

LaRouche calls for resignation of DNC Chairman Fowler

by Debra Hanania Freeman

On May 12, in an action that many loyal Democrats felt was long overdue, Lyndon LaRouche, the only nationally significant candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination besides President Clinton, issued a personal statement, calling for the immediate resignation of Don Fowler as National Chairman of the Democratic Party.

Since at least January 1996, Fowler has engaged in a personal vendetta against LaRouche, which began with a series of lying attacks against the candidate and his supporters, and escalated to probable violations of law by Fowler, as he sought to unilaterally declare LaRouche a “non-candidate,” whose “votes should be disregarded.”

On Jan. 6, as Democrats seeking to go to the Democratic National Convention as delegates pledged to LaRouche gathered in Ohio, state Democratic Party officials received a letter, apparently issued by National Chairman Fowler just one day earlier. The letter, sent to state party leaders across the nation, stated that Fowler, acting unilaterally, under the authority granted to him as National Chairman, was declaring that LaRouche was not “a bona fide Democrat,” and was, therefore, not to be considered “a qualified Presidential candidate.”

Fowler had obviously been advised that there was no legal basis for denying LaRouche ballot status, and was forced to admit to a Delaware reporter, that LaRouche had, in fact, fulfilled all the legal requirements to run for the Democratic Presidential nomination in primaries across the nation. But, in his letter to party leaders, Fowler directed that “state parties should *disregard* any votes that might be cast for Mr. LaRouche, should not allocate delegate positions to Mr. LaRouche, and should not recognize the selection of delegates pledged to him at any stage of the Delegate Selection Process” (emphasis added).

Fowler, obviously functioning under the bizarre assumption that the authority of party law not only supersedes the spirit and letter of the U.S. Constitution, but also the truth, stated in his letter, that “this determination is based on Mr. LaRouche’s expressed political beliefs, including beliefs which are explicitly racist and anti-Semitic.”

LaRouche, who has been an active Democratic Party campaigner during more than 15 years, and who is credited with having cost the Republican Party approximately \$23 million by destroying Ollie North’s 1994 bid for the U.S. Senate, responded to the scurrilous attack less than 48 hours later, denouncing the allegations as “flagrant and disgusting lies.” LaRouche proposed, in a letter on Jan. 8, that Fowler’s letter be tabled by all party officials, “until such time as Mr. Fowler may have rebuked whomever might have misused his name, or, in the alternative, may have made suitable apology for the utterance. . . .”

Prominent Democrats rebuke Fowler

Democratic leaders were horrified. Fowler’s letter was absurd! Not only did LaRouche enjoy the enthusiastic support of much of what remained of the movement associated with the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., but it was LaRouche who had taken the point in defeating the effort led by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) to destroy the U.S. Constitution.

On Jan. 20, a group of prominent Democratic Party leaders and elected officials from Massachusetts to Mississippi, wrote to Fowler, urging him to correct what could be a costly mistake for the party. They pointed out that “LaRouche has been a vocal defender of the Clinton Administration and has actively opposed Newt Gingrich’s policies.” They pointed

out that LaRouche had repeatedly and publicly stated that he fully intended to be actively supporting President Clinton's reelection following the National Convention. They appealed to Fowler, "To attempt to deny LaRouche access to the Convention is not only contrary to the fundamental spirit of the Democratic Party, it also threatens to cause an unnecessary rift in the party, with probable legal challenges, during a critical election period, when we ought to be principally concerned with defeating the Gingrich crowd. For many of us, it brings back bad memories of our Party's unfortunate attempt to lock out representatives of the Mississippi Freedom Democrats! Moreover, we believe that debate on the views that LaRouche has raised is a useful and necessary addition to our internal discussion." Finally, they told Fowler, "Above all else, the allegations on which the attempt to exclude LaRouche are premised, are totally inaccurate and untrue."

