

SHOWDOWN AT DNC WINTER MEETING

Will Democrats Be the Party of Lyndon LaRouche or Marc Rich?

by Jeffrey Steinberg

The Democratic National Committee's Winter 2003 meeting opened on Feb. 20, and the brawl over the DNC's continuing suicidal efforts to exclude Lyndon LaRouche from the party's Presidential selection process immediately dominated events.

A widely advertised, but poorly attended town meeting in Washington, hosted by College Democrats, was transformed into a lively debate over LaRouche's leadership, when more than 50 LaRouche Youth Movement activists, fresh from four days of intense dialogue at the Schiller Institute Presidents' Day Weekend conference and cadre school in nearby Virginia, showed up. After all of the College Democrat panelists said they'd support LaRouche's right to participate in all candidates events, a frantic DNC bureaucrat interrupted the session, to clamp down on debate. Some of the LaRouche youth activists were herded into a separate room; moments later five Washington, D.C. police officers were ushered in by DNC officials, with orders to eject all the "LaRouche people." Among the youth ejected from the room were a number of totally baffled College Dems who were not even part of the LaRouche contingent.

Pandemonium soon spread to the hotel hallways, as DNC officials Joe Andrew and Joe Sanders threw temper tantrums, screaming that LaRouche was not a "legitimate Democrat," and referring perplexed DNC members to DNC attorney John Keeney, Jr., the son of the notorious career Justice Department prosecutor, whom one young LaRouche organizer equated with "the Ku Klux Klan."

Soon, Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe personally got into the act, when he stumbled into the College Democrats session, mistakenly assuming that all of the LaRouche supporters had been dragged out of the room.

He launched into a pathetic pitch to the young Democrats, promising to restore college tuition money that had been "robbed by Bush," and also vowing to "reunify the party." At that point, another LaRouche Youth Movement leader stood up and confronted McAuliffe on the LaRouche exclusion, and on the failure of the DNC to provide any leadership, as evidenced in the last two "most embarrassing ever" electoral defeats in 2000 and 2002. The heated debate between the LaRouche activist and McAuliffe continued after the session ended, with a large crowd gathered around them.

War and Peace

Leading Democratic Party figures have confirmed that the party leadership is in thorough turmoil over what to do about LaRouche. They say that the fight over LaRouche intersects a second controversy, which erupted earlier in February, when former President William Clinton appeared on a national television interview and publicly broke with Marc Rich, the fugitive speculator and accused Russian Mafiya "Godfather," who is the dirty-moneybags behind the war party factions in the Democratic Party and in both the Likud and Labor parties in Israel.

President Clinton's January 2001 pardon of Marc Rich, who faced over 230 years in jail, for tax evasion and trading with the enemy (Khomeini's Iran), temporarily wrecked the former President's ability to assume a leadership position in the party after he left office. Friends of Clinton had concluded some time ago, that the Rich pardon had been foisted on the President by his enemies inside the party, including the circles of Vice President Al Gore, who had his own Russian Mafiya links; as well as by neo-con Republican circles led by I. Lewis

“Scooter” Libby, now Vice President Dick Cheney’s chief of staff and the longtime private attorney for Rich, who orchestrated the pardon campaign.

Appearing on Feb. 11 on the NBC “Today Show,” the former President was asked by hostess Katie Couric:

“In this month’s edition of the *Atlantic Monthly*, James Fallows writes, ‘Clinton had the worst beginning of an ex-presidency since Richard Nixon flew to San Clemente in 1974.’ Certainly you did ignite a firestorm of criticism with your pardon of Marc Rich. Had you the opportunity to do it over again, would you have pardoned him?”

President Clinton responded, “No, I would have waited and let President Bush do it, because Vice President Cheney’s chief of staff was his main lawyer, and there would have been no media firestorm and he wouldn’t be being investigated. That only happens to us. There’s a double standard there.”

