
V. Lyndon LaRouche Speaks to You

LYNDON H. LAROUCHE, JR, IN 2001

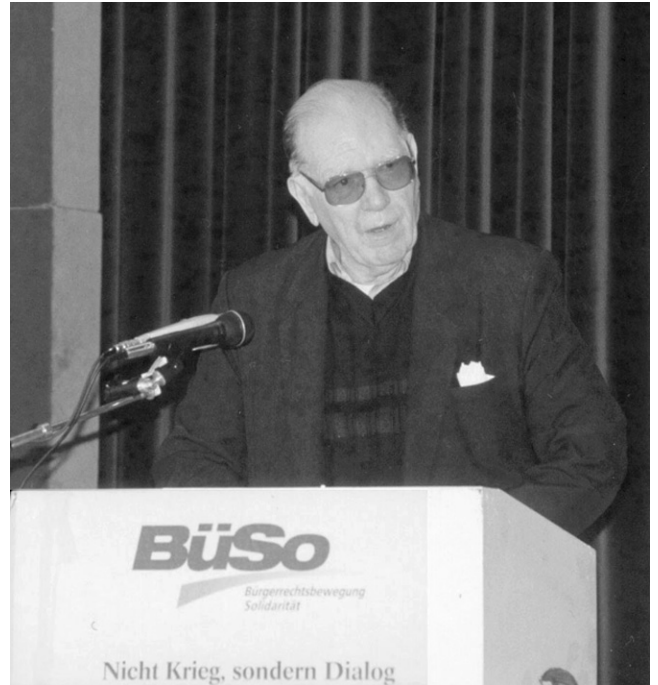
Are You Willing To Make the Change?

Mr. LaRouche addressed the annual conference of the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity party (BüSo) in Mainz, Germany, on Nov. 17, 2001.

We are in a period of history which is unlike anything that, probably, any of you have experienced in your lifetime. And this period of history, which most of you do not know even from studies, this type: It's a period where everything that seemed to be conventional and expected, suddenly vanished. And things came forward, and became dominant, as if from nowhere, at least in the eyes of most people. These are characteristic of the truly great revolutionary periods of history, the great upheavals which mark the separation between entire phases of history, sometimes the existence of the nations. We're in such a period.

The reason, why all of these political parties, of the Americas and Western and Central Europe, will soon disappear from the scene, is because they have come from a period which is past, and have entered a shift, into a period in which they are irrelevant.

Now, this is not really something to be described. There's a principle involved. It's a principle which I've sometimes referred to, in writing on the subject of the "goldfish bowl." The way society is organized, is not really rational. It is not, so far. Societies are organized, like the Roman Empire, on a system which has many of the elements of *vox populi*. It's called "popular opinion." Popular opinion varies in its composition, from nation to nation, and time to time. It is generally thought of in terms of the acceptance of certain institutions: institutions of government; institutions of law; institutions of financial and accounting practice; institutions of taste, dress, custom, and expression of opinion. When people wish to influence other people, they will generally appeal to some of these generally accepted institutions, or opinions, as the authority for their behavior. In turn, they believe themselves to be compelled



Lyndon LaRouche addresses the annual conference of the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity party (BüSo). "It's a period of great danger; globally. It's also a period of great opportunity. The question whether the danger will be mastered, will depend upon how many natural, organic leaders, come forth from the population, to exert leadership; leadership of the quality, which Schiller identifies as the Sublime."

to behave as these habits instruct them to behave. And when the time comes that these assumptions of institutions, habits, laws, and so forth, no longer work, then you have the spectacle, which is like the legendary goldfish, which, being released from a bowl into a large pond, swims in small circles, because that is its habit: That is public opinion; that is popular opinion; that is what the Romans called *vox populi*.

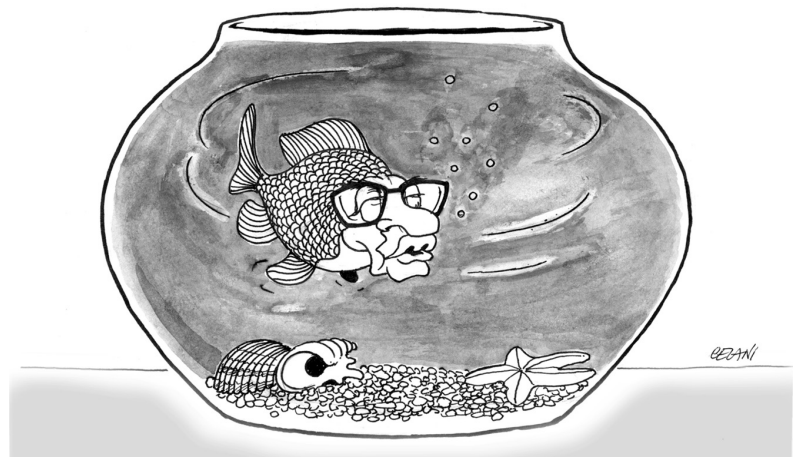
What is changed, then, [are] certain assumptions which are—relative to a far more Classical education in geometry, in Euclidean geometry—are changes in

