

LaRouche Youth Mobilize in New England For Housing ‘Firewall,’ General Welfare

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As one drives through Worcester, Mass., one sees the remnants of a once-proud city, gone to ruin as a result of decades of post-industrial economic policies. This was once a city with an active machine-tool sector and a population with a purpose, who have been left unproductive and forgotten.

In Worcester, the magnitude of the crisis is not just expressed in the 3,097 currently pending foreclosures, or in the one out of every 101 households in foreclosure, or by the increase in foreclosures by 374% since beginning of 2006, but in the overall increase in cost-of-living. This was expressed by one 22-year-old man who earns \$40,000 a year, and still can barely live day to day.

If you think this is an isolated event, you be trippin’! Let’s look at the other major New England cities threatened by high foreclosure rates. New England has five among the top 50 U.S. metropolitan areas ranked by the number of foreclosure filings per number of households: New Haven/Milford, Conn. (#28); Worcester, Mass. (#35); Hartford, Conn. (#44); Springfield, Mass. (#47); Bridgeport/Stamford/Norwalk, Conn. (#48). (This according to Realtytrac.com as of Aug. 14.)

When confronted about the escalating crisis, a Massachusetts Congressman quickly dismissed the idea that this is anything remotely like the 1930s Depression. However, when we have discussed the same topic with city councilmen, they immediately report numerous tragic stories of their constituents being foreclosed on, and there is a sense of desperation, and frustration at the lack of leadership by the Congress and state legislature. Many city councilmen have even reported that the state officials are ignoring their phone calls.

In a desperate call for help, two working-class middle-aged women called into the LaRouche PAC Boston office, as a last resort for help in saving their homes. Each woman’s mortgage had increased by almost 40%. Both with four children, they were going to be out in the street by November. A Worcester woman reported that with the collapse in real estate, the apartment building next door to her now houses drug addicts and dealers, so she is forced to clean up the drug paraphernalia left on the sidewalk overnight, so her children will not encounter it when they are playing.

Is this the condition that the population of a great nation should be reduced to? More importantly, why would the leadership of that great nation, tolerate such conditions?

LaRouche: Mobilize the Masses!

Economist and statesman Lyndon LaRouche addressed that question while speaking to a group of young people on

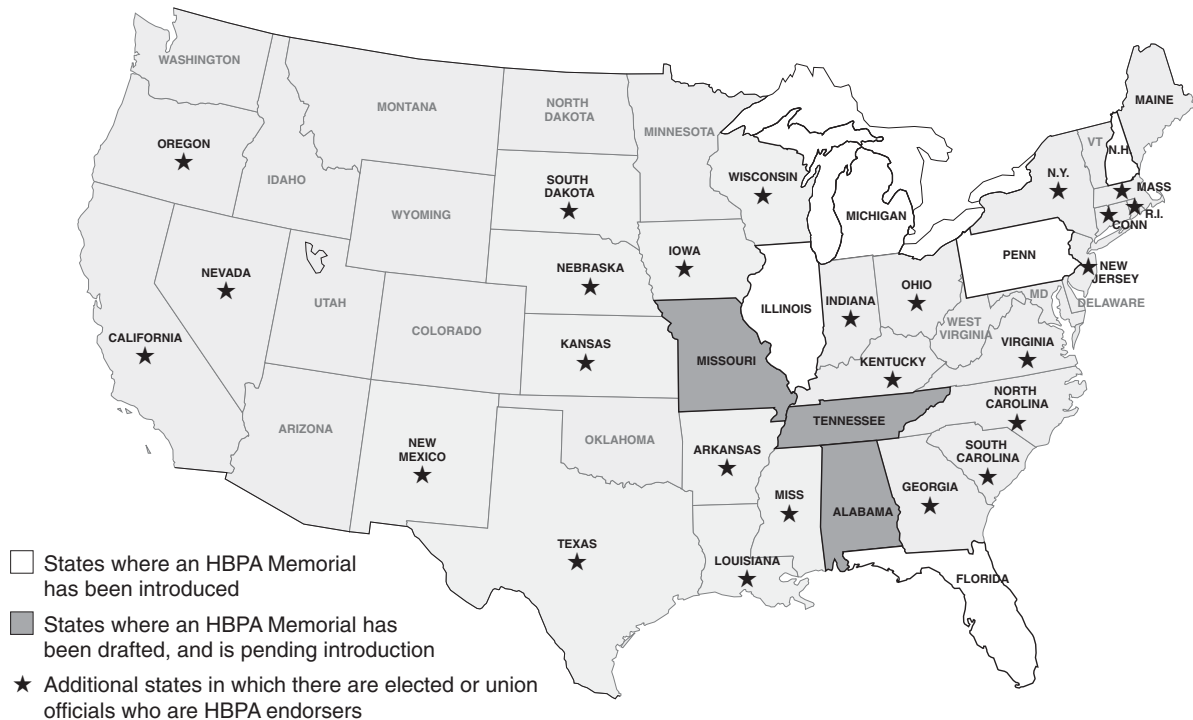
Oct. 21. He said, “Our problem is that the Congress, including our Democrats, has earned a popularity of less than 11%—below the popularity of this idiot, the President and this fascist, the Vice President! And you want to sit back and accept leadership from politicians who are controlled by George Shultz, George Soros, and Felix Rohatyn? You are accepting that? You should be ashamed of yourselves!”

