

## Editorial

### *The power of truth*

Before Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering left for Beijing the week of June 7, to present the Chinese government an official "explanation" of the May 7 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche issued a statement (see p. 71) stressing that nothing but the truth would suffice. To peddle the idea that it had been a "tragic accident," LaRouche said, "is the worst possible action at this time, almost a politically suicidal action, for the U.S. President's credibility among any of the world's nations." LaRouche urged the United States, "for a change," to "try telling the truth."

Mr. Pickering would have done well to heed this advice. Instead, he chose the course of lying diplomacy, and fell flat on his face. Pickering reiterated the fairy tale of the outdated map, and regretted that subsequent cross-checking had also failed to correct the "error" regarding the location of the Chinese Embassy.

The official response of the Beijing authorities to Pickering's explanation, should not surprise anyone. As reported on China Central TV on June 17, the Chinese government rejected his version, and gave ample reasons why.

"The Chinese side," the report went, "refuted the explanation by saying it was impossible for U.S.-led NATO not to know the exact location of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia. . . . The Chinese side finds it difficult to believe why the U.S. side put so much value on, and faith in the out-dated maps. The U.S. also acknowledges that there are many maps which show the correct location of the Chinese Embassy. But they were not able to explain why they did not use these maps.

"Secondly, the U.S. had planned the strikes against Yugoslavia for a long time. This allowed much time for the photographing, mapping, and surveying of all parts of Yugoslavia. This includes Belgrade in particular. All throughout the bombing of Central Belgrade, efforts were made to avoid hitting foreign embassies in Yugoslavia. All of these other embassies were located near targets that were hit. This shows that the U.S. was clear

about which targets were intended and which were no-hit targets.

"Thirdly the U.S. claims they located the intended target purely by an undependable technique of land navigations. But this is clearly not logical. . . . Fourthly, U.S. target databases were updated frequently with clearly distinguished target lists. The U.S. claim that the Chinese Embassy was mistakenly fed into the database as a Yugoslavian military target facility does not hold ground. Fifthly, the explanation given by the U.S. side that its review process failed to detect and correct the intelligence errors is inconceivable. The U.S. has always claimed that it has a whole set of stringent review procedures throughout the process of reconnaissance, identification, and final selection. The technical departments concerned would not determine the intended targets unless they had doubts about them. With such strict review procedures, why did errors occur at every stage and none of them were corrected?"

In conclusion, the report emphasized that the bombing had "not only encroached upon the national dignity of the Chinese people, but also violated the fundamental rights of human life." Stressing that "China has made it clear that the Chinese government has always attached importance to the improvement and development of Sino-U.S. relations," it reiterated that "the U.S. side must face squarely the severe consequences of its attack on the Chinese Embassy and the effect it has had on China-U.S. relations. The U.S. must take practical action in handling this incident properly, so as to create the necessary condition and atmosphere for bilateral relations to return to normal."

There is no reason to assume that the Chinese government will change its mind, or modify its principled stance on this grave violation of national sovereignty. There is no other alternative open to Washington, but to listen to Lyndon LaRouche's informed standpoint, and "for a change," start telling the truth. As LaRouche's campaign slogan recalls, "You cannot fool all of the people all the time."