But, Fowler, increasingly under the influence of certain wealthy, right-wing circles inside the party, wasn't listening. He continued to ignore appeals from Democratic officials, who had constituted the traditional base of the party's support, and from state chairmen, angered that they were being asked to disenfranchise local Democrats who might vote for LaRouche, at the same time that they had to find ways to mobilize those voters to come out in November, if Democratic candidates were to win. Instead, Fowler concentrated on raising record sums of money for the party's coffers. Somehow, he managed to convince longtime Republican moneybags, including ADM's Dwayne Andreas and Seagrams' Edgar

Bronfman, to contribute unprecedented amounts of cash to the Democratic National Committee (DNC), far exceeding their past, extremely generous handouts to the GOP.

Had LaRouche failed to garner any votes, Fowler might have gotten away with it. But, on Feb. 24, in what was only the nation's second primary of the season, in Delaware, LaRouche's vote was a just a fraction under 10%. A week later, in Colorado, Democratic leaders called LaRouche's 11% in that state's primary "jolting," noting that in the southwestern portion of the state, his vote went as high as 30.8%. Finally, on March 12, less than a month into the official start of the primary season, and despite a virtual press and media blackout of his candidacy, LaRouche crossed the 15% threshold necessary to win a convention delegate in Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District.

Acting under direct orders from Fowler, Louisiana Democratic Party officials refused to administer the post-primary caucus, mandated by the National Delegate Selection rules, so that a LaRouche delegate and alternate could be selected. In complying with Fowler's demand, LaRouche was deprived of the delegate and alternate he was legally entitled to, but, more significantly, 3,995 Democratic voters in Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District stand completely disenfranchised, as their votes were disregarded.

Although previous court decisions have upheld the right of a political party to make its own rules, legal experts agree that the Louisiana action, in throwing out legally cast votes, would almost certainly stand as a gross violation of the Con-



LaRouche Democrat Nancy Spannaus, a candidate for the Virginia Democratic Party's Senatorial nomination, confronts Democratic National Committee Chairman Donald Fowler in Richmond, Virginia, December 1995. Fowler's smile is only for the cameras.

stitution. The issue becomes even more complicated when viewed in light of the U.S. Voting Rights Act. Although only 14% of the population of the Congressional District in question are African American, it is estimated that at least 30-35% of the district's Democratic voters, the only voters eligible to vote for LaRouche, are African American. And, it is widely accepted that LaRouche's support is probably strongest among African American voters.

Disenfranchisement of D.C. voters

The same question presented itself in a far more egregious way a few weeks later in Washington, D.C., where the issue of voter disenfranchisement is a volatile one. Although the nation's capital has a population of over 570,000, with 67% of them African American, it was not until the civil rights revolution of the 1960s that Washingtonians gained the right to vote in Presidential elections. In 1964, Washingtonians began to cast three electoral votes for President. In 1971, they got to elect a non-voting delegate to the U.S. Congress. Finally, in 1974, they were granted home rule, and could, for the first time, elect a mayor and a city council. But, under Gingrich's Conservative Revolution, more than 20 years after Congress finally relinquished the control of the District that it had exercised over most of its history, explicitly out of distrust of the city's large black population, Gingrich's Republican majority turned control of the capital city's finances over to a federally appointed financial control board, seriously curtailing the already limited home rule.

The Democratic National Committee, on the other hand, accords the District all the rights and privileges of a state. The central committee is referred to as the District of Columbia State Democratic Committee, the Democratic mayor is accorded the full status of a governor, and the District delegation of 38 delegates and 4 delegates to the National Convention is larger than that of many states.

Nevertheless, when the time came for candidates for National Convention delegate to file their petitions, Fowler intervened. He ordered D.C. State Democratic Chairman William H. Simons to prevent any delegate candidate pledged to Lyndon LaRouche from obtaining the petitions necessary to qualify. Some of the candidates, who had successfully filed before Fowler intervened, received letters, notifying them that their candidacies had been "voided."

