

loans for campaigns and publishing projects. At sentencing, the prosecutor stated in court, that the sentence was intended to be a "message to those other people" and was needed to "send a message to Michael Billington and to Lyndon LaRouche and to everybody affiliated with that organization out there raising funds."

Political motivation is obvious

Never before had there been any ruling, nor any civil proceeding, that the political loans at issue were "securities." Such a ruling "to fit the crime" was only made one month after Billington and others were arrested; the political motive behind the arrests could hardly become more obvious. The woman who issued that ruling was shortly thereafter promoted to the Virginia State Supreme Court.

In the course of the trial against Billington, he was by order of the court subjected to a psychiatric examination for his insistence on his constitutional right to a trial by jury! The pattern of legal abuse was intensified by the behavior of his own lawyer, who changed sides and allied openly with the prosecution; the judge outrageously denied him the chance to change lawyers during trial. During the entire time of the competency proceedings and trial, Billington was held in solitary confinement in a cell 3×4 meters, for a total of more than 100 days! . . .

The trial judge in Billington's and other Virginia cases has admitted in court to having *ex parte* communications with a private agency, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, about the alleged "cult" nature of the philosophical movement—a maliciously slanderous allegation circulated to secure unopposed persecution against an undesired political opponent. The *ex parte* communications included a scarcely disguised bribe that the ADL would back the judge's candidacy to the Virginia State Supreme Court.

Published writings of Lyndon LaRouche and associates who had been or are at present incarcerated give testimony of the intellectual strength and unbroken spirit, that has characterized the so-called "LaRouche movement" during the over 20 years of its existence. The world-famous violinist Norbert Brainin, the first violinist of the Amadeus string quartet, said in a nationally broadcast TV appearance in the United States television on Nov. 5, 1988, after the trial against Lyndon LaRouche had begun in Alexandria, Va., about his friend LaRouche: "He displayed the kind of analytical mind, the kind of truth-seeking which one associates with a real scientist."

The International Progress Organization calls upon the members of the Sub-Commission to immediately engage in a thorough and impartial investigation of the case, so that not only justice is being done to the victims of this blatant politically motivated persecution, but also the authority of the United States as a country respecting internationally set standards of human rights protection in their own homeland and abroad is restored.

Rukh mobilizes to rescue Ukraine

by Konstantin George

On Aug. 17, two years had passed since Ukraine's Declaration of National Independence. Ukraine, with a population of 52 million and an economy second only to Russia in the former Soviet Union, became formally independent on Dec. 1, 1991. On account of its highly educated population, skilled work force, natural resources, and technological capabilities, Ukraine had the easy potential not only to flourish on its own, but to become a catalyst for economic development for its giant neighbor Russia as well. Independence began with such hopes and visions, yet two years later, Ukraine is faced with a crisis which endangers the very survival of the Ukrainian state.

Betrayed by the West

From abroad, Ukraine has been the victim of a ruthless policy of economic and credit embargo by the West, coupled with economic and energy blackmail by Russia, and Russian support for ethnic Russian separatist movements in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. These policies are designed to continually weaken Ukraine, making it ripe for re-incorporation into a new Russian Empire. Domestically, the old Ukrainian assets of the Russian imperial design, who dominate the Parliament and are heavily present in the state apparatus, have been no less responsible for the dismal state of affairs.

Living standards have collapsed, savings wiped out, and organized crime and street crime are rampant. Angry Ukrainians suspect that through a mixture of weakness, cowardice, and in some cases actions bordering on treason, the country's leading institutions, the presidency, parliament, and government, have allowed Ukraine to drift to the precipice.

The referendum trap

On Aug. 12 the Ukrainian State Electoral Committee cancelled the planned Sept. 26 referendum vote of confidence in the President and the Parliament. The referendum had been put forward as a central political demand by the ethnic-Russian dominated Donetsk strike committees, during the June strike wave spearheaded by the Donetsk coal miners. The original agreement by President Kravchuk and parliament for a referendum was a set-up, and its cancellation has fed further into the chaos scenario.

The referendum would have been non-binding, solving nothing, and indeed would have worsened the crisis by leaving Ukraine with a President and Parliament with no popular support. If mid-August opinion polls in Ukraine are anywhere near reality, the negative vote against the Parliament would be 74%, and 58% against President Leonid Kravchuk.

