

II. The Statesman as Poet

POETRY AS A WEAPON

How Robert Burns Beat the British Empire of the Mind

The following is an edited transcription of a January 30, 2021 dialogue [presented](#) by the LaRouche Organization in the New York-New Jersey region and broadcast on the Internet. Dennis Speed hosted the event, which featured Harley Schlanger, Gerald Belsky, and Fred Haight.

Dennis Speed: Today we're going to get at how people have to begin to reconsider how they should think, in this situation, a situation in which what's really going on, is a fundamental question that confronts people.

Right now in the United States, on either the left or the right—neither of which actually exist, by the way—people who believe themselves to be on the left or the right are talking about fears of a civil war. Some are talking about the *need* for a civil war in the United States. Such a thing would essentially end up with billions of people dead.

This isn't a United States affair; it's not an internal matter. It indicates that the inability to understand how to think as Abraham Lincoln thought, may be what people have to consider may be their actual circumstance. Maybe they have to consider the fact of Lincoln's lack of any formal education whatsoever, but rather his dependence on the Bible, the works of Shakespeare, and the poetry of Scottish poet Robert Burns, for his fundamental inspirations throughout his entire life. Maybe that's what qualified him to know how to think as he did, and there-

fore, preserve the Union from the secession sometimes mistakenly called the Civil War....

Harley Schlanger: What has enabled us to continue as a nation during this past 50 years, to blunt the drive for a global fascist dictatorship and constantly come up with a potentially different pathway? That's this concept that Dennis brought up—the shadow Presidency of Lyndon LaRouche. This is something that people should really think about, and I hope that what I present will give you some insights into how LaRouche approached his campaigns for President. He ran eight campaigns for President; each time there was massive slander. We had very little money; we were constantly accused of being left-wing, right-wing, a criminal enterprise—all kinds of slanders. By the way, very similar to what we've heard the last four years aimed at Donald Trump; not surprisingly, because the “Get Trump” team, the criminal cabal of the intelligence community from Bush and Obama, were British intel-



Robert Burns

Alexander Nasmyth

ligence. That was the same team that targeted Lyndon LaRouche.

I want to go through a couple of aspects of that, and then give an overview of what's happening today, to show that by applying Lyndon LaRouche's method, we not only have a pathway to victory, but we have a very good chance that that pathway can succeed.

Go back to this idea of LaRouche as a shadow Pres-

ident. What did he do during those years? First, there was his economic forecasting. Second, his historical method, which enabled him to constantly expose who was running the operations threatening our nation. During his World War II service when he was in India, he saw how the British Empire functioned. It was the British Empire—not the English people, but the British Empire—which was the enemy of the United States. And not just in the 18th Century or 19th Century, but up to the present day. He exposed who they were, what their policies were, why they were doing it, who was responsible in the United States for working with them....

There was one other crucial aspect of LaRouche’s campaigns, about which we’re going to hear more tonight: his commitment to a Classical culture. Lyndon LaRouche pointed out that it was a global movement against oligarchism, against the idea of an empire, that shaped the American Revolution—a movement against the idea that some people are born better, and therefore, have a right to rule, that landed nobility were chosen by God. The idea of the divine right of kings. That was broken by the American Revolution.

Allies of the American Revolution included many leading thinkers in Europe, who were supporters of the American Revolution, including Wolfgang Mozart; including Friedrich Schiller; including Ludwig van Beethoven. But go back before that. Who were the predecessors for this? Gottfried Leibniz, the German scientist-philosopher; Johannes Kepler, the great astronomer and developer of modern physics. People of that sort. Leonardo da Vinci. These are people who contributed to the idea of republicanism, which shaped the thinking of the Founding Fathers of the United States; especially Benjamin Franklin and his protégé, Alexander Hamilton....

Speed: We’re now going to play for you an excerpt from a discussion of Lyndon LaRouche with a group of professional musicians back in August of 1994....

Lyndon LaRouche (via recorded audio): Now when it comes to Classical music, and the folk song question,



William Shakespeare

what do you do with a folk song? With a folk song, you realize the intent as you do with a poem. As Beethoven, or Schubert, or Mozart set poetry. Take the folk song as a piece of poetry. You vocalize it, which is what it is. It’s vocalized poetry! Now you say, well let’s introduce a principle of thorough-composition, to bring this together so that it hangs together in a more effective way, so the unity of the musical idea is more thoroughly expressed.