On May 1, the candidates seeking delegate spots pledged to LaRouche, this time accompanied by political and legal observers, press, and a video camera, again attempted to file their petitions, signed by over 4,000 District of Columbia voters, with the District of Columbia Democratic Committee. The party official handling the petitions refused to accept any of the petitions, offering the excuse that she was "only a functionary acting on orders from Don Fowler."

Since the majority of those seeking to file as LaRouche delegates were prominent, longtime African American Democratic activists, Fowler could hardly expect local party offi-

cial to defend their actions to repeat his lying allegations of LaRouche's racism. On April 1, Fowler issued a new directive in a letter addressed to William Simons, chairman of the District of Columbia Democratic Party. Fowler again declared that Lyndon LaRouche "is not a bona fide Democrat." But this time, he stated that, "This position is based on the fact that Mr. LaRouche does not possess a 'record of public service, accomplishment, public writings and/or public statements affirmatively demonstrating that he is faithful . . . and will participate in the Convention in good faith.' " Fowler was treating Simons like a fool. LaRouche is easily the most prolific political writer of the century, and literally hundreds of thousands of his works have been distributed in the District in the last year alone! Fowler attempted to reassure Simons by promising that "should it become necessary, the DNC will provide you with full legal support with regard to your implementation of the Party's position."

Without consulting other members of the State Democratic Committee, Simons decided to comply with Fowler's demand, causing an open and heated controversy. Clearly, what was at issue, were not LaRouche's rights; he had already been certified as a Democratic candidate in the District. What was at issue, however, were the hard-won rights of a majority African American population, still protected under the Voting Rights Act, to participate in the election, and support the candidates of their own choosing, especially at a time when home rule itself is under massive attack. The night before the May 7 primary was to occur, nine out of ten Washingtonians believed that the primary itself had been cancelled, a belief fostered by press reports that since President Clinton had "no opposition," the Financial Control Board was refusing to release the funds to administer the elections!

Fowler's racism

Observers were shocked that Fowler could be so insensitive to questions of racial injustice, especially since voter turnout in the African American community could very well be the difference between victory and defeat for Democratic candidates in November. But, Fowler's alienation from the black community has been evident for years. In his own state of South Carolina, where Fowler served as state party chairman before he came to Washington, it is widely believed that he personally intervened to deny party funds and support to State Sen. Theo Walker Mitchell, a nationally respected African American leader, who was the Democratic gubernatorial nominee against Carroll Campbell in 1990. Fowler repeated a formula that first appeared in articles he authored decades earlier, while on the faculty at the University of South Carolina, that if the Democratic Party in the South didn't change, it would be relegated to a party of blacks! Although Fowler did nothing to publicly oppose Mitchell's candidacy, he also did nothing to help.

During the campaign, as the Bush Justice Department's federal sting of the legislature's Black Caucus racked up in-

dictments, Campbell asked for a “mandate to govern.” Mitchell, badly strapped for funds, and denied the assistance of Fowler’s Democratic Party, despite the fact that he was their nominee, had difficulty mobilizing the turnout of black voters he would have needed to win what was nationally considered a “winnable” election. Instead, the late Republican National Committee chairman and 1988 Bush campaign manager, Lee Atwater, himself a South Carolina native son, shaped a strategy of seeking black votes for the well-financed Campbell candidacy. A campaign was orchestrated, through the press and media, painting Mitchell, who had always been elected to his seat in the State Senate with broad, multi-racial support, as a “black extremist.” Campbell got the near-unanimous support of whites, and almost 25% of the black vote. Local observers gave Fowler almost as much credit as they gave Atwater, for Mitchell’s defeat.

During this election year, the DNC, under Fowler’s leadership, with the largest campaign fund in Democratic Party history, has so far done very little to finance a much-needed voter registration drive among African Americans, and doesn’t seem to be doing much to help members of the Congressional Black Caucus, whose seats are threatened by court-mandated redistricting. And, members of the Democratic Congressional Caucus whose seats are considered “safe,” are worried about the apparent lack of funds being dispensed to mobilize the Democratic base statewide.