axioms or definitions, axioms and postulates, of the way a people and its society think. Now, what if you come to a world, as people did in, for example, 16th-Century Europe? The world of Kepler. And Kepler's accomplishment, in becoming the first founder of a comprehensive mathematical physics, especially with his discoveries in astronomy and astrophysics: What Kepler showed, is that all of his predecessors, including Claudius Ptolemy, Copernicus, and Brahe, were absurd in their fundamental assumptions about the way the universe worked. Because they assumed that the universe would work, according to the kind of lawfulness, which had been prescribed by Aristotle, in his writings. And science showed, as in the case of Kepler—but also in earlier writings of the same type, back to Plato—that this assumption, that a fixed set of generally believed assumptions, was true, was overturned. And this became known as modern science.

Modern science is based, very simply, on the discovery of the absurdity of previously established scientific opinion. And experimental evidence is presented, which presents these scientists with a—let's call it an ontological paradox: a contradiction in physical terms, in which the same standard of mathematical physics, for example, says that something works, but the same, in another experimental case—it doesn't work. And therefore, you have a contradiction between the two cases.

Typical is the case of Fermat, in showing that they had two kinds of phenomena in light, in the bending of light: One, reflection, which appears to follow a pathway of shortest distance. And then, you have another thing: refraction, in which it doesn't. Now, therefore, your concept of time itself, and of the relationship of matter, space, and time, must be radically changed, to take into account the fact of refraction. And much of the work of the 17th Century, of the followers of Fermat, such as Huyghens and Leibniz and Jean Bernoulli, and so forth, was based on the implications of this discovery, that space, time, and matter, as conventionally defined, in that time, were absurd, and the case of refraction proved it. The best accomplishments in modern physics come from that kind of thinking.

So, the way mankind advances—and this is particularly true of modern European civilization: With modern European civilization, and its impact, the rate of increase of the ability of human beings to exist, to



“Thus the legendary goldfish, which continues to swim in small circles. . . .”

increase their life expectancy, to increase the quality of life, had been increased as never before in human existence. This gift of European civilization was created by two things: by the creation of the modern sovereign form of nation-state, the thing that people are now trying to destroy; and by the introduction of science, as a mode of general practice, of general change of practice. This resulted in the greatest increase in the human population ever seen, the greatest rate of increase; the greatest improvement of the potential conditions of life, of life expectancy, and quality of life, intellectually, in all of human existence, for the population as a whole. But it's always based on this principle.

Realize that whatever you believe contains an absurdity. Whatever institutions exist, contain an absurdity. And sooner or later you'll discover what that absurdity is. And the question is posed to you: Are you willing to make the change? Are you will to accept the evidence, the scientific evidence that what you believe is, in part, absurd? That you must concoct an hypothesis, the kind of thing that Kant forbids you to do! But you must test that hypothesis experimentally to determine whether or not it is true. And if it is tested successfully, then you must apply that proven hypothesis to effect a *change* in the behavior in society as well as yourself.

Revive Classical Education

The problem is, that when we come to these changes in political and social institutions, we do not have, any more, a society based on a Classical education, a Classical humanist form of education. The lack of a Classical humanist form of education means that people don't *know* anything; they simply *learn* a great deal. We teach

our children the way we teach dogs to do tricks. We do not educate our children to *know*, by *reliving* the great discoveries of the great minds of the past, which you do in a Classical humanist education. We are swayed by popular taste, not by knowledge. We act like trained animals in a circus, or a carnival. We've come to the point that being a trained animal is sometimes fun in a circus, because the animal is fed daily, the tents are put up properly, the care is what they expect. But one day, the circus goes bankrupt, and then, the animals have a terrible time. The same thing happens to society. The "animals" have a terrible time.

