

Dumping the Undertaker: How To Campaign for Kerry

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

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It were not unfair to think of the late Bob Shrum as the writer of funeral orations for the candidacies of otherwise winning Democrats. These were Democrats whose campaigns were misdirected into accepting recommendations that they adopt the kind of mournful services which Shrum, on his consistent record, has provided for the amusement of the victim Democrats' Republican beneficiaries.

True to form, Shrum's contributions to the 2004 Democratic Pre-Presidential and Presidential campaigns, had been to set up Senator Kerry, in particular, as a patsy for the intellectually pathetic George W. Bush's managers. Essentially, by luring the Democratic campaign into a kind of passivity, in which Kerry reacts chiefly to the agenda set by the thuggish intellectual midgets Bush and Cheney, the Democratic campaign was being spun around the arena by its efforts to stay within the bounds of the Bush League's agenda. Do not, as seasoned funeral director Shrum did, let the opponent set the stage for his client's ensuing event.

The only way in which the intellectually challenged "W" could be prevented from falling apart in mid-motion, was to have the Democrats continue to throw the election-campaign in the way we have seen. That means, we, by focussing our own agenda according to the principle of the flank, choose for the adversary the battlefield on which we choose to fight. This means, among other things, launching attacks on those vulnerable flanks which neither the mass news-media nor the Republican campaign are addressing.

For example, the most obvious vulnerability of the W campaign today is the shocking trends in the physical state of the economy. As James Carville said with his winning smile in 1992: "It's the economy, stupid!" It is the physical economy,

most emphatically.

Analyze the problems of the economic side of campaign policy:

Since the 1981 campaign, the Democratic Party's campaign has followed the spirit of the Brzezinski-Huntington-Margaret-Thatcher role in establishing "Project Democracy" as the virtual Orwellian "Big Brother" doctrine, under which the ruinous effects of Paul Volcker's Trilateral Commission doctrine of "controlled disintegration of the economy" were *not* the focus of the Party's attack. This avoidance of the principal cause of the increasing ruin of the physical conditions of life of the lower eighty-percentile of family-income brackets, led into the Democratic Party's politically suicidal reliance on shifting away from the popular constituency represented by that lower eighty percentile, into reliance on fighting for a share of the expected vote from the ranks of the suburbanite and related strata of the expected voters from the ranks of the upper twenty percentile of family-income brackets. This has been the essence of my personal quarrel with the drift of Democratic campaigns and most of those Presidential candidacies over the past three decades.

Although the Clinton candidacy and Presidency often adapted itself to that Democratic Party trend downward, Clinton himself was projected as an intrinsically sympathetic figure, who often compromised with the right wing in his own party, compromised, from mid-1996, with Newt Gingrich's far-right-wing revolutionary Jacobinism. President Clinton remained, with a few lapses, an effective leader even when he was mistaken, and remained always an unusually capable and active mind, a mind of conscience, toward which the despairing lower eighty percentile income-bracket of the population looked hopefully as an alternative to the increasing cynicism toward the general welfare among both Democratic-



Bob Shrum

as well as Republican-seated political currents in power. For that and related reasons, former President Clinton, the only post-1945 Democratic President since Franklin Roosevelt to actually serve two full terms, remains the most effective Democratic candidate of the past forty years.

Typical of the problem, is the recent turning away from the Democratic Party among one of those constituencies

which had been Clinton's leading supporters prior to the after-taste of the 1996 compromise with the Republican radical right's Newt Gingrich and his "Contract on America."

With the politically healthiest currents within the lower eighty percentile of the U.S. population today, don't be fooled into discussing economic issues as money issues. The poor today—and that means the ever-getting-poorer lower eighty percentile of households today—do not actually think rationally about money as such, although they do think very much about what money might buy, and what lack of money might deny them. They may pretend to be focussed on money, but, among them, that is mostly a form of fantasy-life, like a child's writing a letter to Santa Claus. The lower eighty percentile have very little control over the money they get, and less control of the way it is circulated, differentially, in the economy. The intellectually healthier strata of the lower eighty percentile of family-income brackets, think of economy in physical terms, in terms of the physical conditions of life. Most of our citizens know, or easily recognize, that they are living in the bare-bones hard realities of lost quality employment opportunities, vanishing health-care and pensions, evaporated former places of employment, rusting and rotting infrastructure, and the like.