Debacle in Virginia

LaRouche, despite an accumulation of such events, had refrained from publicly attacking Fowler. He had clearly hoped that the question of Fowler’s outrageous actions could be settled quietly, within the party. But, on May 11, when the Virginia Democratic Party held caucuses to elect delegates, the LaRouche delegates in the Second Congressional District, an area that encompasses a section of the city of Norfolk and all of Virginia Beach, comprised over 24% of the delegates present, more than enough to establish their “viability” under party rules, Fowler intervened again.

This time, when local party officials, acting on orders from the DNC, attempted to disband the duly elected “LaRouche Caucus,” the process broke down, and erupted into utter chaos. When Fowler’s Jan. 5 letter was read, howls of indignation built to a deafening roar. Several Clinton delegates walked out in disgust. The 44 delegates and 7 alternates, who had been elected as pledged to LaRouche, refused to sit quietly and allow their caucus to be disbanded; they booed and catcalled until it was impossible for the process to continue. When local party officials, clearly upset at the fracturing of the party, offered what they considered a compromise, telling the LaRouche delegates that they would be permitted to vote, if they agreed to disband and join the Clinton caucus, the protests only grew louder. Despite the outcry, however, the LaRouche caucus was indeed declared disbanded, and the Clinton caucus voted by acclamation to send their full slate

to the National Convention. When the proceedings were over, many of the delegates remained in their seats, stunned and unable to believe what they had just witnessed.

It was the Virginia debacle that forced LaRouche’s hand. The next day, he called for Fowler’s resignation. “The issue goes beyond the outrageously immoral, repeated, lying attacks which Mr. Fowler has made upon both me and those voters who have supported my candidacy,” LaRouche stated. “Fowler’s conduct as National Chairman in these matters underlines the fact that he has made himself a public fool, and a serious public embarrassment to the Democratic Party, and a liability to all Democratic Party candidacies. His continuation as National Chairman, at this time, could bring about the otherwise unlikely defeat of the party, at the polls, in the November general election.”

Documentation

The following are the full texts of the letters and statements by Lyndon LaRouche and Donald Fowler referred to in the article above.

Fowler letter to state chairmen, Jan. 5

Letter from Donald Fowler to Democratic state party chairmen concerning Lyndon LaRouche’s Presidential candidacy. As the reader will note, Fowler insists on misspelling LaRouche’s name every time—an insult we have preserved in our reproduction.

To Democratic State Party Chairs:

Rule 11(K) of the Delegate Selection Rules for the 1996 Democratic National Convention adopted by the Democratic National Committee on March 12, 1994, provides that, for purposes of those Rules, a qualified candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for President—

“must be registered to vote, must be a declared Democrat, and must, as determined by the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, have established a bona fide record of public service, accomplishment, public writings and/or public statements affirmatively demonstrating that he or she has the interests, welfare and success of the Democratic Party of the United States at heart and will participate in the Convention in good faith.”

Under Article VI of the Call to the Democratic National Convention, adopted by the Democratic National Committee on January 22, 1995, the terms “presidential candidate” means:

“... any person who, as determined by the National Chairperson of the Democratic National Committee, has accrued delegates in the nominating process and plans to seek the nomination, has established substantial support for his or

her nomination as the Democratic candidate for the office of the President of the United States, is a bona fide Democrat whose record of public service, accomplishment, public writings and/or public statements, affirmatively demonstrates that he or she is faithful to the interests, welfare and success of the Democratic Party of the United States, and will participate in the Convention in good faith.”