But, because we do not have a society that is educated in science, in the scientific way of thinking, as Kepler, Leibniz, and so forth; because we have a society in which Classical humanist education has been banned, for example, in Germany, for the past 30 years. Therefore, you have, among Germans, for example: You meet a German who was educated in the Classical humanist education, the Humboldt system, *prior* to the Brandt reforms, and one who was educated *after* the Brandt reforms: it's like meeting *two different species*. One inferior, morally, to the other. The ability to think is lacking, has been largely destroyed. We have in the labor force in the United States, we have not only vast unemployment, in fact, but we have people who are unqualified for work. We have people who are not qualified for the kinds of jobs which have disappeared, which are the jobs they used to be trained for, but which no longer exist, at least not in great numbers.

So, we've come to a point, in which we have to make a change. The existing parties are based, and base their success, on the record of success in influencing institutions, under conditions which *no longer exist*. And by their clinging to the anchor of a sinking ship for security, *they drown in their own folly*.

So, our problem is to understand this process, and understand that, in dealing with people throughout the world, we have to deal with this problem. We're dealing with people who *don't know how to think*. They have been taught *to learn, not to know*. Therefore, politics, real politics today, takes the form of *applied Classical humanist education*, of thinking, preparing, when you're dealing with people, to present what they need to know, in the form of the experiencing of an ontological paradox, a relevant ontological paradox, and working through the process of discovery, to see what the principle is, which that paradox requires us to discover. And when they have shared

the discovery of that principle, *then they know it*.

So, being in real politics today, is actually a form of *applied Classical humanist education*: in science, in emphasis on Classical poetry, Classical drama. Because the only way you can transform society from one that doesn't work, like the present European nations, or the present United States, is by educating the population to *know*. How can a population have the confidence to make revolutionary changes, suddenly, and in large numbers, if they don't *know* what they're doing? They can continue to stumble into the ditch by following the habits they've acquired, habits expressed by the existing political parties, which might be called the rubbish dump of dead ideas. You have a dead idea, you jump into one of these rubbish dumps, and you are disposed of in due course. But, if you want to be a part, a relevant part of the conditions of life which are emerging, then, you have to know what you're doing. To influence large numbers of people, to make a fundamental change in the way *they* behave, they have to know what they're doing. And therefore, the issue is that.

How an Economy Functions

Let me just give one example of this from my own personal standpoint: Some years ago, now, over 50 years ago, I made a certain series of scientific discoveries, in the field of physical economy. These were made in the course of refuting the absurdity of the arguments for information theory by Norbert Wiener, and the arguments for systems analysis and artificial intelligence by John von Neumann, both of whom were acolytes, in their childhood or youth, of Bertrand Russell, and who represented a principle of pure evil. But, later, in the course of working through these discoveries I made, I found, I turned again to Bernard Riemann, and found out what kind of a conception you had to have—how do you organize such a set of ideas into a functioning economy? And therefore, the ideas of Riemann became an integral part of my own discoveries.

In the course of this, I came to understand how modern economies function. They function in terms of long waves, long cycles, not the way Kondratieff described it for the Russians, but another kind of long cycle. The cycles are, as Kondratieff suggested, largely technologically based. That is, when a society has adopted a certain kind of general technology, that technology, as the population becomes more proficient in it, as investment occurs, that wave of technology will tend to result in an increase in the productive powers of labor,

and other benefits. After a while, not making additional new discoveries will result in the same society, which succeeded in that wave of technology, will then go into an attritional period of decline.

So we have these characteristic cycles in society, which are largely cycles of ideas; in physical science, they're cycles of physical ideas, or how to apply them. There are also cycles in the way people cooperate. If you educate people in the Classical humanist mode, in an educational system, then you will have a labor force which is able to think, which knows. Such a labor force can more rapidly assimilate new technologies; whereas a labor force which is trained like a donkey to pull the same load, given a different job to do, can't do it. So, you have cycles of culture, as well as physical science, as such.

Thus, in analyzing economies, I always look at this question of axiomatics. What are the principles which cause an economy to behave the way it does? We say an economy is behaving the way it does because the people in it, the form of government institutions, the form of laws, the form of accounting procedures, and other customs, caused that society to behave in a certain way, as if it were a very specific kind of geometry, in which nothing can happen that doesn't fit the assumptions, the definitions, axioms, and postulates of that geometry.

And therefore, a society has a cyclical characteristic; the most typical cycle is that of one generation, or two generations. If you look at the history of economy, the history of events, you find that the period from the age of birth, to the age of about 25 years, is a characteristic cycle in modern society, because it takes about 25 years to take a child, and bring it to maturity as a professional in modern society. But, you will find that, for example, investments in infrastructure—benefits last for a quarter-century to a half-century. There are investments that take that long. Investment in an agricultural program by a farmer: He has to plant a crop program, he has to develop the crop program, which in vegetable crops is lower; if he has to develop cattle, like high-quality dairy cattle, it may take 25 years to build up a decent herd of high-quality dairy cattle. It's not done so easily, so it's an investment over a period of time, whose fruit is harvested over a period of time, and which is used up over a period of time.

