

## Australia Dossier by Robert Barwick

### 'I Dream of Pauline'

*The populist genie of Australian politics has again been let out of the bottle to counter LaRouche.*

The Feb. 10 state election in Western Australia saw the biggest political shift in the history of the state, when the Australian Labor Party (ALP) won 13 seats, to capture the government. Reacting to high gasoline prices, a new 10% value-added tax, and a crisis in the public hospital system, voters punished the government of Liberal Party Premier Richard Court.

Yet, the ALP, led by Third Way fruitcake Geoff Gallop, one of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's closest friends from their days at Oxford, attracted just 37.6% of the vote, only 1.8% above what they received in the 1996 elections, when they were smashed by the Liberal/National party coalition, their traditional rivals. Almost 10% of the state's voters chose the anti-globalization Pauline Hanson's One Nation party, and cast their "preferences" votes away from sitting Members of Parliament, the majority of whom were from the Liberal/National coalition. (Under Australia's system, voters number their second, third, etc., choices, and these "secondary votes," or "preferences," often determine the outcome of the election.) The deposed Court rued, "With the preferences directed largely against our sitting members, it's been bang-bang, you're gone."

The most remarkable aspect of the election, was that just six months ago, One Nation was politically dead. As a party, it had fallen a long way from the heights of June 1998, when it won 24% of the vote and 11 seats in the Queensland state election, and then garnered an astonishing 1.2 million votes in the October 1998 federal election, although the major parties' "preference

swaps" prevented it from winning but one Senate seat.

One Nation was largely created by the media beginning in 1997, to deflect support from LaRouche's Australian associates in the Citizens Electoral Council (CEC), who commanded great influence in rural Australia by 1996-97 (see "Globalization and 'Land Rights': The Crown Plot To Loot Australia," *EIR*, Feb. 15, 2001). However, One Nation threatened to become a Frankenstein's monster. As Rupert Murdoch's *Courier-Mail* gasped about Hanson on Aug. 26, 1998, "She does have ideas, alas, and her ideas are essentially those of the CEC." But, because the party had almost no mass-based organization, as quickly as it had made her, the establishment was able to break her. Following its high-water mark in the October 1998 Federal election, a vicious media campaign unleashed the party's near-destruction: It was de-registered; all 11 of its Queensland representatives defected; and its leadership disintegrated. For the next two years, One Nation registered 1-2% in the polls.

The purpose of this recent resurrection of One Nation is, again, to stop the rising influence of LaRouche and the CEC. The political establishment was rocked in April 2000, when the CEC and the executive of the Municipal Employees Union of Western Australia, co-founded a new political party, the Curtin Labor Alliance (CLA). Not only has the CEC survived years of media blackout, but, through mass-organizing, it has won support among sections of the ALP's traditional constituency—the trade unions. CLA Western Australia chairman

Adrian Bennett forecast, "This new party will change the course of this nation. The likelihood is the establishment will start screaming bloody murder about the CLA."

It did more than scream. The state government immediately prepared new laws to block the registration of the CLA. Then, on Aug. 29, 2000, media mogul Kerry Packer's flagship magazine, *The Bulletin* ran a glossy, four-page cover story headlined, "Pauline Hanson, Can This Souffle Rise Twice?" which let the genie back out of the bottle. Observed Lynton Crosby, the director of the Liberal Party, "She may be off the radar screen right now . . . but if you start putting her on the cover of *The Bulletin* . . ." With a renewed media boost, and doors suddenly opened to its re-registration in Queensland and Western Australia, support for One Nation surged.

By election day, the clear choice the voters would have had, between the establishment parties' status quo, or LaRouche's economic policies to survive depression, had been muddied by a flood of media coverage of policy-void Hanson populism. Still, the CLA's 21 candidates polled a hard-core vote of up to 7% in 5-, 6-, and 7-way races. In one seat, the combined vote of the CLA's Jean Robinson, with 7.65%, and her One Nation opponent's 21%, was more than the 27.47% of the votes of the winner. "How did [the One Nation vote] happen?" asked Liberal Party commentator Christopher Pearson in the Feb. 12 *Australian Financial Review*. "The re-invigoration of a 'party' bereft of ideas is a tribute to the power of the media," he wrote. According to Pearson, between mid-December and Feb. 8, there appeared no fewer than "174 press or electronic media reports which could be construed as talking up One Nation's electoral prospects."