Which is exactly what was done by Haydn, with his Scottish and other songs, and with Beethoven, some Mozart settings, with Schubert, and especially Brahms, and Dvořák, the setting of folk music....

What’s our purpose? The purpose of the folk song is to get inside the skin of the people, to make them aware or more conscious or accountable about the beauty of this principle which separates man from the beasts. So, they need poetry, they need music, they need drama—all the things of beauty, including drawing in a beautiful way, in order to develop themselves as whole human beings....

Speed: This past week, members of our organization, our political organizers, pulled together a [celebration](#) of the life of the poet Robert Burns, born January 25, 1759. We have with us a couple of the people who put it together and who made presentations.

Gerald Belsky: Lyndon LaRouche’s idea that creativity is essential to all forms of activity, is absolutely the case in the political fight that we are waging today. I just want to demonstrate briefly in my remarks, this concept of art and politics, which was understood by Abraham Lincoln, who was inspired both by William Shakespeare, and especially Robert Burns.

Just to set the stage for this, let me reference two other thinkers that we’ve often mentioned—Friedrich Schiller, of course, and Percy Shelley, both of whom were fighting the empire and the people behind empire. Schiller made the point concerning the French Revolution, that it was not enough to overcome tyranny, because if a population was not developed through beauty

and art, you could have a revolution against tyranny, as in France, descend into a new form of tyranny through terror and chaos. So, for those who want to set up guillotines to execute all the evil people, Schiller made it very clear, you will destroy yourselves. Therefore, in order to achieve true freedom, he said it is through Beauty that one must achieve Freedom; which required aesthetic education.

In the case of the great poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, he made the point in his “A Defence of Poetry” that the distinction between poets and prose writers is a vulgar error; the distinction between philosophers and poets has been anticipated; and he said Plato was essentially a poet. But the point he makes at the end of this essay is directly relevant to what we want to talk about today. Remember, this is about the 1820s, it’s after the American Revolution. It’s when the British are trying to overthrow the legacy of the American Revolution, and destroy it. He writes:

The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry. At such periods there is an accumulation of the power of communicating and receiving intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature.... Poets are ... the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

Saying ‘No’ to Malthus

Now, to Robert Burns, Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, the timeframe in which they all lived: Burns lived from 1759 to about 1796. He was a contemporary of Schiller, 1759-1805. Lincoln, of course, 1809 to 1865; and then Frederick Douglass, 1818 to 1895;

they really were all dealing with the attempt by the British to destroy the American System.

Here is a short quote from Thomas Malthus (1766-1834), who was writing right in the middle of that, about 1804, right after Burns died, and before Lincoln was born, and he made it very clear what the policy of the British was then, and what the policy of the British Empire is today. He is speaking as a teacher at the East India College of the East India Company, which was carrying out this policy. This was his policy. The following two quotations are from his *An Essay on the Principle of Population*:



Percy Bysshe Shelley

[W]e are bound in justice and honor formally to disclaim the *right* of the poor to support.

To this end, I should propose a regulation to be made, declaring, that no child born from any marriage, taking place after the expiration of a year from the date of the law, and no illegitimate child born two years from the same date, should ever be entitled to parish assistance....

The infant is, comparatively speaking, of little value to the society, as others will immediately supply its place....

—Book IV, Chapter VIII

All the children born, beyond what would be required to keep up the population to this level, must necessarily perish, unless room be made for them by the deaths of grown persons.... [T]herefore, we should facilitate, instead of foolishly and vainly endeavoring to impede, the operations of nature in producing this mortality; and if we dread the too frequent visitation of the horrid form of famine, we should sedulously encourage the other forms of destruction, which we compel nature to use....

—Book IV, Chapter V

It was this policy that Robert Burns, who was born

to a poor farmer in Scotland, was facing, as he himself was trying to live a life as a farmer, at backbreaking work; yet he was inspired by the American Revolution at the time. He also educated himself in Shakespeare and other writers. And he composed the poetry to actually free his people from the British form of economic slavery, but also mental slavery where they had to accept the fact that they were subjects to be destroyed.

