

Editorial

A Lame Duck

Not yet three months into his second Administration, George W. Bush is beginning to qualify as a lame duck. Just as Lyndon LaRouche had said was necessary.

The surest sign of this fact is the status of the President's self-proclaimed "issue" for his second term, Social Security privatization. Bush has done nothing but grandstand for his Social Security scheme, with radio ads, town meetings, and public statements, since the first of the year. The result? It's falling flat on its face, and he's getting more insane by the moment.

Bush's fundamental problem on Social Security, is the one no one dares to talk about: the aggressive campaign by Democrat Lyndon LaRouche and his youth movement to unabashedly identify the Social Security heist as the Shultz-promoted fascist scheme it is. In the context of that campaign, the Democratic Party has shown itself much tougher than expected in resisting the Republicans' cajoling and thuggery on this issue, and the Democrats have launched a virtually unprecedented mobilization of their constituency to boot. And in this environment, many leading Republicans have refused to kowtow to Karl Rove and Dick Cheney's pressures as well.

It started with Republican Rep. Bill Thomas, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, who said right off the bat in January that the privatization scheme was a "dead horse." He had his "mind changed" shortly afterward. Then there was Majority leader Sen. Bill Frist a couple months ago, saying that he didn't think a Social Security "reform" bill could make it through Congress this year; he was forced to eat his words the next day. Then came Sen. Charles Grassley, the head of the Senate Finance Committee, who, on the day before Bush arrived in Iowa March 30, put it this way: "I said I intend to bring this [Social Security reform] up, even if the President is not successful. Now, have I said I'd fall on my sword? I haven't said that yet." Then on April 1, Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, who controls the pace of legislation through the House of Representatives, cast doubt on Bush's call for completion of a Social Security bill this year, in an interview in the April 2 edition

of the *National Journal*.

Bush's plan is in deep, deep trouble. His threats, and those of Vice President Cheney, don't seem to be getting him anywhere. Some of his closest allies, like the Governor of North Dakota, leave town when he comes to their state to campaign for Social Security "reform." He's losing his clout.

Nor is this just the case domestically. Bush's troubles on Social Security have been covered in the international press, and it seems that some of the aura of invincibility for the "one world superpower" is beginning to wear off. Just look at the recent events in Kyrgyzstan, and the defiance of the U.S. demands for action against Venezuela in Ibero-America. Some international leaders seem to have gotten the idea that they don't have to bow down and obey.

Making Bush a lame duck is not enough, of course. The world cannot survive with the lunatic crew still in control at the White House. What is required is a bipartisan coalition that will force a sane policy through in Washington, particularly on economic policy.

It is from this standpoint that LaRouche has initiated a process of discussion of a new "reconstruction agenda," within the circles of trade unionists, Democratic Party officials, scientific professionals, and policymakers of both parties. LaRouche's message has been straightforward: This is no time to sit around and wait for the Bush Administration to finish off the remaining core of U.S. industrial capability, and discredit itself by so doing. Responsible political people have to act *now* to discuss and debate proposals for economic revival, which will put the skilled manpower and industrial apparatus now being thrown on the scrap-heap, to work immediately. Set a process of recovery into motion *now*, so that as the dramatic financial crises hit, a positive alternative has already been put into place.

LaRouche will be addressing just how to create this alternative at his next webcast, scheduled for April 7 at 1 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. *EIR*'s website, www.larouchepub.com, will carry it live, and you won't want to miss it.