

Freshmen Dems Mean New Kind of Congress

by the LaRouche Youth Movement and EIR Staff

Since the surprising landslide victory of the Democratic Party in the Nov. 7 midterm elections, many Americans now want to know: “What will the incoming Democratic Congress do as the Majority?” “Will we get out of Iraq, and finally impeach those bums?!”

Judging from statements by the 30 newly elected Democrats, they intend to end free trade, auto and other manufacturing shutdowns, and the war in Iraq. Before November, they were machine-tool workers, sheriffs, teachers, social workers, farmers, and veterans who are part of the lower 80% of American income brackets. One freshman seemed to characterize the whole group, when he said, “I feel like I’m ‘Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.’”

A number of the newcomers were elected without financial support from the national Democratic establishment, such as David Loeb sack from Iowa, who won with a mere \$458,000 war chest. Loeb sack told CQ Politics.com that he is glad the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee took little interest his race, because that allowed him to run the kind of campaign he wanted. As CQ comments, owing little to the national Democratic leadership, Loeb sack can take a more independent posture.

Minnesota high school teacher Tim Walz defeated six-term Republican Gil Gutknecht in Minnesota’s 1st CD, a Republican-leaning area centered around Rochester. Walz got publicity on the blogosphere, CQ reports, “while he ran well under the radar of Democratic campaign operatives in Washington.” A retired sergeant-major in the Minnesota Army National Guard, Walz proposed a redeployment of troops out of Iraq, and universal health care.

The Congressional freshmen are eager to reverse free trade and save manufacturing. One freshman was a former machine-tool worker, and had heard about LaRouche’s Emergency Recovery Act of 2006. Another freshman from the Midwest raised the issue of the Delphi auto parts employees, whose wages fell from \$21/hour to \$9/hour. Another Midwest Democratic freshman called on the Party leadership to address the outsourcing of U.S. industrial jobs. At the Harvard Orientation session for the freshmen (see below), one Congressman-elect called for nuclear power, and another debunked ethanol as “putting more in than you get out.” Rep-elect Steve Kagen of Wisconsin told CQ, Wisconsin “cannot surrender manufacturing.”

The freshmen are also eager for oversight of the Bush-Cheney operations. Incoming Rep. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) told the Litchfield *County Times*, “There has been little or no oversight [in Iraq] in the last six years. . . . When it comes to the situation in Iraq, it is [CBS-TV show] ‘60 Minutes,’ and not Congress, that has been conducting the oversight on the President.” Murphy has been assigned to the House Government Operations Committee, to be chaired by the tough, veteran investigator, Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.).

At least one Congressman-elect, and the spouse of another, denounced Cheney’s lies, and agreed on the need to get him out. This is clearly a new Congress.

Freshmen, Meet the LYM

Fully conscious of the severity of the crisis facing the nation, the LaRouche Youth Movement jumped on the first opportunity to take up the economic and impeachment issues with 36 freshmen at the New Members of Congress Conference (NMCC), an “orientation” hosted by Harvard University’s Institute of Politics Nov. 28-Dec. 1. Most sessions were closed to the public and press, and few Harvard students even knew the event was occurring on their campus.

The group of 20+ LYM organizers, after some successful sleuthing, walked over to the Kennedy School of Government, went inside the room, and formed what is known as the G-Chorus (Guerrilla Chorus) for its reputation for catching unsuspecting audiences off-guard with beautiful *bel canto* harmony. The LYM sang a Christmas Carol satire entitled, “We Wish Dick Would Leave the White House” to the tune of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas,” in four-part harmony, and other humorous “carols” directed at Bush-Cheney. These were received with joyous laughter from most in attendance.

The next day, four members of the LYM press team attended the NMCC forum on “Energy and National Security,” which all the Members-elect attended, along with a top aide to Speaker-elect Nancy Pelosi. The forum reflected the indecisive approach to the disintegration of the U.S. economy of the old 109th Congress, consisting of a wide array of views on energy policy, ranging from that of the moderator, a former Representative: “The price of petroleum is going up because of consumption: Thus our post-industrial economy necessitates we follow the market prices, and move on to alternative fuels including ethanol, wind, etc.,” to a former physicist and Representative-elect: “People are high on ethanol. It will never work; you get less out than you put in. Basic technical competence! Besides, using corn for fuel is immoral, with a starving world!” A former Senator chimed in: “The U.S. should stop fighting wars for oil. Our energy policy is immoral, with one-third of the military budget being used to secure oil.” Questions from the new Reps of the 110th Congress displayed a refreshing view, in contrast to the dangerous lack of confidence of the old:

Congressman-elect: “Ethanol will never work, aren’t we underutilizing nuclear power? Why not go nuclear to solve energy challenges?!” Current Congressman: “The market has

Democratic Gains in The 110th Congress

The Senate

Claire McCaskill, Mo., defeated 1-term incumbent Jim Talent, 49-47.
Jon Tester, Mont., defeated 3-term incumbent Conrad Burns, 49-48.
Sherrod Brown, Ohio, won a landslide over 2-term incumbent Mike DeWine, 56-44.
Robert Casey, Jr., crushed 2-term incumbent Rick Santorum, 59-41.
Sheldon Whitehouse, R.I., defeated 1-term incumbent Lincoln Chafee, 53-47.
James Webb, Va., defeated incumbent George Allen by 9,000 votes.