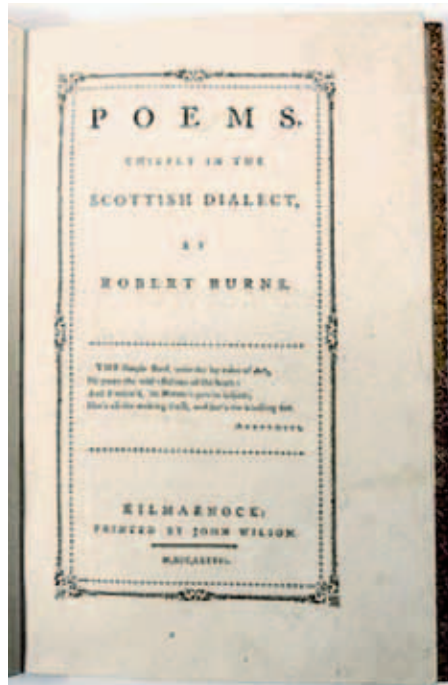
He wrote a poem that's very famous; I just want to quote a little bit of it, which is a direct attack on this mentality of letting the poor die. He said, "A man's a man for a that." He begins:

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hings his head, an' a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure, an' a' that;
The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man's the gowd for a' that, ...

And he ends, in a very simple way, as Friedrich Schiller in his *Ode to Joy*:

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

He also wrote a poem which, rather than calling for the death of the poor, is actually praising the virtuous life of the hard worker. And this is a poem which Abraham Lincoln knew very well, and liked to recite, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," where he discusses the scenes of people working in Scotland. And actually, they're being driven off the land and can't work, they can't succeed. But he's describing their honest,



hard work, and he says,

From Scenes like these, old SCOTIA'S grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home,
rever'd abroad:
Princes and lords are but the
breath of kings,
'An honest man's the noble
work of GOD.

I should just mention one final thing about Burns, which is that he was making all sorts of humorous, satirical poems about what he knew was daily life. He put these words, often in the contemporary speech of Scottish people, and could really get into their soul, and would make fun of the hypocrisy—what he called "hypocrisy à la mode"—or the self-righteousness of various re-

ligious groups, and show that they were given to committing the same sins which they were attacking. But he also wrote at the end of his life, an "Ode to Washington's Birthday," praising the spirit of overthrowing tyranny.

Abraham Lincoln had a very similar view as Burns on how to deal with his life and with history. These are two quotes, from Lincoln and from Burns. Lincoln said:

I have an irrepressible desire to live till I can be assured that the world is a little better for my having lived in it.

Early in his life, Burns wrote:

That I for poor auld Scotland's sake
Some useful plan, or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.

They both wanted to do something that would actually free their fellow citizens. Lincoln further said:

There are no accidents in my philosophy. Every effect must have a cause. The past is the cause of the present, and the present will be the cause of the future. All these are links in the endless chain stretching from the Infinite to the finite.

And he said that his political philosophy was very simple: It was the Declaration of Independence, that “all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”

Lincoln’s Companion, Burns

Lincoln had worked until he was 21 or 22 in very hard labor, and in fact, he said he felt enslaved, because under those conditions he was an indentured servant, virtually, for all his wages had to be turned over to his father. And he said he always hated slavery and he thought of himself as a slave. About the time that his family was moving from Indiana to Illinois, and he was ending his indentured servitude, he came across a book of Burns, which he started memorizing, and even started writing poetry. And then, when he moved to New Salem, Illinois, he actually met a Scotsman, Jack Kelso, who introduced him to Shakespeare, as well as reintroduced him to Burns. One of Lincoln’s associates, Milton Hay, in his later career as a lawyer in the 1840s, said about Lincoln:

