

Russia, LaRouche, and America

Vladimir Matveyev reports from Moscow on an extraordinary demonstration held at the American embassy.

On June 12, a protest was organized at the United States of America embassy in Moscow, by the Moscow organization of the Democratic Union party and the Moscow Committee for the Liberation of Lyndon LaRouche. The action was joined by the Moscow section of the Ukrainian organization Rukh, and the Free Russia organization and the Moscow anarchists sent representatives. Valeriya Novodvorskaya, the well-known Russian political figure from the democratic opposition and member of the Moscow Coordinating Council (MKS) of the Democratic Union, personally took part in the demonstration.

The participants in the action protested against the "Russia" policy of the current U.S. government—which is extending aid to the pseudo-democratic Yeltsin regime—against Russia's joining the International Monetary Fund. They demanded the liberation of the American political prisoner, economist, and political figure Lyndon LaRouche. The demonstrators held placards with the following texts: "Shame on America for betraying freedom! No to collaboration among the FBI, CIA and KGB (MBRF)" [MBRF is the Russian Federation Ministry of Security—ed.]. "Freedom for the American political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche and his comrades!" "The International Monetary Fund is economic genocide!" "No to western aid for the Yeltsin-Gaidar government. Western credits to farmers and business, not into the pockets of Kremlin bureaucrats!" "America! Better free your own political prisoners, instead of supporting Yeltsin's toadies!" "The IMF is an instrument of U.S. economic aggression, Russia should not be in that organization of international racketeers!" as well as a placard giving detailed information about the persecution of Lyndon LaRouche in the United States.

The action began at 3:30 p.m. and lasted about an hour, until a representative of the American ambassador came out of the building. The participants in the action handed him a petition consisting of three documents: an appeal of the Moscow Coordinating Council of the Democratic Union party against American aid to the present government of Russia, a declaration of the Moscow Committee for the Liberation of Lyndon LaRouche, which was endorsed by the MKS of Democratic Union and by the Moscow Rukh, and a declaration of the Moscow Rukh.

"We in Russia understand particularly well, how state security organs fabricate cases like [LaRouche's], disguising political repressions as criminal investigations," said the statement

from the Moscow Committee for the Liberation of Lyndon LaRouche. "We consider that the case should be reconsidered. . . . The truth that there are no borders in the struggle for human rights should now be upheld in the U.S., a country that presents itself as a fighter for rights and freedoms."

Collaboration between Democratic Union and the Schiller Institute made it possible to hold such an action. At the end of last year, *Svobodnoye Slovo* [Free Word], the newspaper of the Moscow Democratic Union, published material on the persecution of Lyndon LaRouche. Then the recent publication in *Svobodnoye Slovo* of [EIR European Economics Editor] William Engdahl's article "The IMF and the Illusion of a 'Free Market' Miracle" gave several Democratic Union members the opportunity to consolidate their own views with the opinion of the Schiller Institute about the IMF and American policy with respect to Russia.

Unfortunately, little information reaches Russia about the economic concepts that exist in the West. In Moscow, the Russian-American University has a monopoly in this field, and it preaches the concepts of Jeffrey Sachs and the IMF. Practically all economic experts of the Russian government are connected with this university or are under the influence of its school. This university is financed by the U.S., and many of its Russian specialists worked earlier—and some continue to work—in the economic departments of the KGB (MBRF).

At the present time, the Russian-American University is on a firm financial footing, and it has practically monopolized the commercial sphere of economic information reaching Russia from the West. The various economic structures of this university are making substantial profits from lobbying the Russian government on behalf of several American firms.

The ideas of Lyndon LaRouche in the area of economic cooperation between the West and Russia could significantly edge out the Jeffrey Sachs school and the Russian-American University. At the present time, only the Democratic Union is trying to do something to spread LaRouche's economic concepts in Russia, but the social basis for his ideas to be adopted in Russia has ripened.

The ideas of liberalism in Russia's economy have now been totally discredited by the Yeltsin government. Total privatization, essentially, is now under way in Russia, but not all citizens are obtaining property—only former CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] functionaries, who

have ensconced themselves in the leadership of the state structures and of major businesses. The bureaucrats have simply stolen their way ahead now in Russia.