This is to notify you that, under the authority granted to me by the Delegate Selection Rules and the Call, I have determined that Lyndon Larouche [sic] is not a bona fide Democrat and does not possess a record affirmatively demonstrating that he is faithful to, or has at heart, the interests, welfare and success of the Democratic Party of the United States. This determination is based on Mr. Larouche’s expressed political beliefs, including beliefs which are explicitly racist and anti-Semitic, and otherwise utterly contrary to the fundamental beliefs, values and tenets of the Democratic Party and is also based on his past activities including exploitation of and defrauding contributors and voters.

Accordingly, Mr. Larouche is not to be considered a qualified candidate for nomination of the Democratic Party for President under the Delegate Selection Rules and is not to be considered a “presidential candidate” within the meaning of Article VI of the Call. Therefore, state parties, in the implementation of their delegate selection plans, should disregard any votes that might be cast for Mr. Larouche, should not allocate delegate positions to Mr. Larouche and should not recognize the selection of delegates pledged to him at any stage of the Delegate Selection Process.

Further, Mr. Larouche will not be entitled to have his name placed in nomination for the office of President at the 1996 Democratic National Convention. No certification of a delegate pledged to Mr. Larouche will be accepted by the Secretary of the DNC and no such delegate shall be placed on the Temporary Roll of the Convention. The National Chair will, if necessary, and upon the proper filing of a challenge, recommend to the Credentials Committee of the 1996 Democratic National Convention that the Committee resolve that any such delegate not be seated at the Convention.

If you have any questions about the implementation of this notice, please do not hesitate to contact me or to contact the DNC’s Rules and Bylaws Committee at (202) 863-7191.

[Signed]

Donald L. Fowler
National Chair

LaRouche letter to fellow Democrats, Jan. 8

Dear Fellow Democrat:

This is to confirm and qualify the January 5th reply which I have issued, in response to a letter issued to Democratic Party State Chairs, a letter issued ostensibly over the signature of Democratic National Committee Chair Donald L. Fowler.

This statement I have distributed, by Internet, is the following.

“I am in a receipt of a two-page, scurrilous letter, which presents itself as a policy statement, from Democratic National Committee Chairperson Donald L. Fowler, to each and all Democratic State Party Chairs.

“The purpose of the letter is stated within the third of the letter’s five paragraphs. The signator, ostensibly Fowler, states that ‘Lyndon Larouche is not a bona fide Democrat . . . This determination is based on Mr. Larouche’s expressed political beliefs, including beliefs which are explicitly racist and anti-Semitic. . . .’ (sic).

“On this account, either Mr. Fowler, or whoever issued this letter in his name, is purely and simply a liar.

“I am not obliged to speculate on the motives of whoever caused that letter to be put into circulation. However, since I have been an active Democratic Party campaigner during more than fifteen years, and have campaigned for the party’s nomination five times, such an obviously hysterical document now, suggests that someone is terribly afraid of the extent of estimated potential support for my candidacy at this time. Since Mr. Clinton’s reelection is virtually inevitable, and since I am committed to support his reelection after the August convention, one may ask: whether the authorship of the scurrilous letter either wrote in a deranged state of mind, or is operating under the influence of some secret agenda?”

Ironically, given its reliance upon that flagrant lie, the text of the letter as a whole is fairly described as recalling the totalitarian style of “political correctness” (*Gleichschaltung*) practised by Nazi Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels, a quality which one might have thought were “utterly contrary to the fundamental beliefs, values and tenets of the Democratic Party.”

Since that letter’s reported determination by the Chair is explicitly premised upon no evidence other than a flagrant lie, I propose that the letter be tabled by all National and State party officials, until such time as Mr. Fowler may have rebuked whomever might have misused his name, or, in the alternative, may have made suitable apology for the utterance of so flagrantly false and disgusting a lie. In the interim, letter’s text should be recognized for what it is: a dirty political trick by some faction with access to the official stationery of the National Committee’s Chair.

Sincerely Yours,

[Signed]

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

cc: The Honorable Donald L. Fowler
The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd

Fowler letter to William Simons, April 1

Letter from Donald Fowler to William Simons, chairman of the District of Columbia Democratic Party:

Dear Bill:

Thank you for your letter of March 25, 1996 regarding

individuals wishing to run as delegate candidates pledged to Lyndon LaRouche.