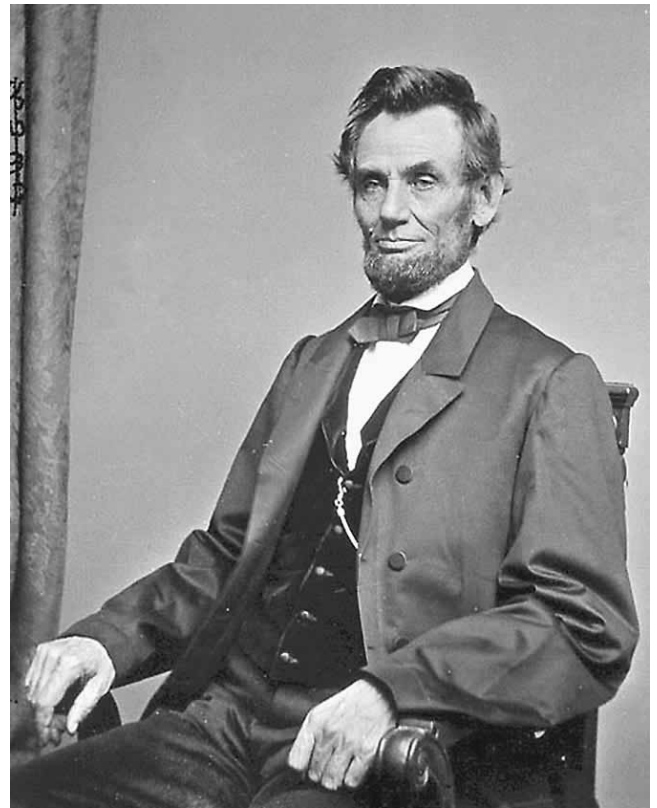
He [Lincoln] could quote very nearly all of Burns’s poems by memory. I have frequently heard him quote the whole of “Tam O’Shanter,” “Holy Willie’s Prayer,” and a large portion of “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” from memory. He acquired the Scottish accent and could render Burns perfectly.

Others reported that Lincoln would recite these poems all the time. Furthermore, Hay said, “I fancy that a great deal of Abraham Lincoln is borrowed on Robert Burns and William Shakespeare. Sometimes I think I can see traces of both men in his writings.”

When Lincoln ran for President, his official campaign biography said:

When practicing law before his election to Congress, a copy of Burns was his inseparable companion on the circuit; and this he pursued so constantly, that it is said he now has by heart every line of his favorite poet.

Another person recounted—and this would require another presentation—that Lincoln also carried a copy of Edgar Allan Poe’s works on the circuit, and was known to recite “The Raven” publicly to many people. When Lincoln was asked to frame a toast to Burns at the



Mathew Brady

Abraham Lincoln

end of his life at the January 25, 1865 dinner, this is what he said:

I can say nothing worthy of his [Burns’] generous heart and transcendent genius. Thinking of what he has said, I cannot say anything worth saying.

His final reference to Burns was just before his assassination, when he was going down the Potomac with one of his secretaries, John Hay, the nephew of his former law clerk Milton Hay. He had quoted from poetry of Burns and he also discussed *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*; but he quoted Burns in this famous “Lament for James Earl of Glencairn” where Burns described his gratitude to Glencairn. And he turned to Hay, and said,

Burns never touched sentiment without carrying it to its ultimate expression and leaving nothing further to be said.

When you read Lincoln’s famous speeches, you see

that in his attempts to shape words and express sentiment in its simplest way, in his Gettysburg Address, in the sense that we are fighting for government “of the people, by the people, and for the people”; in his Second Inaugural Address, where he talked about “with malice toward none and charity to all,” he’s expressing in his language the effect of both Robert Burns and William Shakespeare—in their “intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature,” as Shelley put it. His expression is able to grab people in a time of crisis. And this is exactly the expression that Lyndon LaRouche was talking about, of expressing creativity and invoking it in other people, which means he had to be trained himself in doing that.

