
Editorial

A Matter of Survival

On Friday, Sept. 29, 2006, American statesman Lyndon LaRouche issued the following statement:

“The calamitous failure on Thursday, by the leadership of the Democratic Party fraction in the U.S. Senate, on the matter of the torture policy, although not the Democratic fraction as a whole, has occurred at a time when the issues foremost in the life-experience of the lower eighty percentile of the U.S. citizenry as a whole show that the popular trend going into the November mid-term elections is a policy directly opposite to that expressed over the period from the Alito confirmation to yesterday’s Senate vote which has been, and is still required today.

“This is not an ordinary sort of error by the Senate Democratic leadership. We are in a time when the planet as whole is being readied for a plunge into Hell by the current U.S. Administration, by its worse than useless response to the onrushing global financial avalanche and the Administration’s present commitment to the war against Iran now fully prepared for action as early as mid-October.

“The most relevant precedent for what is happening in the body of the Democratic (and Republican) Senate leaderships as such, is comparable to the way in which a form of Sophistry like that which gripped a self-doomed Athens under Pericles led to the virtual destruction of ancient Greek civilization in the ensuing Peloponnesian War. Nothing so neatly echoes that case of ancient, self-doomed Athens as the U.S.A. under George Shultz’s version of H.G. Wells’ ‘The Island of Doctor Moreau,’ the Cheney-Bush Administration of 2001-2006 to date. The Sophistry exhibited during 2006 to date, by the Democratic leadership in the Senate, reflects that body’s current efforts to caricature the fate of Pericles’ foolish Athens.

“The spread of similar exhibitions of Sophistry, is also characteristic of the leadership of the governments and reigning political parties of western and central Europe. They all appear to have kissed the face of the Gorgon Medusa.”

A close look at the process by which the U.S. Senate, after a spirited fight by Republican Senators only two weeks ago, decided to vote *for* the adoption of the Bush-Cheney torture policy, only underscores LaRouche’s

argument. In *all* the votes on Democratic substitutes, and amendments, the opponents of Cheney’s torture policy rallied more than 41 votes, the number required in order to filibuster the Administration bill. The bill by Republican Sen. Arlen Specter, who vigorously opposed the elimination of *habeas corpus* for individuals designated enemy combatants by the Administration, received 48 votes, and thus went down to only a narrow defeat.

Yet the Democratic leadership *refused* to mobilize a filibuster—in the same tradition they followed from 2001 forward, starting with the Ashcroft nomination, and proceeding to the confirmation of Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt-afficionado Samuel Alito. The leadership knew *exactly* what it was voting for in all cases. In the first two, the LaRouche movement carried out a mass mobilization to inform them of the stakes. In the case of this torture bill, leading members of the U.S. military stepped forward to make the point clear.

Only two weeks ago, no less a prominent military spokesman than Gen. Colin Powell (ret.) weighed in to oppose the Bush Administration’s “reinterpretation” of the Geneva Conventions against torture. Many others have fought consistently. “There is no need for this bill,” Lt. Cmdr. Charles Swift told *EIR* Sept. 25, after a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing where he testified against the elimination of *habeas corpus* in the proposed “compromise.” Rear Adm. John Hutson (ret.), the former Judge Advocate General of the Navy, seconded the evaluation, telling *EIR*, “If they don’t fix the *habeas corpus* part of it, then we’re better off with nothing.”

Yet during this entire fight, most of the Democratic Party leadership sat on the sidelines, treating the fight among Republicans as if it were to their advantage. Then, when faced with a vote, many decided it was electorally “smart” to vote for torture, in futile hopes of staving off lunatic Republican attacks on them for being “pro-terrorist.”

The job has been left to LaRouche’s forces and the American people, to make it clear that Americans have not abandoned the tradition of Washington and Lincoln, and that we will not permit our government to carry out Nazi crimes of torture and aggressive war. It is, as Mr. LaRouche wrote, a matter of survival.