And so, we think about 5-year cycles; not so much, but 10-, 20-year, 50-year cycles are the kind of cycles we experience in physical economy. And political economy tends to follow underneath the needs and impact of physical economy.

The Post-War Policy Crisis

And the problem has been, that, in the postwar period, since 1945, the policies which the United States had intended to follow had Roosevelt lived, were not carried out. Those policies meant the immediate elimination of colonialism, immediate! That the French, the British, the Dutch, the Portuguese colonies would be instantly wiped from the map, as colonies, and independent nations would stand where colonies had stood the moment before. The United States, which had built up a large war machine, an industrial war machine, intended to *convert* that industrial war machine into a production machine for capital goods, for the world at large. In conjunction with developing, as Roosevelt laid out in a famous meeting he had in Casablanca, in 1942, to develop Africa, Asia, areas of colonialism as independent nations, and the United States, while helping Europe to recover from the combined effects of depression and war, would also devote a large part of its production to meeting the needs of what we call today, developing nations. We didn't do that.

We didn't do that.

But we developed a Bretton Woods system of modified form, which, unfortunately, was based on an artificial conflict between the Soviet system and the Anglo-American system. We lived on this mixture of conflict, and a fairly good economic system for Western Europe, Japan, the United States, the Americas, for a period up until the middle of the 1960s.

Then, shortly after the death of Kennedy—the assassination of Kennedy—it was torn down. It was signalled by the ouster of Erhard, here in Germany, which was a turning point downward for the German economy, and the attempt to ruin de Gaulle, in the same period, which was a downturn for the French economy. You will find that most of the benefits, in Germany, that are being taken away today, were those that were built up and set into motion, as part of the postwar economic recovery, from 1945 through the middle of the 1960s. You find the same thing in France; France is living on the fag-end of the exhaustion of what Charles de Gaulle, as President, contributed to the development of France, essentially.

The same thing is true around the world. The United States, Western Europe, Japan, and most of the Americas, increased their productivity, improved their standard of living, improved the conditions of life, consis-

tently, over about that period, from 1945 to 1964-65. That was a cycle.

Then there were the changes that came, coinciding with the war in Vietnam. There were the radical changes, in culture, in politics, and in economics. And from 1965 on, Europe and the United States *willfully* began to *destroy its own economy*, its own productive capability. Just make a list! Of the great German firms, for example. Industrial firms, which existed, employed people and so forth, in 1965. Make a list of those, which have disappeared, or have shrunken into obscurity, since that time.

There's another cycle: Over the past 35 years, the world system, the so-called Anglo-American system, has been dominated by this degeneration. This degeneration was accelerated, by the collapse of Soviet system. With the collapse of the Soviet system, Anglo-American interests believed that they had established a potential world empire, like the Roman Empire; or more like a Venetian model of the Roman Empire, that is, where a rentier-financier group of parasites would run the world, from the standpoint of their financial interests. Nation-states, as such, would be destroyed, as was done with the Maastricht treaties—these kinds of things. This process of *destruction* of civilization, *accelerated* after 1989! It shouldn't have! The right policy could have been followed. It wasn't.

The policy was, to *take the opportunity of the collapse of the Soviet adversarial posture, as an excuse for accelerating the rate of destruction of economy!* Which is what happened.

We've now come to the point, that that system, for its own *axiomatic reasons, is finished! It's over!* We are now standing at the *end-phase* of an entire period of history! The end-phase of, actually, the entire 1945 to 2001 interval of history, which contains within it several cycles. And, by looking at the assumptions of policy-making, the assumption of prevailing ideas, which have guided each of these changes, I was able to make forecasts, which have been, on record now, the most accurate long-range economic forecasts made by anyone in the entire past 55-60 years. Simply because I emphasized what I had discovered: that you do not look, from week to week, from month to month, from statistics, and try to determine where an economy is going. You look at the *underlying, axiomatic assumptions, that control the behavior, of populations and their component parts*. And, thus you can foresee, if you think ahead.

Lessons of Classical Tragedy

The problem we have—another one, the crucial one, which I'm sure Helga [Zepp LaRouche] referred to today, because I know she was going to do something like that—is the question of the Sublime.

