

Congressional hearings must exonerate LaRouche

by Debra Hanania Freeman

On April 30, Senate Judiciary Chair Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) will call to order a hearing whose purpose is the exercise of his committee's oversight responsibility for the conduct and function of the U.S. Department of Justice. Each year, in a seemingly routine procedure, the Attorney General appears before the committee to give an accounting of the Department's functioning, and to respond to whatever questions and concerns the U.S. senators who serve on that committee raise. But, this year, those hearings promise to be anything but "routine." Attorney General Janet Reno's appearance will occur in a climate characterized by stinging charges that the DOJ's "permanent bureaucracy" has routinely engaged in a repertoire of practices that includes cover-up, corruption, fraud, judicial abuse, and prosecutorial misconduct. Whether those hearings will serve as the beginning of the long-overdue cleaning out of one of the most corrupt sections of our government's permanent bureaucracy, or as the perpetuation of a persistent pattern of covering up that corruption, is still very much an open question.

Over four years ago, when President Clinton was first coming into office, the clean-out of the careerists who were responsible for the pattern of judicial abuse during the 12 years of the Reagan-Bush Justice Department, was considered one of the new President's highest priorities. Like many of Clinton's early initiatives, the effort was at best faltering.

Clinton had trouble finding an Attorney General. The World Trade Center bombing occurred very early in his first term. His new Attorney General's first major decision (made with the help of DOJ careerist Mark Richard) led to the Waco debacle. Two years later, on April 19, 1995, the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was bombed. But, the Oklahoma City tragedy became the catalyst for renewed bipartisan concern in the Congress, that the Waco case, along with other pertinent cases, was a predicate of a continuing pattern of behavior by certain elements attached to the Department of Justice.

At the same time, recognition was growing, both inside and outside the United States, that a full investigation of the judicial railroad of Lyndon LaRouche and his



Meeting of the independent commission to investigate misconduct by the Department of Justice, Aug. 31, 1995, Vienna, Virginia. The commission is now renewing its call for Congressional hearings. Right to left: Msgr. Elias el Hayek; Toby Fitch, North Carolina House of Representatives; attorney J.L. Chestnut; Ulysses Jones, Jr., Tennessee House of Representatives; James Mann, former member U.S. Congress, S.C.; Percy Watson, Mississippi House of Representatives; Maggie Wallace Glover, South Carolina State Senate; John Hillard, Alabama House of Representatives; William Clark, Alabama House of Representatives; Howard Hunter, North Carolina House of Representatives.

associates, was key to dismantling this corrupt apparatus.

LaRouche had been released on parole on Jan. 26, 1994, after having served five years in federal prison as a political prisoner. His freedom came only after an unprecedented international mobilization. Close to 1,000 of America's foremost legal experts had petitioned the court as *amici curiae*, calling the LaRouche case "a threat to every politically active citizen." The case was brought before the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Organization of American States, and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Thousands of parliamentarians and other elected officials joined with religious leaders, artists, scientists, and human rights figures, to demand an end to LaRouche's unjust incarceration. Hundreds travelled in delegations to Washington, D.C., to lobby for LaRouche's freedom.

In September 1994, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, appearing before an independent body of international legal experts who reviewed the evidence in the LaRouche case, summed up the evidence of government misconduct: The LaRouche case "represented a broader range of deliberate cunning and systematic misconduct, over a longer period of time, utilizing the power of the federal government, than any other prosecution by the U.S. government, in my time or to my knowledge."

In 1995, as the move toward Congressional oversight hearings progressed, there was little doubt that the LaRouche case would be presented. Unfortunately, what started out as bipartisan concern, quickly dissipated, under the leadership of newly elected House Speaker Newt Gingrich, into partisan

political garbage. The Waco hearings were hijacked, and turned into an attempt to pillory President Clinton. The result was a massive cover-up of the DOJ corruption, while Janet Reno, along with FBI Director Louis Freeh, became, and remain, key players in covering up for the abuses committed both by their predecessors and their subordinates.

On Aug. 31-Sept. 1, 1995, an independent panel, co-chaired by former Congressman James Mann (D-S.C.) (probably best known for his service on the House Judiciary Committee during impeachment proceedings against President Nixon) and distinguished Alabama civil rights attorney J.L. Chestnut, and composed of distinguished legislators from all over the United States, was convened to hear the evidence of DOJ misconduct that the House Committee had refused to hear. In addition to the LaRouche case, they examined cases related to the FBI's harassment of African-American public and elected officials, as well as the misconduct of the DOJ's "Nazi-hunting" Office of Special Investigations. They ended their proceedings with an appeal for immediate Congressional oversight hearings into Department of Justice misconduct. Those hearings still have not occurred. But events over the past weeks have brought much new evidence of DOJ corruption center-stage, and the Mann-Chestnut Commission has renewed its call for full investigative hearings (see next page).

If the Senate Judiciary Committee fails to hear this crucial evidence once again, there is little doubt, that the stench of political corruption and cover-up will taint every member of that committee, for what remains of their political careers.