

# LaRouche to AFL-CIO: Stop the insanity

by Marianna Wertz

Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche has launched a powerful attack on the AFL-CIO leadership's embrace of Al Gore's candidacy and its equally insane anti-China policy. In his keynote speech to the Schiller Institute/International Caucus of Labor Committees Presidents' Day conference on Feb. 19 in Reston, Virginia, LaRouche demanded that the labor federation cut out its "insanity" before it destroys not only the labor movement, but the United States as well. The AFL-CIO has been deploying hundreds of campaign workers for Gore in key primary states, shoring up his otherwise wooden campaign with mass leaflettings and doorbell ringing, while disseminating vitriolic attacks on China, as if it were the principal evil in the British-run global free-trade monstrosity.

"It is the American people, with their foolishness, a people which *by law* has the authority to choose its own government, which chose nothing but bad government, either by voting or by not voting," LaRouche said. "Just like the AFL-CIO leadership now, which are not necessarily bad people, a little bit opportunistic, frightened. But they are voting for Al Gore—the leadership. If they get Al Gore as President, number one, *there will be no organized labor in the United States*. That's what Al Gore will deliver. He will free labor from its suffering, by eliminating labor!

"If Al Gore is nominated, it's likely he will not be elected, but something like George Bush will be elected by Wall Street, in which case there will be no organized labor in the United States—not much longer.

"So, what is the AFL-CIO leadership working for? Is it working in the interests of organized labor? Certainly not. It will insist it is, but it's not. But that's typically American. That's how American fools bring themselves into the destruction of our nation, which is already half-destroyed, or more."

## Justice Department threats

LaRouche addressed the same issue a week earlier, in a discussion with civil rights leaders on Feb. 12 carried live on the Internet, where he located the AFL-CIO's actions as being a result of blackmail threats from the Department of Justice, in the continuing money-laundering trial of former Teamster

official Michael Hamilton. That prosecution has implicated top leaders of the AFL-CIO, including President John Sweeney and Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka.

"How can anybody in labor vote for Gore?" LaRouche asked. "Now, I understand some of the Justice Department blackmail, on some of the top political figures in the AFL-CIO. Some of these guys are threatened with going to prison for a long time, if they don't work for Al Gore. And they're turning around and asking their friends, to help them do that. But, what happens to *the entire labor movement* if Al Gore becomes President, if he could? *There won't be an organized labor movement in the United States four years after Al Gore gets to be President!*

"So how can any idiot in labor vote for this guy, work for him? And every guy in labor is bright enough, particularly people in the organizing level, are bright enough to know exactly what Al Gore means. *They know what the 1996 welfare reform bill means as the next step.*

"And how can they vote for him? Because they are not living in the real world. They are frightened people, afraid of Justice Department frame-ups from Jack Keeney, the old guy, and they're living otherwise in an entertainment world, just like proletarians sitting in the bleachers and cheering for lions tearing apart Christians. They're not in the real world."

## Weak endorsement

As *EIR* has frequently documented, Gore's policy is anti-labor in every respect, with the sole exception (and the explicit basis for the AFL-CIO endorsement) of his pro-forma support for the right of unions to organize. He is the leading advocate in the Clinton administration of globalization and free trade. He is the architect, together with Dick Morris, of the hated welfare reform, a slave-labor policy signed into law by Clinton in August 1996. Gore is also the leading proponent in America of a Malthusian, genocidal population-reduction policy, aimed particularly at darker-skinned peoples around the world, which he spells out in his book, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*.

Because most union members know the truth about Gore, it has not been easy to sell him to the rank and file, and, indeed, the Gore endorsement is by no means unanimous, even as the campaign is heating up. Both the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) and United Auto Workers (UAW), two of the largest unions in the AFL-CIO, have withheld their endorsements.

On Feb. 16, the IBT, representing more than 1.4 million workers, announced that its Presidential endorsement remains to be determined. "Our General Executive Board is committed to making a decision in the Presidential endorsement process that will be in the best interests of Teamster members and their families, as well as the broader labor movement," stated IBT President James P. Hoffa. Over the past months, the Teamster leadership has met with Gore, Bill

Bradley, John McCain, Orrin Hatch, and Pat Buchanan, but has yet to meet with Lyndon LaRouche.

