

Australia Dossier by Allen Douglas

Government Delays Fascist Bills

A mobilization led by Lyndon LaRouche's associates has forced the Howard government to back down, for now.

LaRouche's associates in the Citizens Electoral Council (CEC) on May 15 dealt the Liberal/National party coalition government of Prime Minister John Howard a stunning defeat, when Howard was forced to pull a series of draconian "anti-terror" bills without precedent in the Western world, which had passed the House of Representatives on March 13, and were sailing toward passage in the Senate. However, the fight has just begun, because the bills, with some modifications, will be reintroduced when Parliament reconvenes on June 17.

Using the cover of "9/11," Howard's government was attempting to establish a fascist police state, precisely as Hitler used the Reichstag Fire of Feb. 27, 1933 to ram through his *Notverordnung* (Emergency Decree) the following day, which consolidated his dictatorship. (*EIR*, May 3, 2002). As documented in the February 2002 issue of the CEC's *New Citizen* newspaper, the government's claim to be "responding to 9/11" is belied by the raft of less-noticed, but also draconian legislation passed piecemeal at state and federal levels over the past several years.

This legislation included the infamous federal "shoot-to-kill" bill—the Defense Legislation Amendment (Aid to Civilian Authorities) Act 2000—which, for the first time, allowed the Australian Army to shoot and kill Australian civilians. That bill prefigures the establishment of the U.S. Army's new Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) over the United States, Canada, and Mexico, which would also allegedly "provide aid to civilian authorities," but which would consolidate an

SS-style dictatorship under U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft.

In a May 1 webcast, Lyndon LaRouche exposed the command center for the drive for fascism in Australia and elsewhere in the Commonwealth before an international audience, in response to a question from CEC leader Craig Isherwood. "The way this is run in Britain, for example, is through the Privy Council," he said. "Now, the Queen nominally has no powers to speak of, except to read the teleprompter at certain annual occasions, before the Parliament. But the Queen is actually a very powerful institution, who controls the United Kingdom, and the Empire, including Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, directly, for which she is the monarch, through Privy Councils. The operation to which you refer in Australia, is run from the British monarchy, through the Privy Council extensions in Australia."

LaRouche's statement was widely circulated in Australia, in conjunction with the CEC's "Emergency Call to All Australians" (accompanied by the key section from Hitler's *Notverordnung*), which charged that the proposed new laws were identical to Hitler's. Within one week, over a hundred prominent Australians had signed the statement, beginning with Hon. Jim Cairns, the former Deputy Prime Minister in the government of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam (1972-75), which was sacked by the Queen for attempting to implement nationalist policies.

This statement was released amidst a CEC-organized mass-lobbying effort of Members of Parliament

and Senators, in which they were being bombarded with some 200 e-mails per day, and many more phone calls and faxes. The opposition Australian Labor Party (ALP) had made a dirty deal with Howard to ram the sweeping legislation through both the House and Senate within weeks; but, under the impact of the mobilization, an ALP caucus meeting just before the Senate vote, unexpectedly rejected the worst aspects of the bills, which broke the deal. One MP's staffer, who himself disliked the bills, told the CEC, "I hate LaRouche, but you guys have done an impressive job."

Following the ALP's decision, a revolt broke out by MPs in Howard's own party. He was then forced to put off a vote until June 17, by which time he hopes to have the numbers.

Among other things, the bills: allow the Attorney General to ban any organization he wishes, whether or not convicted or even charged with any crime, and to jail its members and "informal supporters" for 25 years; create an extremely broad new "terrorism" offense which would snare many union actions, civil disobedience, and even normal political activity in its net; turn Australia's FBI, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) into a Gestapo, with the right to pick up and detain anyone indefinitely on the slightest pretext, with no lawyer, no right to remain silent, and a five-year jail sentence for non-cooperation; allow wholesale tapping of phones, fax, and e-mail with no warrants; and reverse the onus of proof, such that someone has to prove that he or she is *not* a terrorist, or has not aided a terrorist. All of this was rammed through the House of Representatives in 24 hours, despite testimony by many of the country's finest legal minds, that the existing Criminal Code (with perhaps slight modifications) was ample to capture terrorists.