popular music, or gospels, they are songs which are about the fight for freedom, and have a Classical nature, in that sense—I understood exactly what he meant: That this was the way in which we can build the necessary movement for a true Renaissance.

### ‘The Path to Truth Is Through Beauty’

So the Schiller Institute's motto has always been the Schiller motto—that the path to truth is through beauty. There was a *Musikabend* last night, and I understand that those people who went and participated in the music, who are being recruited to our political ideas,—but it's through participating in this kind of great culture, which we've lost in America with the ugliness that now passes for “culture.” This is the way we create the potential to reverse the decay, the collapse of the civilization that we're living in, and actually create the New Paradigm that Helga addressed.

If we make this possible, that LaRouche is exonerated by President Donald Trump who wants to achieve what he says, in terms of bringing the world together around these powerful ideas of development, of science, of cooperation, and great culture, then all of these ideas of this brilliant man, these beautiful ideas, will be made available to everyone, which have been denied them for these last 40 or 50 years, which is the great crime of the persecution of Lyndon LaRouche, that these ideas were prevented from being known and uplifting people.

So this is where we stand, and I think this is why we have this kind of a fight, to expose and destroy, whether you call it the deep state or British intelligence, destroy those who have purposely set out to destroy both the culture as well as the economy and the participation of our citizens in this kind of commitment, to what, in fact, can and must be, a New Paradigm. Thank you. [applause]