UAW President Stephen Yokich told delegates to their recent national legislative convention that the UAW Executive Board, representing 760,000 active and 500,000 retired members, is not ready to endorse anybody. "This union is not going to stand up and endorse Gore or Bradley or anyone else," Yokich said, "because we want to talk to these candidates. We want these candidates to understand what we think about their trade policy. We want people to know that we're concerned, and the only way you can do that is to stand up and say, 'We are not going to endorse you. You've got to listen to our problems first.'"

The lukewarm nature of the AFL-CIO's statement of endorsement itself underscores Gore's weakness in the ranks of organized labor, and that the endorsement was sold as the "lesser of two evils." Resolution 37, the endorsement of Gore's campaign which passed at the Feb. 16-19 mid-winter New Orleans Executive Council meeting, begins in a way which demonstrates, as LaRouche said, that the AFL-CIO is *not* in the real world: "The best opportunity to influence the outcome of the 2000 elections is through the early and full participation of working men and women, demanding that candidates address our need for a bigger share of our nation's prosperity."

What prosperity? The prosperity of the non-union, upper 20% of the family-income brackets, whose only work is gambling on the stock exchanges?

The statement says that "there is no question that Al Gore is the Presidential candidate most favored, or that members support an endorsement of him at this time by an overwhelming margin." Not exactly a ringing endorsement.

LaRouche characterized the state of mind of the labor leader who would force such an endorsement on his membership. "Take the leadership of the AFL-CIO, as expressed by Sweeney, who presumably is an intelligent person, who presumably ordinarily would probably agree with me on most of the things I say. But now, he's in a fit. He's in a fit to vote for somebody, to use muscle, the labor movement's physical muscle, to ram through a vote for Al Gore, when his very success in doing that, would ensure that organized labor is destroyed, and the conditions of life of working people throughout the United States, will be destroyed.

"Is that not *insanity*? A man who is so dissociated from reality, so imprisoned to a media value, an entertainment value, that they lose sight of the reality, that they will put their muscle into bringing about their own destruction? Isn't that mass insanity?"

## The China question

While the mass media are attempting to portray as contradictory, organized labor's simultaneous support for Gore and opposition to the Clinton-Gore policy promoting China's entry into the World Trade Organization, in fact, both

policies unwittingly have the same ultimate result: the election of George W. Bush, or someone like him, to the Presidency.

As LaRouche told the Presidents' Day conference, Wall Street and London are backing *both* Gore and Bush, knowing that Bush, their chosen pawn, would easily defeat Gore, were he the Democratic nominee. The AFL-CIO's rabid denunciations of China in recent weeks, played in the media as anti-Gore, simply place the AFL-CIO in bed with the most reactionary wing of the GOP, which is pushing *now* for a war between the United States and China, as the platform for a Bush victory.

As LaRouche put it, "For the past two years, or year and a half, especially since the summer of 1998, the world has been marching toward the direction of a new world war. You see the fanatics who are talking about a war with China. You see the AFL-CIO is virtually talking in the same direction these days."

At the Feb. 16 mid-winter AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting, President Sweeney announced a national campaign against globalization, the core of which will be a "No Blank Check for China" campaign. Union members will be bombarding Congress with demands not to grant China permanent Normal Trade Relations status, while demonstrations are planned on the issue nationwide in the spring.

Sweeney let fly an anti-China diatribe at the press conference. "China is one of the worst offenders of human rights in the world," he said. "China uses executions and torture to maintain order, persecutes religious minorities and violates workers' rights."

But, as LaRouche told the Presidents' Day conference, the only way to improve conditions of life in China is to bring it into the New Bretton Woods system that he has proposed, which is also the basis for preventing global war and economic collapse. We must do what Franklin Roosevelt did after World War II, LaRouche said. "Otherwise, we do not have the solid basis for bringing together other nations, which are being estranged from us increasingly by the AFL-CIO, for example, as well as by the wildmen in the Congress, as well as by the British. We have to bring people together in the conviction that they're coming together for a principle, which they are persuaded is a *true and trustworthy principle*.

"We wish to establish a community of sovereign nation-states on this planet, *as the only ruling force on this planet*. Not a nation, not an empire, but a community of sovereign nation-states, in which we play the role of *insisting* upon the legacy of the founding of our republic, of coming back to our own true principle, and saying, 'We are prepared to join with other nations in defending that true principle together. If you trust the principle, you can trust us. If you can trust yourself, you can trust us, and we can work together.'"

This, in fact, is the only basis for restoring the living standard of American workers, now being wrecked by Al Gore's free trade policies.