The greatest problem we have today, is not just the problems I've discussed, but something related to that: that tragedy, as I'm sure Helga emphasized, does not lie in a mis-leader. Tragedy lies in a bad people, with a bad culture. The great figures of tragedy—the leading figures of tragedy—were bad because they were *consistent*, in their behavior and outlook, with the society which they led. What was bad, was the lack of a leader, who would *lead the society away* from its habits. In each case of a tragedy—and remember, all the great Classical tragedies were based either on actual history, or upon legends, which had a historical significance, such as those of the Homeric epics. So, in all real Classical tragedy, the writer was writing about real events, with the skill of a tragedian, and we should study these things to see how the mind of the great Classical tragedians worked, in understanding the critical points, by which a people of a culture *destroyed themselves*. It was not a mis-leader: It was *they*, themselves, that destroyed themselves. As civilization today is destroying itself; as Western Europe is destroying itself; as the United States is destroying itself. It is not being destroyed from the outside: It's being destroyed *inside, by its own people! By its own culture!* Why? Because it has the willpower, to be able to make decisions which would change it: *But they don't make the changes*. It is that characteristic behavior, of not *making* the changes in a timely fashion, which is the force of tragedy, in real history, as we face it today.

Moral Requirements for Leadership

So, therefore, what's the problem? The problem we face—when you get into a situation like mine, you face it more clearly, than, perhaps, in any other position. In a position, where you have some leadership, some influence, of things in the world, on a fairly significant scale sometimes. And, you know how to solve the problem that threatens civilization. But, you find the institutions and people aren't willing to do it. They are, in a sense, *not willing to survive*, if it means giving up a set of definitions, axioms, and postulates, that govern their behavior. That's how societies are doomed. Not making a breakthrough, to freedom.

And, thus, the problem is: How do we understand

this problem? We say, “Forget this business about, ‘the people are good.’” Well, every human being is born good. That is, they have the creative power, which is goodness. The job is, to develop it; to bring it to fruition; to make it efficient. But most people never mature. Even people,—often scientists: They never mature. They remain bad children. Their sense of identity is located in a very small geographic area, in a relatively small set of social relations. Within a short term of time, when you look at things like the great figures of tragedy—the ones who are not tragic in themselves—the great figures often sacrificed their lives, not as a human sacrifice, but by putting their lives at risk, by doing what they knew to be necessary, to lead their society out of the grip of a tragedy.

The problem is, there are very few people today, who have that moral quality. There have been relatively few people in all history, who’ve had that quality, to rise above the littleness, the mediocrity, the small-mindedness, the petty self-interest of the average person. People say, “If you’re so smart, why aren’t you successful?” “Why would you do that? You would ruin your career!” And, it’s by that kind of small-mindedness, that people in positions of power become *fools*, by trying to be realistic and successful.

Whereas, the hero, the true hero, who typifies what is called the Sublime in Classical art, is the person, who knows the change that has to be made, in the assumptions of the society, to save the society, *and will risk everything, as necessary, to bring about that change.*

The only thing that saves a people, from the kind of self-destruction, which European nations and the United States are bringing upon themselves today, is to find among them *leaders*, who will represent the Sublime, who will do what *is necessary*, for the nation, for the people, and for the future, whatever the risk that entails for themselves.

And, people are not stupid. Even when they’re behaving badly. We find that you can often, if you have those qualities, you can often *touch them* in people. Great leaders inspire a population *to rise above its pettiness*. For example, as de Gaulle did. De Gaulle was



“Great leaders inspire a population to rise above its pettiness.” Germany’s Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (left) and France’s President Charles de Gaulle.

the leader of France. He came to France, and they struggled against a coup d’état, against him, and an earlier coup. He gave a famous speech, which I saw on television, and he said to the French population: “*Aidez moi*” [help me]. And, the French population responded, and France was saved. De Gaulle, the hero, in that moment, who *saved* France, and saved Europe from the hell which would have resulted, had he not succeeded!

It is *always* that. When you look at the history of the rise of Nazism in Germany: *There were people on the scene, who could have prevented that! And, didn’t.* Because, they wanted to work within the system, to control the problem. The same thing is true, in all history. There have always been people, on the scene—to my knowledge—who had the knowledge, and had the impulse in the right direction, to provide leadership. But that leadership was often rejected. Or, they didn’t cultivate their powers of leadership, adequately. Didn’t rely upon it. They flinched. They vacillated. And, therefore, a nation was lost, or went to hell.

We’re in such a period, now. So, I think it’s a period of great danger, globally. It’s also a period of great opportunity. The question whether the danger will be mastered, will depend upon how many natural, organic leaders, come forth from the population, to exert leadership; leadership of the quality, which Schiller identifies as the Sublime.

Thank you.