On the other hand, the President and Parliament knew that the cancellation would provoke a new strike wave led by the Donetsk coal miners. On Aug. 16, mining strike committee delegates from the three Eastern Ukraine regions (oblasts) of Donetsk, Lugansk, and Dnepropetrovsk, met in Makeevka, Donetsk oblast, to demand that the referendum be restored. Otherwise they warned of an “uncontrolled social explosion,” and that the mass strikes would resume. The threat of a new strike wave is something the country can afford neither economically nor politically.

The national opposition, Popular Movement of Ukraine (Rukh), had bitterly fought during the June strike wave against the referendum tactic. They said that the ethnic-Russian strike committees had pushed it to further the destabilization of the country, to deflect from the only viable political solution, namely the holding of early elections to replace the Soviet-era parliament.

As Rukh has repeatedly stressed since June, elections are the only chance to give Ukraine a stable government and a parliament committed to policies that could bring Ukraine out of its crisis. The referendum was readily accepted in June by the old-Communist dominated Parliament, to sabotage new elections and keep the nation on a seesaw. As long as Ukraine’s institutions are discredited, the chances increase for a new form of Russian domination, and hence their own perpetuation as the ruling caste.

The Rukh alternative for early elections, which may be the last chance for Ukraine to halt economic, social, and political disintegration, has a fair chance of success, if the population be mobilized behind it. The wishes of most Ukrainians might be reflected in opinion polls that show that well over 80% of Ukrainians want neither meaningless referenda nor strikes and chaos, but early elections to give the republic stability.

The Rukh issued a Statement to the Citizens of Ukraine on Aug. 17, the second anniversary of the Ukrainian Declaration of National Independence, reprinted below in full.

Rukh statement text

Two years have passed from the famous day of Ukraine’s Declaration of National Independence.

Our hopes of successfully developing our country have failed to materialize. Though at the time when we abandoned the Soviet Union it was in the most advantageous circumstances, we have not become a developed and democratic nation, the citizens of which feel free, confident and secure.

A garden needs a diligent gardener, a new edifice needs a solid foundation and a talented builder, a young nation

needs new authorities which enjoy the people’s trust.

The highest legislative authority which was elected at a time of colonial dependence has proven to be unqualified for quality legislative work. Initiatives by the democratic minority in parliament have been rejected in a hostile manner by the reactionary majority which safeguards the interests of the old Communist Party and Soviet Nomenklatura.

This situation is aggravated by the President’s ill-balanced actions, his inclination to thoughtless compromises, his conservatism with regard to political and economic reforms and the protracted evasion of ruling the country’s internal affairs.

The government headed by Leonid Kuchma has failed to begin implementing promised reforms, it is using old administrative methods. The credit of trust in the government has finally been exhausted following major alterations in the cabinet that have consolidated the hold of the “red directors” [directors of huge state industry complexes, who were political appointees in the Soviet era, and who are mentally still nostalgic for the Soviet Union — ed.], who are entirely alien to the interests of the Ukrainian state and nation.

The inefficient actions of all branches of authority have brought about the general impoverishment of the people, galloping inflation, rampant crime and Mafia rule, they have ushered in an atmosphere of tension in society, which is constantly threatening with new outbreaks of social explosions.

The pro-imperial forces [supporting Russian Empire restoration — ed.] both in Ukraine and abroad [Moscow and collaborative forces in western capitals — ed.] take advantage of our young nation’s grave crisis and want to put a new imperial yoke on the neck of our people by using political and economic blackmail, and by forcing Ukraine to join all kinds of commonwealths and unions [referring to the Community of Independent States, and the July agreement where Moscow strongarmed Ukraine to join a Russian-dominated “Economic Union” — ed.].

The Popular Movement of Ukraine (Rukh) calls on the entire Ukrainian nation for vigilance and determination. Now is not the time for vacillation and indecisiveness. Each wasted day brings Ukraine nearer to disaster, to a loss of the most precious possessions of the modern nation: statehood and democracy.

Only urgent economic reforms which the present authorities are unable to carry out, only the immediate change of the political system, elections to a new parliament and reformed local authorities in accordance with a new electoral law, only the unity of the presently divided democratic forces, can rescue the Ukrainian state from collapse.

Let us not abandon ourselves to infamy and shame. Let us not allow those who lead Ukraine to an abyss to rule the country. Let new people, who are prepared to take responsibility for the nation’s fate, come on to the stage.

Let us unite! Let us unite in Rukh! Glory to Ukraine!