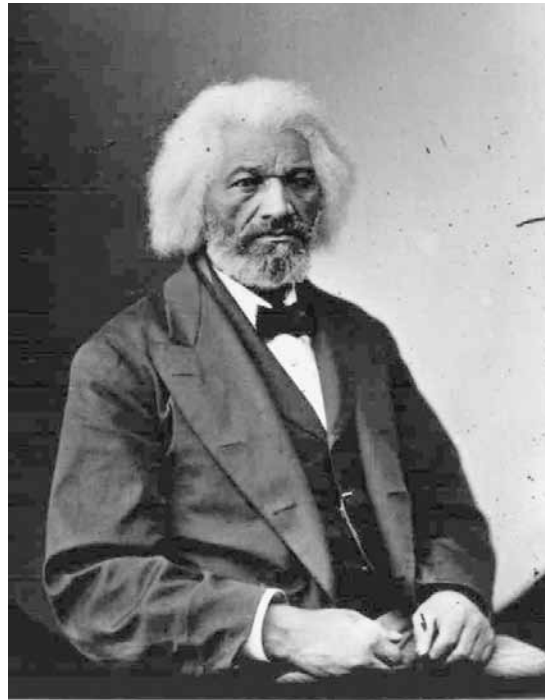
Frederick Douglass and Burns

Finally, let me just mention that Frederick Douglass broke the first chain of slavery, as Lyndon LaRouche expressed, when he was able—and he had to fight for this—to have the right to read. Slaves were prohibited from learning to read, but Douglass’s mistress did something that was not supposed to happen: She taught him some words, and he gathered up all the alphabetical letters he could when he was working on the docks in Baltimore. He was allowed to go out there and work, even though he was a slave. And he broke through and his idea of freedom actually came, and his idea of being free not just from physical slavery but mental slavery, came because of his voracious reading and studying. And he became, himself, a lover of William Shakespeare and Robert Burns. In his autobiography, Douglass quotes the soliloquy from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* about slaves, like himself, who had the fear of breaking free from slavery, and about:

The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all....

When Douglass had finally escaped from slavery, in a bookstore in Maryland he picked up a book of Robert Burns; and very shortly after became an admirer of Burns. He loved Burns for standing up against the “bigoted and besotted clergy” of his day and the “shallow-brained aristocracy.” In fact, he identified the aristocracy’s attempt to make Burns a “brute,” with his own situation in America. So he implicitly saw that we are not dealing with slavery of black slaves, we are dealing with slavery worldwide by this British Empire, in Scotland and in Ireland.



Frederick Douglass

LoC

Beethoven and Burns

Fred Haight: When I was writing a daily column on Ludwig van Beethoven, the “Daily Doses of Beethoven,” I had known about his Scottish and Irish songs for a long time, but was always confused. I knew there had to be something behind them, but couldn’t quite figure out what it was. It’s usually just dismissed as, “He needed the money,” so he took it as a commission. But as I went through and started looking at them, I was both amazed and thrilled to find that the driving force behind the setting of these songs, was none other than Robbie Burns!

Professor Barry Cooper, the world expert on these songs, had the integrity to say that he did not believe it was about money; that Beethoven wanted to build a folk song monument. I would go further, and say that Beethoven was passionately concerned with nation-building and developing freedom all over the world. Both Beethoven and Burns fulfilled Schiller’s injunction that a true poet must be both a patriot of their own country and also a world citizen. And they both had that.

With Burns, it started in 1786, with the publication by James Johnson of the first volume of something called *The Scots Musical Museum*. Burns is enthusiastic enough that he took the role as editor, and supplied the poetry. Because they had melodies; they had many

Scottish melodies coming in. Burns would make some changes to the melodies; he would take a fragment and expand it, but he wrote the poetry to it, to the extent that by the time the sixth volume was completed, of the more than 600 songs, one-third of them had poetry by Robbie Burns.

Mark Calney, author of the [book](#) on *Robert Burns & the Ideas of the American Revolution*, wrote that from that time on, that was Robbie Burns' chief concern. He spent more time working on the setting of Scottish folk songs, than he did even on poetry.

To understand this, you have to understand what was going on in Scotland at the time. After the final defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie and his Jacobite army at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, the British treated the Scots like animals. They hunted them down, rounded them up, killed them, banned the bagpipe, banned speaking Gaelic, banned wearing kilts; and not long after that began the expropriations of land: The Lowland Clearances, first, and then the Highland clearances.

In the case of the Highland Clearances, the British landlords looked at the people living in the Highlands, and they had all this wonderful, arable land being used for subsistence agriculture; and they said, we can't have all this good land just being used for people to have food to eat; we could grow sheep there to feed our wool-



Mark Calney, author of Robert Burns & the Ideas of the American Revolution, is seen here in front of Robert Burns' house in Dumfries, Scotland.

ens industry and make a lot more money. But we have to get rid of the people.

With that began what were known as the Highland Clearances, with the collusion of certain corrupt chieftains who were supposed to defend members of their clan. They started expropriating people's houses, cleared out entire villages, burned them down—they would burn an entire village down, so the people would leave and nothing but sheep were left. This caused the Highlanders to flee the country in droves; tens of thousands of people went all over the world. And in the eyes of the British, it was about money and saving the land, but it was also about completely destroying a culture that they despised.

It was my friend Rick Sanders who first pointed out that the poem "To a Mouse"—which on the surface would seem to be what Harley talked about—the British idea that man is destroying nature: "I am truly sorry that man's dominion / has broken nature's social union"—but when you look at it, the poem talks about, "Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin! / It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!" And "it's bleak December" and it's too late for you to build a new house.