The retirement of Gavriil Popov as mayor of Moscow illustrates this. That doctor of Marxist-Leninist political economy from the former Institute of Social Sciences of the CC [Central Committee] CPSU, one of the leaders of the new post-communist *nomenklatura* that has united into the so-called Democratic Movement of Russia, a Yeltsin man, during his short term as mayor became one of the six wealthiest people in Moscow, selling state property for bribes. It is worth noting that the scandal in the Moscow City Council that led to the resignation of Mayor Popov was his article, published in Moscow newspapers, in which the mayor proposed to legalize the transfer to bureaucrats working in the mayor's office, a certain percentage of the value of the state property they privatized, and outlined his approximate calculations on the magnitude of these percentages.

Under these conditions, the position of the United States toward Russia is especially immoral. American aid to the government of Russia is a disservice to the peoples of the Russian Federation. By feeding the anti-popular regime of Yeltsin with dollars, the United States supports former CPSU functionaries

who neither desire nor are capable of carrying out actual reforms and real privatization in the interests of all citizens, so as to provide everybody with equal startup opportunities.

The U.S. and the IMF willingly give credits to those thieving Russian bureaucrats, knowing perfectly well that money from the state budget will be passed through commercial structures into the personal overseas bank accounts of the people around Yeltsin, while the citizens of Russia will be denying themselves the bare essentials, while paying off these immoral credits and working for American monopolies.

"America has no permanent friends and allies. America only has vital interests," one American President said in his day. It would be interesting to know whether—besides those interests—America has an elementary concept of right and wrong. Judging by the current "Russia" policy of the United States, this concept is lacking. That is why Democratic Union went to protest at the U.S. embassy on June 12, on the "Russian independence" day proclaimed by Yeltsin, wanting to find out, when America's slumbering conscience will wake up.

The author is a member of the Democratic Union and of the Moscow Committee for the Liberation of Lyndon La ouche. The article was translated from the Russian.

Misery and criticism grow in Russia

The increase in price and scarcity of food in Russia primarily affects those who are already badly off, such as pensioners. A Moscow research institute investigated how the living standard of old people has changed since the lifting of price controls; the results are devastating. The elderly must pay more than 80% of their pensions just to buy food. Simultaneously, pensioners have had to sharply limit their consumption of milk and meat. Last November, the per capita consumption by this population group was still around 19 kilograms (kg) of milk and milk products and 3.9 kg of meat. By the beginning of this year, it contracted to a meager 4 kg and 1.6 kg, respectively. Humanitarian help from abroad only rarely reaches the needy. In November, only 7% of those who had asked for help had received such aid, and in January it was a mere 3%.

The deliveries of aid from the western countries have evidently been taken over by the old Communist Party organizations. Thus, the German labor group Free Animal Husbandry and Meat Industry in Brussels protested that on the Russian side, the firm Prodintorg is still exclusively authorized to receive food imports. Additionally, the group said, the Russian firm refused to accept the most

favorable price offer, and would work only with those firms that it knew during the time of the Soviet planned economy. Prodintorg is even willing to pay higher prices. The European Community has thus far delivered \$630 billion worth of food aid to Russia.

Reform not thought through

Meanwhile, the agricultural trade unions and the Russian Agricultural Union have sharply criticized the Yeltsin government's agricultural policy. The reform policy of the government, they say, is "not thought through"; it will lead to an "irreversible process of decline of agricultural production, to rural ruin, and the dying out of Russian villages." That will in turn lead to mass poverty and hunger among the Russian population.

As a result of the lifting of price controls, the gap between costs and prices to the producers has increased. Thus a farmer now must sell 473 tons of grain or 208 tons of milk in order to buy a tractor of the "Don 1500" type, three times as much as one year before. Mineral fertilizer and insecticides cost 40-100 times more than last year. However, because of the low purchasing power of the population, the critics say, prices to the farmer cannot be correspondingly increased. This discrepancy will lead to the ruin of agricultural businesses. Wages in agriculture in the first quarter of 1992 are only one-third the comparable wage level in industry, the union critically points out.

—Rosa Tennenbaum