For these citizens, the Democratic Party of recent decades has become increasingly irrelevant. Those citizens tend to limit themselves to either begging, or menacing Democratic candidates with demands for single-issue-type special favors, having given up on hope of a sound economic policy from the Democratic Party. There has been no longer an organic link between the Party's policy-shaping and the conscious role of the lower eighty percentile in that day-to-day functioning of the Democratic Party as a deliberative body which had been the Franklin Delano Roosevelt legacy. Rather, the alienation of large sections of the citizenry from the Party organization was a reflection of a growing impulse from the Party machine toward dumping an unwanted Roosevelt legacy.

Thus, until the shock of the already onrushing collapse of financial markets and institutions is reluctantly recognized among the "suburban"-oriented upper twenty percentile of the population, the upper twenty percentile is obsessed with the idea of money per se, and has lost the ability to distinguish, either intellectually or emotionally, between what is actually

What will come out of that shell?



income, and spending its way into a pit of catastrophic indebtedness.

Look, for example, at the areas in which Alan Greenspan's Fannie is spreading as the mortgage-based-securities bubble. In both the United Kingdom and the U.S.A., the areas of expanding apparent wealth inhabited by the upper- to-middle-level, feature regions in which the heavily debt-ridden inhabitants face a sudden collapse of real-estate values from the plus-\$400,000 mortgage-level, to a general collapse of mortgage-based values which will threaten the banking system generally. We are presently hanging by the fraying threads of mortgage-based securities speculation.

Notable: Even in those areas of development, the percentile of total family income required to maintain a mortgaged place of residence has soared far above the twenty-five percentile recommended, to a highly strained level as high as sixty percent. A chain-reaction collapse of Greenspan's mortgage-based, financial-derivatives-based bubble, has devastating implications for the entirety of the population which has gambled its future on a hair-trigger of inflated debt in these "developing" localities. A collapse of the number of actually employed persons sharing the burden of possession of a mortgaged residence, or simply a down-sizing of quality of income from employment, represents threatened catastrophe for those in the nominal category of "suburban" mortgaged-debtor-classes.

In general, the curves of financial and monetary turnover are already far, far removed from a state of affairs in which

monetary-financial expansion meant physical growth in per-capita incomes and asset-holding. The data on financial and related markets have been churned by financial-derivatives and related pure speculation, as in various guises of hedge funds. This has produced what we may recognize as chiefly a churning within the financial sector itself, a churning which has represented, less and less, a correlative of real economic activity, and has now become a pure parasite sucking on, and collapsing the physical economy.

Thanks to the leading news media and other influences, the general population has no indigenous comprehension of the way any of this actually works; but, that population does experience the effects in real-life terms, especially among the less demoralized strata, such as households still thinking of themselves as representing skilled and semi-skilled working households. It is that stratum of the population *outside the suburbanite strata*, which, combined with young adults of the 18-25 age-bracket who have not yet fallen off the deep end of culture, is the electoral factor least considered by the Democratic Party's Presidential-campaign strategy until recently.

Although we must approach the practical, and derived political issues of the economy at large from the best, highest level of competence in technical and related matters, we must also impart a sense of the reality of what professionals should know, to the organic intellectual pace-setters of the lower eighty percentile of family-income brackets. Turning out an additional vote, now rapidly, through persistent emphasis on the leading combination of such mature households and the 18-25-age youth movement typified by the LaRouche Youth Movement itself, is the "chemical" combination which is the source of margin needed for a potential landslide victory, even at this late stage of the game,

To that effect, we must do what I am doing in support of the organizing role of the LYM in those areas of the nation on which we are concentrating as our adopted places of responsibility on behalf of the Kerry candidacy.

When we talk about the economy in terms of the current financial markets, the majority of citizens are hopelessly confused, that in the way I have indicated here. However, when one focuses on lost essential physical and related basic economic infrastructure in the citizen's area of the country, the downward shifts in purchasing-power represented by income, in the lost quality of goods available at stores, the now accelerating, already catastrophic collapse of health-care, the fraud of W's ridiculous pretensions as an "education President," and the loss of one after another of the places of productive employment in that area, the citizen who is confused by the financial double-talk (and outright lies) coming from the current Administration, suddenly shows intelligent comprehension of the reality of economic issues.