On January 5, 1996, pursuant to the authority granted to me as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee by the 1996 Delegate Selection Rules and the Call to the Convention, I declared that, for the purpose of the Democratic Party's presidential nominating process, Mr. LaRouche is not a bona fide Democrat. This position is based on the fact that Mr. LaRouche does not possess a record of service, accomplishment, public writings and/or public statements affirmatively [demonstrating that he] is faithful to the interest, welfare and success of the Democratic Party of the United States, and will participate in the Convention in good faith. Accordingly, Mr. LaRouche is not to be considered a qualified candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for President under the Delegate Selection Rules and is subsequently ineligible to receive delegates to the 1996 Democratic National Convention.

Since Mr. LaRouche is ineligible to be awarded positions, a State Party should not permit persons pledged to Mr. LaRouche to participate in post-primary caucuses. Therefore, the Democratic National Committee will support the DC Democratic Party's decision to deny petitions to individuals wishing to file as LaRouche delegate candidates. Should it become necessary, the DNC will provide full legal support to the DC Democratic Party in its implementation of the Party's position with regard to Mr. LaRouche's ineligibility to receive delegates to the Democratic National Convention.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the DNC's Office of Party Affairs.

Sincerely,

[Signed]

Donald L. Fowler

Statement by LaRouche, May 12

Since January 1996, National Chairman Don Fowler has been engaged in a personal vendetta against me, during which he has repeatedly violated every relevant moral precept and statute of the Democratic Party. Chairman Fowler has purported to justify these outrageous actions by a series of aggregately multifarious false statements, including outright lies, arguing that his personal lies acquire the authority of party law by virtue of his Napoleonic occupation of the post of National Chairman.

In the hope that Mr. Fowler would come to quietly desist from continuing these practices, either voluntarily or at the direction of saner heads in the Party, I have treated Mr. Fowler's behavior with exemplary forbearance, during the entire period, over the months and weeks from the issuance of his outrageous first public attack, to the present date. I had hoped that saner heads would act soon enough that my hand would not be forced on this issue.

An accumulation of events, beginning with the time of my gaining a delegate in the Louisiana primary, Fowler's

implicit violation of the Voting Rights Act in the Washington, D.C. primary, and the past weekend's developments in the Commonwealth of Virginia, has brought my forbearance to an end.

The issue goes beyond the outrageously immoral, repeated, lying attacks which Mr. Fowler has made upon both me and those voters who have supported my candidacy. Fowler's conduct as National Chairman in these matters underlines the fact that he has made himself a public fool, and a serious public embarrassment to the Democratic Party, and a liability to all Democratic Party candidacies. His continuation as National Chairman, at this time, could bring about the otherwise unlikely defeat of the party, at the polls, in the November general election.

It is relevant to this matter, that Mr. Fowler's immoral and otherwise outrageous misconduct in office has been prompted chiefly by the pressure on him and the National Committee, from a certain wealthy, right-wing circle whose economic and social policies would be more suited to the associates of House Speaker Newt Gingrich than the party of Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy, and Bill Clinton. This is the same factional influence within the Democratic National Committee which threw the 1994 Congressional elections to Mr. Gingrich's fellow-travellers, and which is acting, again today, to bring about a similar result.

The Science of Christian Economy

And other
prison writings by
Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

Includes
In Defense of Common Sense,
Project A, and *The Science of
Christian Economy*,

three ground-breaking essays written by LaRouche after he became a political prisoner of the Bush administration on Jan. 27, 1989.

\$15

Order from:

Ben Franklin Booksellers, Inc.

Toll free (800) 453-4108 (703) 777-3661 fax (703) 777-8287

Shipping and handling: Add \$4 for the first book and \$.50 for each additional book in the order. Virginia residents add 4.5% sales tax. We accept MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover.

