

be able to challenge their elected officials on policy matters and allow the voters to make their choice—but, not so in the State of New York.

I declared my candidacy for the 2022 U.S. Senate race in July of 2020, knowing that the State of New York already had one of the most difficult ballot access procedures in the nation; namely requiring 15,000 valid signatures of registered New York voters to be gathered in a short six-week period, plus other additional onerous filing requirements. Even U.S. Senator John McCain failed to meet these requirements for the 2020 Republican presidential primary, while, thanks to a genuine political machine of dedicated volunteers, Lyndon LaRouche's name did appear on the New York ballot in two presidential primary elections.

I had been prepared to face the already onerous 15,000 signature requirement to challenge Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, who is pushing national drug legalization, in order to legitimize massive income streams for the Wall Street crowd he represents. Unbeknownst to me (and most New York voters), major changes in ballot access were disingenuously introduced into the 2020 New York State budget (see S.7508B, p.259). The signature requirement was tripled for non-major party affiliated candidates in statewide races, to a virtually impossible 45,000 valid signatures, all to be collected over the same short six-week period. And yet, for Democratic and Republican Party candidates who have the substantial resources of their party organizations to draw upon, the requirement remains at 15,000 signatures!

Also in this budget item, the Libertarian and Green Parties were stripped of their party lines on the ballot, as the previous requirement of 50,000 votes in a statewide election was more than tripled to 2% of the statewide vote.

So, in the State of New York, while great care is allegedly being taken to make sure that 'anyone and everyone' can vote virtually at any time and at any location, the only candidates allowed on the ballot will be those from the two major parties, as well as the New York State Conservative Party and Working Families Party, which both got around the requirement by endorsing Trump and Biden respectively, thus depriving their members of a non-establishment presidential choice.

The ostensible rationale for this outrageous elimination of independent campaigns from the New York State ballot, was that the state intends to disperse \$100 million in matching funds, and they don't want to spend money on "frivolous" candidates, obviously meaning that they intend to keep the money within the hands of those who already have it. Since the matching funds are given in an 8:1 ratio, this widens the gulf between establishment and non-establishment campaigns even more. It also makes the tripled signature requirement for my U.S. Senate campaign the more absurd, as federal candidates are not eligible for matching funds in the first place. That is, no matter how many signatures I get, or how much money I raise, I will not receive matching funds, thus proving that the argument for the requirement is based upon fraudulent premises.

My independent campaign for U.S. Senate currently represents the only serious challenge to incumbent Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. Of the several candidates supposedly challenging Schumer, I am the only candidate who has filed a report with the Federal Elections Commission. Thus, as of this time, if I am excluded from the ballot, there will be no opposition in this very important U.S. Senate election.

Further, over the past 18 months, I have hosted over 50 weekly symposia on various urgent topics,

Andrey Kortunov

Director of the Russian International Affairs Council

These remarks are part of the article, "Summit for Democracy Attempts to Turn Multicolor Modern World into Black and White Division," by Dr. Kortunov, released on November 22.

It goes without saying that the nations of the world should firmly oppose corruption, abuses of power by state authorities and gross violations of human rights. If the goal of the Summit for De-

mocracy were to confront these evils on a global scale, there would be no need to make the event exclusive by inviting mostly US friends and allies. If the goal is to advertise the US political, social, and economic model, Washington should probably delay the summit and put its house in order first. If the goal is to isolate Beijing and Moscow in the world of politics, this is not likely to work well for the US.