The intent of the urgently needed change in emphasis in the Presidential and related campaigns, must be to motivate the citizen to vote, not because he is dragged to the polls, but

because he or she marches to the polls, with grim determination, and an inner-directed clear sense of determination to win the political-economic war which we must win if our system is to survive. Instead of jerking the citizen around with "spin," arouse that intelligent perception of not only real, but urgent interest in a changed national economic direction, an inner-directed impulse which will launch him, or her to the polls, wearing a smiling, but also grim determination to do something which needs to be done now.

On flanking poor "W":

W's psychological make-up is his false-front strength, and also the fatal flaw which can be string-jerked to produce his potential downfall. Over four years, since his first Presidential campaign, he himself has given us all the evidence we need to adduce certain useful psychological insights with a certain confidence.

As any thinking man or woman could plainly see, he is an obsessive creature, fascinated with his Narcissus-like adoration of his own spewing flood of word-matter he does not actually understand, a spew of words pouring forth to the accompaniment of a grim, sadistic smirk on his face, like the Roman Emperor Caligula's smiling to his wife when he informed her, while making love to her: "What a pretty neck. I could slice it any time I chose to do so." Trying to be liked by W, is not a good insurance-policy to buy into.

The worst danger he represents, is not only that he is a savage and essentially illiterate, would-be idiot-savant. Only his emotional impulses of an inveterate petty sneak are sincere, and the impulses of that "artful dodger" are very bad. He is more a "preying" than "praying" Christian. The more Christian he claims himself to be, the more un-Christian the Cheney-like, beastman-like sadistic impulses he expresses in practice, the more Christ-hating his actual motives, motives suggesting Dostoevsky's portrayal of the Christ-hating Grand Inquisitor.

The typical problem is, that when he has once adopted a word he has overheard coming out of his mouth, that word now becomes a substitute for reality. His defiantly illiterate spewing of the word "terrism" is exemplary. His staged landing on a carrier, to claim victory, when the asymmetric warfare had just begun, is typical of the gutter-level charlatan within him. He, like Cheney, usually lies, in one way or another, on every topic he takes up, such as the "yellowcake" hoax, and the claims of the certainty of arsenals of immediately deployable "weapons of mass destruction," deployed to hoodwink the politically intimidated majority of the Senate into a violation of the Constitutional specifications and intent on the war-powers of the President. By putting W-style "spin" on a short vocabulary of such code-words, he evades all challenging questions with a dumb dry drunk's smirking-style ejaculations of sophistry.

On all practical matters, the man is mentally an unbalanced virtual idiot respecting matters of knowledge, a vicious "dry drunk," and would be a great, immediate danger to global

civilization, were he and Cheney to be reelected. Imagine his dreaming state! He is stupid; his interior activity of brain must be like the racket heard in a boiler-factory: in effect of these qualities of a Bush-Cheney “odd couple,” to which he is to be compared, for likely effects. One wonders, must he be managing all that rage by help of an obsessive dependency on muscle-bending? In effect, he is a dumbed-down stand-in for Adolf Hitler. That is to say, such he threatens to be, when we consider the world-role he must tend to play in our powerful Presidency; his mental and moral deficits, including his rages, represent, a danger to civilization of the same general classification as Hitler and the like in times past.

Knowing this ourselves, how do we force the truth about himself out of the collective mouth of sadistically smirking puppet W, and also the scowling puppet-master “Dirty Dick” Cheney?

As long as the puppet-masters behind W are capable of defining the debate-agenda of the national campaigns, W’s

string-pullers are able to make him appear to be a serious player on stage. Once the agenda is forcefully shifted to subject-matters he can not handle, boxing him in to force his response to issues on which he is inherently un-preparable, will expose him to public insight into the monster he is, the monster which we who are observant know to be seething behind the mask his managers seek to maintain for him.

How does one do a battle with words against an opponent who lacks elementary intelligence respecting the real world, and who will be therefore unresponsive to the tugs of reason? Take him on by surprise, publicly, in topical areas on which his pathetic lack of sane intellectual powers and his lack of ability to recognize facts, is forced visibly to the surface. Especially on the practical issues of trends in physical economy, where he does no better than quiver like a doomed, melting jellyfish which had been left on the beach by an outgoing tide.

Do not let him set the agenda of the debates! Flank him.