

## Eye on Democrats by Anita Gallagher

### Harriman machine fissures;

Will DNC chairman Chuck Manatt maintain control until 1984? This is a question many people are asking.

At a Seattle, Washington press conference on Aug. 29, Manatt showed the strain as he was met by picket signs like "Kick the KGB Out of the Democratic Party," signs carried by Democratic candidates for local office who have been endorsed by the National Democratic Policy Committee.

The high-strung banker opened his press conference by announcing, "I know that LaRouche's people are here." True, he has done this a number of times before. But Manatt's follow-up was, "And I'm not going to answer any questions regarding my connections to the FBI."

*EIR's* Don Pilsen tried to clarify things for the rest of the press corps by asking, "Is your opposition to the development of defensive beam weapons a result of your business deals with top KGB officer Djerment Gvishiani?" Manatt began repeating, "I'm not going to answer that question. You're with LaRouche. I'm not going to answer any questions from LaRouche!"

Pilsen regained the floor to comment, "It's not the FBI connection that concerns me, but the KGB connection." Manatt retorted, "These are LaRouche's people. Let me tell you who they are." Pilsen replied, "Everybody knows who we are. It's you whom people have to know about, and your connections to the KGB."

With that, Manatt shut down his press conference. As *EIR* went to the front of the room, Averell Harriman's top Democrat sped off in the opposite direction—only to find there was no

door. "I'm not going to let you get me mad," said Manatt through gritted teeth, while the TV cameras filmed his non-exit.

### Worried about keeping control in New York?

Simultaneously, in the heart of New York City, supposedly a stronghold of Harriman-Manatt control, 95 NDPC-backed candidates for party positions in the Sept. 13 primary have won ballot status, in a stunning victory against the Harriman machine in the jaws of the beast.

Over 100 citizens, half of whom were not involved in the NDPC until the committee launched a campaign in May 1983 expressly to throw out the Manatt-Harriman machine, came forward to run. (This enlisting of local candidates has been a typical response to NDPC campaigns across the country, the NDPC reports.) On July 28, more than 120 citizens filed petitions to become candidates for Democratic County Committee in Manhattan, and eight candidates filed for Democratic District Leader.

The New York Harriman machine, a collection of "Sodom and Gomorrah" liberals second to none, responded by challenging the ballot status of some 60 of the county committee slates, and three of the four district leader slates. Battle had been joined over thousands of petition signatures.

Nowhere else in the nation is one's right to run for office as difficult to exercise as in New York State, a difficulty stemming from "reforms" of the New York election laws by liberal Democrats in the 1970s. For example, when U.S. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan challenged then NDPC-backed Democrat Mel Klenetsky's petitions in 1982, Moynihan spent \$50,000—and lost, flooring every Democrat politician in New York. The idea is to keep insurgents off the ballot with le-

gal challenges that eat up manhours and money.

The legal battle, however, showed the hidden strength of the NDPC candidates' movement, as well as the demoralization of the lower echelons of former New York Gov. Averell Harriman's Democratic underlings. Ninety-five out of 100 candidates backed by the NDPC defeated the challenges brought by the Harrimanite trio of New York Assemblyman Brian Murtaugh, State Sen. Franz Leichter, and New York County boss Denny Farrell. The sheer number of NDPC candidates proved to be more than the Harrimanite lapdogs could handle. For example, in 27 out of 60 general challenges brought, the machine lacked the manpower to produce specific challenges, thus forfeiting them.

Harriman's local boys were so unprepared for the NDPC's drive to run hundreds of candidates that they put up no candidates for many of the 1000-plus positions up in September. Thus, at least six of the 95 NDPC-backed candidates are running unopposed, and will take office on Sept. 14.

The political action committee is flexing its muscle all over the state. NDPC-backed candidate Elizabeth Carman in Buffalo beat a ballot challenge by DNC Executive Committee member Joe Crangle's supposedly unbeatable machine. While Mrs. Carman runs for City Council president, Dr. Charles Carman is running for Erie County Executive.

The Harriman crowd is worried about the Sept. 13 elections. Unlike last spring, when Leichter et al. led a slanderous campaign against a nine-person NDPC backed School Board slate, the American Federation of Teachers and AFSCME contributed \$3 million. Now, with little money, and few troops, Leichter is left standing on his record: he is the author of a Nazi euthanasia bill, he supports the sale of marijuana in liquor stores, and he advocated the KGB's nuclear freeze.