The British did love burning



David Morier

The Battle of Culloden in 1746 marked the final defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie and his Jacobite army, after which the British treated the Scots like animals.

down villages at the beginning of winter, so that even if people wanted to try and rebuild, they could not. And he also says, to the mouse, “Well, I know you have to steal, but you have to live, and the small amount you’re taking, I wouldn’t even notice it.” Mice don’t steal, they just eat; but starving people will steal, and the British punishment for people who stole in those days was harsh: It became deportation later, to Australia.

In a certain way, I think Burns is doing exactly what Rick said. You’re feeling so sorry for this mouse and her children, and then you all of a sudden, say, wait a minute, what about the tens of thousands of people who are being evicted from their homes, and their culture being destroyed?

Burns gave his attention to the setting of the Scottish songs and writing the words for them. The *Scots Musical Museum* includes many famous songs that you’re familiar with: “Green Grow the Rashes,” “Flow Gently Sweet Afton,” “Coming through the Rye.” But in Volume 4, there is one called “The Slave’s Lament,” set to a Scottish tune, and it goes like this:

It was in sweet Senegal that my foes did me
enthral,
For the lands of Virginia, -ginia O:
Torn from that lovely shore, and must never see
it more;
And alas! I am weary, weary O:
Torn from that lovely shore, and must never see
it more;
And alas! I am weary, weary O.

What is a song about a slave missing Senegal, when he’s been sent to Virginia, doing in the *Scots Musical Museum* if Robbie Burns is “merely” the Scottish national poet?—And he certainly is. At the same time, 1794, he wrote a poem that is seldom performed at Robbie Burns dinners—I don’t think it’s ever been performed at a Canadian Robbie Burns Dinner!—It’s his “Ode for General Washington’s Birthday.” Washington was President of the United States at the time; the British were still *furious*, absolutely determined to overthrow the American Revolution, and Burns has words in it praising the overthrow of King George! And that’s sedition. You could be charged and executed for trying



CC/Blisco

Robert Burns, working with James Johnson, became the editor of, and supplied much of poetry for The Scots Musical Museum. Here, the Allt a’ Mhuillin walking path up the north face of Ben Nevis in the Scottish Highlands.

to overthrow the King, or merely supporting the idea. There are four lines in that poem that go:

See gathering thousands, while I sing,
A broken chain exulting bring,
And dash it in a tyrant’s face,
And dare him to his very beard,
And tell him he no more is feared—
No more the despot of Columbia’s race!

With that we begin to get an idea of the real Robbie Burns. I might add that part of what adds to his concern with folk songs, is that the first Classical music in Scotland, in the late part of the 1700s, was introduced by visiting opera singers, who would sing Scottish folk songs with their bel canto voices, and demonstrate the real beauty of these songs. And therefore, as part of that Classical tradition, Burns also worked with a fellow who came along a little later than James Johnson; his name was George Thompson. It was Thompson who engaged Beethoven to set many of these Scottish and Irish songs. Unfortunately, Burns died before he could really even know of Beethoven, because I think the two are really kindred souls.

Beethoven’s Irish Songs

But once again, looking at Burns’ self-conception as a world citizen, it was Burns who suggested to George Thompson that besides setting Scottish songs, they also

set Irish songs, and Burns offered to write the poetry for the Irish songs. So Thompson got friends of his in Ireland to send him melodies, and Burns would take these melodies—sometimes they were just fragments and he would have to finish them; so they are known as songs by Robbie Burns.

But Burns applied somewhat the opposite approach that a composer would to a poem. A composer has to study a poem, get it in his head, recite it, replicate that meaning in music. Burns wrote that, with these melodies, he would have to sing them, but not in any kind of mundane way; he would have to sing them with great passion in order to figure out what the appropriate words should be. And that he did, and as a result, many Irish songs—I forget how many—actually have words by Robbie Burns! And many of those were set by Beethoven!

Just to give you an idea of Beethoven's commitment to this, he carried it on for well over a decade, and with the first set of songs that he sent to George Thompson in 1810, the Napoleonic Wars were under way, and you could not just send something from Austria to Scotland. Therefore, Beethoven sent out packages containing the songs by different, circuitous routes. One of them went through Malta; they all had to be smuggled across the English Channel, and it still took two years for them to get there. They did not reach Scotland until 1812.

