

mechanical about this. This party is not about business. It's about bringing in ideas from young people, bringing in ideas to shape the future once again. Bringing in those ideas that are going to *challenge*, challenge the traditions which are necessary to have a real impact in the population, fighting for the forgotten men and women of this nation.

The first order of business for the Democratic Party, has to be to *get Cheney out now!* [applause] And Maxine Waters, Representative from California, has just recognized this, and I am going with her on that one.

I stood strong in the fight to bring down Tom DeLay, going door to door, organizing day by day. I want to let you know, I am an organizer! After graduating college, I found that our generation had no future. We're not trained in skilled labor, our productive capabilities are falling. We're losing our labor forces right now. We have to bring labor into discussions of the Democratic Party. We have to bring the forgotten men and women! Why is it that we have almost 36 counties not here, represented? We should have made sure that they were here! Why is it that we don't have more young people here? I'm going to bring them in! [applause] Why are we not addressing the needs of our farmers? We have to bring them in, now!

And I ask you today, that you join me. I am ready to join with you, as your leader and as a candidate for the Texas Democratic Party Chair. I'm ready to work with you, to reorganize and to change this party, back to the traditions which it once represented. I know I'm young; I don't know everything. But you and I, together, will take this party back. We'll take it back to the people, and we'll make sure that *we win the fight* to take Texas back Out of the Bushes and Into the Future! And we are going to do it *without DeLay!* [cheers]

Democrats: I'm counting on you to make a change. Join me, now! Thank you. [cheers, applause]

Interview: Lakesha Rogers

Texas Dems Make Way for LaRouche

Harley Schlanger interviewed LaRouche Youth Movement leader Lakesha Rogers on June 12, immediately after the conclusion of the Texas Democratic convention. Here are excerpts.

EIR: Kesha, you entered the race for Texas Democratic Party chair rather late. Why did you decide to run?

Rogers: After the announcement by Tom DeLay that he was

resigning, many Democrats acted as though we could get by with nothing more than the "we're not them" attitude, that the Republicans are so bad, people will automatically vote for Democrats. To address this in Texas, as well as the same problem nationally, you and Lyn [LaRouche] suggested that I run for the office. . . . The idea was that my campaign can shape the potential for a landslide victory in 2006, to win back the House and the Senate. We launched the campaign with the slogan "Out of the Bushes and Into the Future," which created an immediate impact statewide, and nationally.

EIR: What's been your experience in the Party?

Rogers: I have been active for many years. . . . I campaigned for former Mayor Lee Brown (in Houston) and worked in Congressional campaigns, such as for Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Tex.) and others. After joining the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) three years ago, I became a precinct chair. With the LYM, I played a key role in leading the fight against the poster boy of free trade and corruption, Tom DeLay. We showed Democrats how to take on the Shultz/Rohatyn crowd which was behind Social Security privatization. And we are showing Democrats that we can, and must, discuss these issues, at the highest level, with constituents in the lower 80% of family income brackets, that that is how we can give them a sense of mission in working with the Democratic Party.

EIR: What kind of campaigning did you do?

Rogers: We took the approach of building a groundswell in the population. The idea was to rejuvenate those layers which had been displaced by the Democratic Party, bring them back into the fight. I travelled with other members of the LYM throughout the state, organizing at campuses, union halls, Democratic Party meetings, at tax offices, and post offices. . . .

We focussed on LaRouche's proposal for retooling the auto industry, to enable long-term infrastructure development. We had to educate people on the Hamiltonian model of public credit, versus the free trade model of Shultz and Rohatyn.

A crucial part of this was discussing the urgent need to kick out the dirty Wall Street faction, which has attempted to hijack the party, trying to eliminate the legacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt, to get the party to go along with free trade and globalization. We led a strong fight to expose the role of Felix Rohatyn in attacking this FDR legacy, which is still important in Texas. This really shook things up, especially in discussions with Congressmen and elected officials.

EIR: What kind of response did you get from Texas Democrats?

Rogers: It has been one of an overwhelming eagerness for honest leadership and open discussion, and a strong rejection of the status quo. . . .

For example, a man on the State Democratic Executive Committee stood up in the meeting when the interim chair

was selected, and demanded that LaRouche literature not be allowed in the convention. This same man was intersected repeatedly by the LYM at the convention. After the speech that I gave at the convention, he told me he was very inspired. There was a new, massive openness from elected officials, and from party “regulars.”

EIR: One party leader told me that there is a lot of anger among Democrats, as many of the traditional constituents are hurting and they feel abandoned by the party. Was this evident to you?

Rogers: This was absolutely the response of many Democrats. People saw no solutions being provided. One lady summed it up just right when she said that everyone knows she’s a Democrat, and she tells everyone to vote that way, but they ask her, “Is it really going to hurt less to get screwed by a Democrat?” She continued, “What do I tell those people? How are we going to hold our elected officials accountable?”

There’s a paradox in Democrats’ minds over Clinton, that supposedly the economy was great, but he also went along with NAFTA, and now jobs are being outsourced left and right. The problem resides in the constituents’ idea of being able to change things themselves. They are being told to vote for the Democrats, and everything will be all right.

We’re telling people that we have to change things *right now!* We, the LaRouche organization, have a solid solution on the table, and we are organizing elected officials to take it up now, and pass the emergency legislation. Don’t wait until after the November elections; confront these guys now. Tell them they have to act now if they want to deserve your vote in November. . . .

EIR: By the time of the convention, Lyndon LaRouche had brought Rohatyn’s role into the open. While Rohatyn may not be well known in Texas, the Democratic Leadership Council is. What response did you get when you said you intend to clean Rohatyn and the DLC right-wingers out of the party?

Rogers: The key to exposing the impotence of the leadership of the Democratic Party was making Rohatyn the issue, educating Democrats on the threat his financial circle represents to the party, and the nation. Many responded by saying, “So that’s the bastard wrecking the party?” We put many people on edge over Rohatyn. But we have the goods on this guy, his role in pushing privatization and opposing the FDR legacy in the party.

When we discovered his role in the Delphi bankruptcy, Lyn immediately authorized the publication of a White Paper,



EIRNS/Michael Steger

Rogers: We are bringing in the ideas necessary “to have a real impact in the population, fighting for the forgotten men and women of this nation.”

“Rohatyn: The French-Nazi Connection,” which we saturated the convention with. While some just don’t want to deal with this, many people indicated they are ready to fight. . . . They are ready for a transformation of the party. The key to this transformation is the ability of youth to go in with real solutions, to inspire change and open the party up to LaRouche’s ideas. . . .

EIR: At the close of the convention, the new chairman, Boyd Richie, specified that he wants to work with you to win in November 2006.

Rogers: Mr. Richie’s comments signified a real change. He recognized that to win, he would have to open the party, as I emphasized throughout the campaign. He was really challenged by the fact that he did not win in the first round, and he saw the insurgency in the party. I am encouraged by his statement, because it reflects an understanding that change is necessary.

The LYM, and I, plan to escalate the drive for organizing throughout the population, reaching out to the lower 80% of family income brackets, and especially to youth, labor, farmers and ranchers, and racial and ethnic minorities. This has been expressed clearly to Mr. Richie, that we are prepared to join with him to do that.

We have also spoken to many Democratic candidates about the impact the LYM can have in shaping their campaigns, to organize a landslide in November, to demonstrate that the Democrats will no longer run as “Bush-lite,” but will provide real solutions to the crises they face. I think many of the candidates . . . are open to collaboration on this kind of principled basis.