

VIPs visit capital, want LaRouche free

The former labor minister of Colombia, two of Colombia's top legal experts, and a member of the now-dissolved Moscow City Council were among those international figures meeting with congressional leaders during the week of Oct. 18 to press the case for freeing American political economist and presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche from prison. LaRouche is now entering the fifth year of his incarceration stemming from a federal trial in Virginia on fabricated conspiracy charges.

In recent months, scores of leading international figures have descended on America's capital to demand from the Congress and the President that everything be done to end LaRouche's imprisonment and the "shame for America," as Moscow City Councilman Viktor Kuzin put it, that his jailing represents.

Joining Kuzin for talks on Capitol Hill were Jorge Carrillo, former labor minister of Colombia; Oswaldo Ardila, president of the Colombian Bar Association, Conalbos; and Jenny Valencia, president of the Bogotá Chapter of Conalbos.

In an interview taped for television airing in October on Virginia local stations, Viktor Kuzin noted it was after studying LaRouche's economic policies that he and other members of the Moscow City Council had been moved to intervene on his behalf. The "prosecution of LaRouche was unworthy of a great nation," he charged.

During a previous visit to the United States in July, Kuzin also visited imprisoned LaRouche associate Michael Billington, who has been sentenced to what Kuzin termed a "monstrous" 77 years on charges of "securities violations." Kuzin remarked that even "the current Russian criminal code, which was drawn up under totalitarianism, does not provide for sentences of that length."

Kuzin blasts stupidity about Russia

Kuzin's second and related reason for visiting Washington was to hammer away at the stupidity of those in the West who blindly back Boris Yeltsin as some sort of "democrat." In his capacity as Moscow City Council member, Kuzin served as chairman of the Civil Rights subcommittee and as vice chairman of the Committee on Law, Justice, and the Defense of Civil Rights. He is also a founding member of Democratic Union, the first party formed in opposition to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

On Oct. 3, Kuzin was arrested in his City Council office,

together with other members of the council. He had been engaged in gathering and disseminating information about police brutality and other developments in Moscow after Yeltsin's initiation of rule-by-decree on Sept. 21. Kuzin was released after an international effort to publicize his case was organized by the Schiller Institute.

In his television interview, Kuzin scored the American support for "former President Yeltsin," and said that the casualties stemming from Yeltsin's bloody crackdown against opponents of his policies numbered in "the several thousands." "I am not misspeaking," he was quick to add, because "according to Article 121 of the Russian Federation, [Yeltsin] ceased being President at the moment he issued his decree dissolving the Parliament on Sept. 21. And in vain, Yeltsin is trying to convince the entire world that he did the right thing, by claiming that it was a Brezhnev-era Constitution. Americans may find it interesting to know that the Constitution which Yeltsin suppressed, though not without its contradictions, was amended to include the Universal Declaration on Human Rights."

Kuzin noted that Yeltsin was required to bring in troops from outside Moscow in order to break up the demonstrations in front of the Parliament, and that Yeltsin's principal support has come from outside Russia, from the western powers, thus belying his claims to be the popular leader of Russia. The Moscow City Council was also dissolved by Yeltsin's hand-picked mayor of Moscow.

Human rights groups are currently reconstructing events, in order to make up a precise tally of the numbers killed and wounded during the confrontation. But, Kuzin said, it is already thought that "the casualties are in the several thousands." It was precisely because members of the Moscow City Council were involved in the effort to centralize information on the bloody crackdown, that its members were arrested.

During private meetings with foreign diplomats, Kuzin vigorously attacked other governments for supporting Yeltsin. "How can you support this butcher?" he demanded of one shaking diplomat, whose government, while privately disagreeing, has publicly backed Clinton's endorsement of Yeltsin. To the diplomat's protests that "Oh no, we don't support personalities; we just support reform of Communism," Kuzin shot back, "This is no reform of Communism. The police are only maintaining order in Moscow by killing, and courtesy of the *nomenklatura* mafia, which have taken over the city. . . . These are not exactly safe conditions for foreign investment! These are not reforms, this is the destruction of Russia. All foreign governments who support this must know what they are doing. It seems you deliberately want to destroy Russia!"

Following his talks in Washington, Kuzin toured a number of cities in the United States, warning citizens and policymakers of the dangers of a United States policy in support of Boris Yeltsin.