That gives us some idea of the commitment that Beethoven had to this, and it gives us an idea of the commitment that Burns had. They tried to destroy that idea of political commitment on the part of Beethoven, and also in just reducing Robbie Burns to a "Scottish" patriot. And that destroys the creativity, that makes it something other. These guys were developing the creativity that Lyndon LaRouche was talking about, for the benefit of humanity.

I'll say one last thing on "To a Mouse," because it's the difference between fixation and metaphor. I've seen many poems about the Highland clearances that were just full of rage. The kind of rage that you see on the



Willibrord Joseph Mähler

Ludwig van Beethoven

streets today in this left-versus-right stuff, of people who can't think, but just fury over "what was done to me, what was done to me."

Burns, by posing this metaphor—to actually catch yourself, and how you're thinking, and think on a higher level—is doing something that can actually get through to everybody, to bring everybody to a level of reason, because it's not going to be solved by any set of "do's" and don'ts," any sets of rules.

How did people with very little education, like Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, come to see Shakespeare and Burns as a weapon? How did they see poetry as a weapon? They recognized it. And I

would say they were pretty successful people. Why is it that so many of us today don't see poetry and Classical art as a weapon? There are many reasons I could cite, but I'll never forget reading Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. It is not a warning about a dictatorship; it's a prescription for it. In that story, the dictatorship is confronted with Shakespeare: "Well, what do we do about Shakespeare? He inspires people!" And someone says, "Well, let's just ban him!" and they say, "Well, no, if we ban him, they'll just get more curious." And they finally decide, what they're going to do: "We're going to dumb the people down so much that we can give Shakespeare free rein—you can buy his books anywhere, you can see his plays; they won't understand what he's talking about!"

That dumbing down was not only the question of illiteracy that Mr. LaRouche is talking about, it's also mindless forms of entertainment—*Brave New World* had it all, it had drugs, it had free sex, it had the movies up and down. That is what has become our culture today. So if you find yourself saying, "It's too much work to read Shakespeare, I'd rather chill out and just watch a movie," you're playing right into that dumbing down.

Do the work, study the stuff, learn it. You'll find riches and rewards far beyond what you might expect, and you'll have an ally and you'll have weapons to win this war.

Schlanger: You have to change people. And the wealth of ideas and principles that you can discover with Classical music, Classical poetry and Classical drama, is something that's urgently needed. I think these two presentations gave people a glimpse into what that means.

Questions on Poetry and Economy

Speed: We have two questions from two individuals in New York, but I'm going to ask them together, because they're actually the exact same question.

It was posed earlier that I can't understand economics, if I don't understand Classical music. What does that mean about the nature of what economics really is? Why should a welder, or iron worker, or any kind of construction worker listen to and understand Beethoven? Or why should they recite Burns' poetry?...

Earlier on, you said that in order to understand physical economy, you need to understand Classical music and Classical composition. Why is that? How is what people listen to and read, connected to the overall state of the economy?

Schlanger: For LaRouche, Classical culture is proof of the creative nature of human beings, that which separates us from the beasts. Some animals sing, but they don't compose. I'm talking about birds. Human beings not only compose, but are capable of being moved by the ideas, the thoughts, the non-sensual thoughts that are contained within musical composition.

For LaRouche, physical economy is an expression of human creativity. The ability to make discoveries of physical principle, that can be applied to transforming nature for the benefit of man, is the same process of creative reason, of discovery of something new, that you find in musical composition. For example, Beethoven taking these folk songs, or these poems, and elevating them into musical *Lieder*—songs—that people will then sing, and in their singing, have a higher sense of a nation. And that is directly related to this question of physical economy.

The connection between the two, is human creativity and the ability to come up with new ideas when confronted with problems.

Haight: The notion many of us have of economy today, is not what the country was built upon. For the Founding Fathers, the notion of economy was the gen-

eral welfare, that which advances the state of every single human being. What is it now? It's money! Money—money, money, money, money, money! How do I get rich quick? There used to be an idea of, "We're all in this together." Like in the Depression, people didn't think "How am I going to get by?" They thought "We've got to figure out how everybody's going to get by."

A perfect example of it is the current pandemic. COVID-19 should have shown us what's wrong with the way we're thinking economically, because we weren't prepared for it: We don't have a healthcare system that's prepared for it, because we're a bunch of monetarists. We're more interested in getting rich quick, and seeing how that can be done from playing the stock market, mutual funds, etc. We allowed a situation where a huge part of the world, the Third World so-called, is plunged into poverty. We are now being told that it may be quite a while before people in the less developed countries of the world can be immunized against COVID. What's going to happen to us in the meantime? We can have all the vaccines we want. If the virus is developing new strains in the places we don't care about, then we're going to get hit with that!