The ex-President’s brief remarks provoked a hail of protests among leading Democrats who have become addicted to the dirty-money flows from Rich and his partner-in-sin, former hedge-fund manager Michael Steinhardt, a second generation Meyer Lansky syndicate front-man. Steinhardt, who is the founder of the fifth column Democratic Leadership Council (DLC)—a lookalike for the Republican Party right-wing—and who is the sugar-daddy of Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), recently travelled to Israel with Marc Rich, to sabotage the electoral campaign of Labor Party Chairman Amram Mitzna, to secure Ariel Sharon’s reelection, and force Labor back into another suicidal national unity government under war criminal Sharon’s Likud mis-leadership.

The issue confronting the Democratic Party, in both the LaRouche matter and the ex-President’s break with Rich, is one of war or peace. Both parties are sharply divided over the Bush Administration’s war drive against Iraq. But so far, with the exception of LaRouche, and the action of a handful of Senators, like Robert Byrd (D-W.V.) and Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), the Democratic Party has pathetically sat on the sidelines, as the fate of civilization for decades to come, has been battled out, down Pennsylvania Avenue at the White House.

Lyndon LaRouche, on being briefed on the showdown at the College Democrats session, between his youthful campaign activists and the DNC hacks, emphasized that the cowardice of the Democratic Party leadership in the Congress centers on the Marc Rich issue. No longer can the Democratic Party survive with the likes of war party zealots Steinhardt, Rich, and Lieberman in its midst. He further warned that the recent disgusting spectacle of Lieberman and Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) standing up, again, at the annual Wehrkunde global security conference in Munich, Germany, earlier this month, to declare that war on Iraq is both necessary and inevitable, and to claim credit for foisting that insane war on President Bush, served as a reminder that McCain and Lieberman are, still, in full flight, to stage a “Bull Moose” third party disruption of the November 2004 elections.

Nuclear War, Constitutional Crisis

The brawl over LaRouche at the DNC intersects two profound issues on which a viable Democratic Party would be aggressively intervening, but which has been left, in the absence of a functioning party, to a few brave individuals. On Feb. 19, the British daily the *Guardian* published a leak of a confidential Pentagon memo, by Dr. Dale Klein, an aide to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, detailing plans for an Aug. 4, 2003 conference, at the headquarters of the U.S. Strategic Command, where U.S. nuclear war-fighting doctrine will be overhauled. Greg Mello, the head of the Los Alamos Study Group, which received the leaked Klein memo, charged, credibly, that the August meeting will integrate the use of nuclear weapons into the Bush Administration’s new pre-emptive war doctrine, and will signal a U.S. breakaway from global arms control treaties and the moratorium on testing nuclear weapons.

According to aides to Sens. Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) and Tim Johnson (D-S.D.), Edward Kennedy and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) are circulating a draft resolution to block the shift in nuclear weapons policy.

A week earlier, on Feb. 12, in a powerful speech on the Senate floor, West Virginia’s Robert Byrd had chastised the Congress for doing nothing while the Bush Administration wages an unprecedented assault on the Constitution and races into a war, to test a new imperial military doctrine. “This nation,” warned the senior Senator, “is about to embark upon the first test of a revolutionary doctrine applied in an extraordinary way at an unfortunate time. The doctrine of pre-emption—the idea that the United States or any other nation can legitimately attack a nation that is not imminently threatening but may be threatening in the future—is a radical new twist on the traditional idea of self-defense . . . in contravention of international law and the UN Charter.”

Turning to the new U.S. nuclear weapons doctrine, Byrd warned, “High-level Administration figures recently refused to take nuclear weapons off the table when discussing a possible attack against Iraq. . . . Yet this chamber is hauntingly silent. We are truly ‘sleepwalking through history.’ . . . Our challenge now is to find a graceful way out of a box of our own making. Perhaps there is still a way if we allow more time.”

One immediate step that can, and must be taken is for all leading Democrats who oppose the tyranny of the war party, to join together in forcing the Democratic Party leadership to drop their mad schemes to keep LaRouche out of the party and off the ballot.

There are now hundreds, and, soon will be thousands of young Americans, between the ages of 18 and 25, who have joined the LaRouche campaign. They represent the future of the Democratic Party and the nation, and, as the events of Feb. 20 signalled, they will not allow themselves to be held back by a corrupt political leadership that is all too willing to write them off as the “no-future generation,” while raking in the dirty cash from Rich, Steinhardt, et al.