

## Australia Dossier by Allen Douglas

### Breakthrough on LaRouche case

*Members of Parliament from all parties are shocked at the violation of human rights in the United States.*

The Human Rights Subcommittee of the Australian Parliament is seeking explanations from the U.S. government as to the reasons why Lyndon LaRouche remains in jail. The move marks the latest escalation in an international campaign to gain freedom for LaRouche and the political prisoners associated with him.

The initiative of the subcommittee follows two weeks of lobbying among federal members of Parliament by Gail Billington and members of the Citizen Electoral Councils (CEC). Gail Billington, from the United States, is the wife of LaRouche associate Michael Billington, who is currently serving a 77-year jail sentence in the state of Virginia on trumped-up charges of securities violations. The CEC, a registered Australian political party, is composed of Lyndon LaRouche's cothinkers from "down under."

The Human Rights Subcommittee, through its chairman, Stephen Loosley, himself an influential MP and a member of the Labour Party right-wing faction to which Prime Minister Paul Keating belongs, contacted the U.S. Embassy in Canberra to request information on the "continuing incarceration of Lyndon LaRouche and associates."

No reply, as yet, has been received from the U.S. authorities. According to subcommittee sources, if no reply is received soon, then the subcommittee plans to pursue the issue further.

The human rights group is a subcommittee of the Parliament's Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and has

a mandate to inquire into human rights abuses and Australia's legal obligations under international treaties. It consists of some 30 members of Parliament from all political parties. In the Australian Parliament, committees are under the control of the government, but they do have a capacity for some independent initiatives, can research issues, invite submissions from the public, and issue reports.

Individual subcommittee members, when briefed on the cases of LaRouche and the other political prisoners associated with him, indicated their concern at the miscarriage of justice. One subcommittee member, after being briefed on the facts of the Billington and LaRouche cases, commented that there was "something very strange about this" and that it clearly required further investigation. Another member stated that "this is the worst case I have heard of in many years." Still other subcommittee members indicated that they would discuss the LaRouche case with their colleagues, though it is very unusual for the subcommittee to pursue individual cases of alleged judicial abuse.

In the two weeks of intense lobbying conducted by Gail Billington and the CEC, representatives from all parties were briefed, including many backbenchers (rank-and-file parliamentarians), shadow ministers, party whips, and Senate party leaders, many of whom expressed great interest. Almost without exception, the MPs commented on the travesty of justice in the LaRouche case, the viciousness of sentencing, and the corruption of the judicial system.

For many parliamentarians it has

come as a shock to learn that the United States is capable of crimes against its own citizens who speak out politically, though many lawmakers are still reluctant to intrude into the internal processes of the United States.

The meetings with Mrs. Billington provided most Australian MPs their first opportunity to seriously examine both the facts of the frameup of LaRouche and his associates—but even more importantly, *why* they were framed up—in contrast to relying on the barrage of slanders propagated by the Australian wing of the U.S. organized crime-linked Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Discussions ranged over LaRouche's work for international monetary reform since the 1970s, his programs for economic development, his authorship of President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), and his role in defining the economic development perspective which laid the basis for the recent Israeli-Palestinian accords.

Such intense discussions provoked a slander by a Labour MP, Graeme Campbell, from the Western Australia electorate of Kalgoorlie. Campbell, a British citizen who was forced a year ago to give up his cherished British citizenship or lose his parliamentary seat, is a fellow traveler of the Australian League of Rights, a malthusian spinoff from the British Israelite cult. Under attack by other MPs for his association with the racist League of Rights, and for his own racist demagoguery, Campbell told the *Canberra Times* of Sept. 30 that the influence of the League of Rights, whose major Melbourne meeting he was planning to address the following weekend, was "grossly overstated," and in any case, "the LaRoucheans are far more extreme." The *Times* added its own gratuitous characterization of LaRouche as a "far-right U.S. cult leader."