This crisis should have forced us to reexamine our basic economic values. You can't just let infrastructure slide; you have to have an adequate healthcare system in every country. The poorest part of the world is the weakest part of the system, and it's going to affect us all. It's like the guy who has gangrene in his leg, and says "Well, I don't care about my leg, I only care about the rest of me." It spreads.

The system of economics we have today has little to do with economics understood as physical economy, as Harley said. But why "physical" economy? Because a financial, speculative system is not based on building the actual, physical economy that people need.

Coming back to Classical culture, that depends on your notion of what human beings are: Classical culture, Beethoven, Robert Burns, it gives you a respect for what a human being actually is. As Lyndon LaRouche used to put it, if there's one Beethoven in the world, and he's the only one, does that make him the exception? No. That actually defines what human nature actually is. That defines the potential that is in every person. When you love that creativity, then you love that potential in every person. And you want an economic system that is going to benefit every single person, and you see it to your benefit, the mutual benefit. It's not some other guy getting your piece of the pie.

That's what it comes down to: The degraded entertainment culture that we have, gives us such a low opinion of human beings that we don't have that kind of passion for all humanity.

Belsky: I would just say the question comes down to, are we men or mice? As Robert Burns demonstrated to people, very ironically, the mouse can only think in the present:

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

A human can anticipate the future, whereas an animal cannot, so if you're going to deal with economics, if you're going to deal with any of these issues, you have to think in terms of changing history, changing ideas, having a dialogue with other people, discussing what we have to do to make the future. If we only think in terms of the present, then that is how the enemy treats us, as animals that they can manipulate, through rage,

or obsessions, or just thinking of the moment. If you're going to think of physical economy, you have to think in terms of the future. What're we going to create?

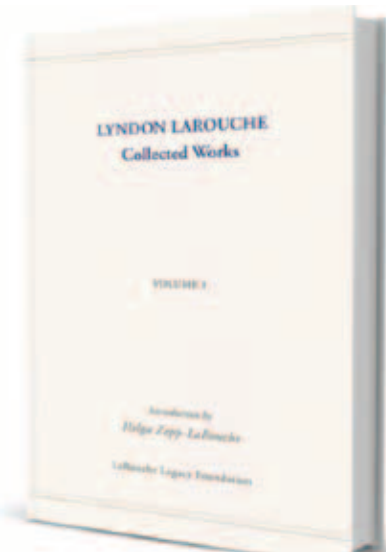
Now, Burns knew what the British wanted to create was to clear the land to get rid of the people. So the quote he also made before that last verse—

But, Mousie, thou art no thy-lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

—can mean, the best-laid plans you bought into such as, “we'll clear you off the land and we'll turn you into a fisherman”; or, “we'll give you the Green New Deal, and we've got a great plan for you.” Or, it could mean plans you actually think through, and that requires this creative mindset that is fostered by the study of poetry, the communication of great ideas through poetry, and through great drama like Shakespeare. Because all of these great artists are dealing with human beings and history, and that is the way we have to approach the crisis today.

LYNDON LAROUCHE Collected Works, Volume I

This first volume of the Lyndon LaRouche Collected Works contains four of LaRouche's most important and influential works on the subject of physical economy:



- *So, You Wish to Learn All About Economics?*
- *There Are No Limits to Growth*
- *The Science of Christian Economy*
- *The Dialogue of Eurasian Civilizations: Earth's Next Fifty Years*

So, You Wish to Learn All About Economics? was first published in 1984 and has become the single most translated of LaRouche's books.

There Are No Limits to Growth first appeared in 1983 as a direct response to the Club of Rome's *The Limits to Growth*, thoroughly refuting the latter's unscientific Malthusian argument, which underlies the “green” environmentalist movement today.

The Science of Christian Economy (1991) is a groundbreaking study written by Mr. LaRouche during the five-year period he was unjustly incarcerated as a political prisoner in significant measure for the arguments he sets forth in this book.

The Dialogue of Eurasian Civilizations: Earth's Next Fifty Years (2004) follows in the footsteps of Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa to establish the scientific, cultural, and theological basis for a true dialogue of civilizations, in order to successfully address the existential crises facing humanity today.

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