LaRouche does not intend for this to be an excuse for you to complain cynically about the Congress. In the same address, LaRouche also discussed the solution:

“Some people say, our members of the State Assembly, our members of the Congress, don’t agree. How’re we going to do it? We can always lynch them—I don’t mean physically lynch them, but we can politically lynch them! We can terrify them, politically, into going along with it! And that’s precisely what we have to do. How do you do that? Very simply. Mobilize the masses. Mobilize the mass population, and say, ‘Your ass is on the line. Your survival is on the line. If you don’t get this act through, you personally are finished.’ And that will get a response.”

The people who put the current Congress into office were those very city and state officials who are now desperately seeking answers for their constituents: those officials whom the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) has been mobilizing since 2004, to revive the soul of the Democratic Party. This fight was waged through the campaign to save the auto sector, and to win a Democratic majority in Congress in 2006. Now these state and local officials are being challenged to lead the same fight Franklin Roosevelt made for the Republic, and to protect the General Welfare by keeping millions of families in their homes. For many of them, this is a no-brainer.

Since LaRouche issued the call for a Homeowners and Bank Protection Act of 2007 (HBPA), on Aug. 22, state and local leaders around the country have been joining the fight to freeze home foreclosures, and to place Federal and state chartered banks under bankruptcy protection—the core provisions of the HBPA. The accompanying map shows the progress to date of efforts to get state legislatures and other governing bodies to pass memorial resolutions, demanding action from Congress to pass this proposed Federal legislation. The LaRouche PAC and others are circulating a resolution on LaRouche’s HBPA, for endorsement by elected officials, labor leaders, and constituency group leaders (the text is at larouchepac.com).



Mobilizing the Northeast’s Real Leaders

The Boston LYM has been organizing among state and local constituency leaders for months, including securing the passage of a resolution on the housing crisis by the Massachusetts Democratic Convention on May 18-19. The resolution called on the state’s Congressional delegation “to act as Franklin D. Roosevelt did in dealing with the housing crisis in the 1930s. We call on our Congressional Delegation to introduce emergency measures which would immediately freeze the current debt and mortgage obligations, as well as the chain of financial instruments built upon them, until such obligations can be sorted out and reorganized in the context of a larger bankruptcy reorganization of the U.S. banking system, while placing a moratorium on foreclosures to keep the homeowners in their houses and prevent mass homelessness of thousands of American families in the near term.”

As the reality of the collapse of the real estate bubble became more and more obvious to everyone, the Massachusetts Attorney General held four hearings Sept. 17-20, in Worcester, Brockton, Springfield, and Boston, on the subject of certain limited, state-level initiatives to combat the foreclosure crisis. The LYM testified on the HBPA at the hearings, emphasizing the fact that only a national solution—an FDR solution—will succeed, since the problem is national, and indeed international, in scope. The LYM ended its testimony in Brockton, by reading FDR’s remarks to Congress in 1933, proposing emergency action to stop foreclosures.

LYM organizers also travelled to state houses all over New England in September, building support for the HBPA, and aggressively countering the pragmatism and cynicism of

those who insisted that “Congress will never do it,” or “the market will determine what happens.” With this work by the LYM, and with the damage the foreclosure crisis has done to New Englanders, wrote Lewis Whilden in *EIR* on Oct. 5, “a breakthrough on the northeastern flank is imminent.”

In October, the scope of the LYM’s work across New England yielded an unprecedented response. For example, in the Massachusetts city of Lawrence, a city councilwoman responded seriously to multiple calls from one LYM organizer, and agreed to meet immediately. The minute they sat down for discussion, this councilwoman endorsed the petition, and laid out her own plan to organize her constituents and fellow councilmen around the HBPA, and even offered to hold a town hall meeting on the subject.

In Providence, R.I., another city councilman endorsed the petition for the HBPA and offered to mass organize all his political circles, including the Congressman of his district. The distinctive approach of this councilman emerged in a discussion about his own campaign to defeat an 11-year incumbent city councilwoman in the 2006 elections. How did he do it? He personally organized young people and minorities in the poor areas, who thought they did not have a voice in politics.

We have discovered, through the intensity of our organizing, that among these elected officials, there is an impulse to join our fight to freeze foreclosures and keep people in their homes, because it is part of these councilmen’s identity as leaders and American patriots. The fight to keep people in their homes will not be won by social workers and counselors, but by American patriots who understand that government’s role is to protect the people first.