The House of Representatives

Harry Mitchell, Ariz., CD 5, defeated 6-term incumbent J.D. Hayworth, 50-46.
Gabrielle Giffords, Ariz., CD 8, won open seat of retiring Republican Jim Kolbe, 54-42.
Jerry McNearney, Calif., CD 11, defeated incumbent Richard Pombo, 53-47.
Ed Perlmutter, Colo., CD 7, won open seat of retiring Republican Bob Beauprez, 55-42.
Joe Courtney, Conn., CD 2, defeated 3-term incumbent Robert Simmons by a 91-vote margin.

Chris Murphy, Conn., CD 5, defeated 12-term incumbent Nancy Johnson, 56-44.
Tim Mahoney, Fla., CD 16, won the seat of resigned GOP Rep. Mark Foley, 50-48.
Ron Klein, Fla., CD 22, defeated 13-term incumbent Clay Shaw, 51-47
Bruce Braley, Iowa, CD 1, won open seat of GOP 8-term Rep. Jim Nussle, who ran for Governor, and lost.
Dave Loebsack, Iowa, CD 2, defeated 15-term moderate incumbent Jim Leach, 51-49.
Joe Donnelly, Ind., CD 2, defeated 2-term incumbent Chris Chocola, 54-46.
Brad Ellsworth, Ind., CD 8, won a landslide over 6-term incumbent John Hostettler, 61-39.
Baron Hill, Ind., CD 9, won his seat back from 1-term Mike Sodrel, who had defeated him in 2004.
Nancy Boyda, Kan., CD 2, defeated GOP incumbent 5-term Jim Ryan 51-47, in GOP stronghold state.
John Yarmuth, Ky., CD 3, defeated 5-term incumbent Anne Northup, 51-48.
Tim Walz, Minn., CD 1, defeated 6-term incumbent Gil Gutknecht, 53-47.
Carol Shea-Porter, N.H., CD 1, defeated 2-term incumbent Jeb Bradley.
Paul Hodes, N.H., CD 2, defeated 6-term incumbent Charles Bass, 53-46.
John Hall, N.Y., CD 19, defeated 6-term incumbent Sue Kelly, 51-49.
Kirsten Gillibrand, N.Y., CD 20, defeated

4-term incumbent John Sweeney, 53-47.
Michael Acuri, N.Y., CD 24, won 54-45 in district of retiring GOP Rep. Sherwood Boehlert.
Heath Shuler, N.C., CD 11, defeated 8-term incumbent Charles Taylor, 54-46.
Zack Space, Ohio, CD 18, won open seat vacated by resigned Republican Rep. Bob Ney, by a 62-38 landslide.
Jason Altmire, Pa., CD 4, defeated 3-term incumbent Melissa Hart, 52-48.
Joe Sestak, Pa., CD 7, military veteran, defeated 10-term incumbent Curt Weldon, 56-44.
Patrick Murphy, Pa., CD 8, Iraq War veteran, defeated 1-term incumbent Mike Fitzpatrick, by a 1,500 vote margin.
Chris Carney, Pa., CD 10, military veteran, defeated 4-term incumbent Don Sherwood 53-47.
Nick Lampson, Tex., CD 22, won open seat of indicted former House Speaker Tom DeLay 52-42.
Ciro Rodriguez, Tex., CD 23, defeated 7-term incumbent Henry Bonilla 55-45.
Steve Kagen, M.D., Wisc., CD 8, won open seat vacated by Mark Green, 51-49. Green ran for Governor and lost.
(13th CD, Florida: Undecided at press time. Christine Jennings filed a Notice of Contest on Dec. 20, challenging Republican Vern Buchanan's lead of 369 votes, on the basis of an 18,000 undervote in Sarasota County, the only county in the district that Democrats won.)

the power and influence in these matters. You have to play around the edges!"

Congressman-elect: "The situation in energy must be seen as a national crisis. How can we view this as an Apollo-style crash program?" Current Congressman: "Good idea, we need nuclear power to get hydrogen, but the problem is, where to get the funding?"

The panel presentation on energy policy to the freshmen reflected the fact that Congress is not prepared for the world economic crisis, and needs an emergency approach like the one illustrated in Lyndon LaRouche's Nov. 16 webcast. Luckily, four LYM members had gotten into the event and engaged the new Reps in discussion around LaRouche's "Economic Recovery Act of 2006" (ERA) and that the economic crisis necessitated impeachment of, at least, Cheney.

One notable discussion took place after the event, with a newly elected Member, who had asked the question about adopting an "Apollo Program" approach to energy policy. She explained that she had won her election without any real support from the Democratic National Committee, nor much money, and that she owed her victory to the youth vote. On

the energy crisis, she called for a return to nuclear power, and rising skill levels in the workforce; she stated that change could not take place under the current economic system, but that the incoming Congress will work to win that fight.

More policy dialogue with the new Representatives occurred at a reception at the JFK School of Government. The working class character of many of the new Congressmen came through in discussions, which had a different quality than the meetings the LYM has with the 109th Congress in its Capitol Hill work. Many of the Reps acknowledged the role of the LYM in the elections, and commented that they had previously received LaRouche PAC literature, either from mass distributions, from friends, or from the United Auto Workers union.

On the subject of impeachment, some repeated the party line, that it would be a distraction from the policy initiatives they want to introduce, while others said that it was not "off the table," and agreed that it might be necessary to defend the Constitution. The entire evening's discussion was polarized around LaRouche's needed policies and the leadership emerging from the 18-35 age bracket.