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The LaRouche Network in Latin America

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THE LAROUCHE NETWORK IN LATIN AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

Lyndon H. LaRouche is a political chameleon. Once a radical left wing activist involved with Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) at Columbia University, in New York, he now leads an extremist political cult which defies conventional description. The LaRouche political network, based in the United States, has also established branches or has activists in many Latin American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela. In Latin America, as in the United States, his political network espouses an amorphous philosophy that touches many points on the political spectrum, from left to right.

Few individuals in the United States, even those who are knowledgeable about the LaRouche network, are aware that it has spread to Latin America. At the same time, most government officials and the general public in Latin America are generally not aware of the history of LaRouche and the methods used by him and his network of organizations in pursuit of their objectives.

The LaRouche network frequently uses front organizations, often called "coalitions," "institutes," "committees," or "foundations," to pursue its goals. These fronts raise funds which are used to support the LaRouche organization's operations and maintain its leadership in high style. Associated corporations and organizations include: Campaigner Publications, Inc.; Caucus Distributors, Inc.; New Benjamin Franklin House Publishing Company; Fusion Energy Foundation; the Club of Life; the Schiller Institute; PMR Printing; International Caucus of Labor Committees; Executive Intelligence Review and Executive Intelligence Review News Service.

These front organizations provide seeming legitimacy and respectability for his cult, both in the United States and abroad. The network, which appears to use these entities for spreading LaRouche's eccentric philosophies, often seizes upon issues of public concern and uses them as springboards for propagandistic rhetoric often framed within bizarre conspiracy theories. One such theory alleges that various influential Jews and Jewish groups (such as the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith), the International Monetary Fund, major banks, crime syndicates and Soviet, British and Israeli intelligence agencies are part of the international drug trade which is directed by the

Queen of England.

The LaRouche organizations publicly attack and harass public officials and other individuals who oppose LaRouche activities. According to the LaRouche cult, former President Jimmy Carter is involved in an international terrorist apparatus of government agencies, private research groups and political organizations, and Henry Kissinger is a Soviet agent. LaRouche himself even claims to have found a "hard kernel of truth" in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a notorious anti-Semitic forgery discredited by a Swiss court in the 1930's.

In the United States political arena LaRouche now portrays himself as a "Conservative Democrat." After the 1976 presidential campaign in which he ran as the candidate of the U.S. Labor Party (now defunct), LaRouche shifted from the left to the right and presented himself as a "conservative" candidate in the Democratic Party presidential primaries. The name of one LaRouche vehicle, the National Democratic Policy Committee, is frequently confused with the Democratic National Committee, which oversees the Democratic Party.

Leaders of the Democratic Party have rebuffed his efforts to adopt a Democratic Party mantle. In 1984, Democratic Party chairman Charles Manatt condemned "the activities of this fanatical cult which...practices various forms of intimidation." Larry Framm, the 1988 chairman of the Democratic Party in the state of Virginia, where the LaRouche organization is headquartered said, "the Democratic party has no use for Lyndon LaRouche."

THE LAROUCHE NETWORK ON TRIAL

The cult's fundraising methods in the United States have resulted in criminal prosecutions and investigations in several jurisdictions, which may jeopardize its operations. Three front groups -- Caucus Distributors, Inc., Campaigner Publications, Inc., and Fusion Energy Foundation -- appear to have ceased operations after April, 1987 when a federal bankruptcy judge placed them under interim trusteeship pending the outcome of government-initiated involuntary bankruptcy proceedings. The government's attempt to place the corporations in involuntary bankruptcy is part of an effort to collect more than \$16 million in contempt fines levied against the three firms for defying a federal grand jury's subpoenas for information regarding their fundraising practices.

LaRouche and several of his top lieutenants were put on trial in late 1987 for their alleged roles in a nationwide scheme which raised more than \$1 million by defrauding individuals who purchased LaRouche publications, made loans or contributions to LaRouche's presidential campaign, or made contributions to one of several causes advanced by the cult, such as fighting AIDS or

drugs. Fundraisers allegedly used high-pressure techniques to solicit contributions or loans, which they promised to repay with interest, when it was the organization's policy not to repay these loans, unless the lender was influential and could make trouble for the cult. Unauthorized charges were also allegedly made to the credit card numbers thus obtained. Former members have said the scheme was prompted by the need for funds for LaRouche's previously unsuccessful 1984 presidential bid. LaRouche is charged with obstruction of justice for allegedly interfering with a grand jury probe of the alleged fraud. Several of his associates are charged with obstruction of justice and credit card fraud. The trial is expected to last several months into 1988.

A former LaRouche security aide, Roy Frankhauser, was convicted in December, 1987 of plotting to obstruct the aforementioned investigation. Frankhauser is a former member of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party.

In prosecutions elsewhere, LaRouche followers were indicted in early 1987 by a Virginia grand jury on state charges of securities fraud. The trial has been continued until May, 1988. Others were indicted, also in early 1987, by a New York state grand jury for securities fraud and grand larceny. (Loans secured by promissory notes are deemed securities by these states.) The Attorneys General of Virginia and New York have said the amount fraudulently obtained may total more than \$30 million over a two-year period. Thirteen states have issued civil cease-and-desist orders barring LaRouche associates and organizations from raising funds in those states.

Arrest warrants were issued by the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office in January, 1988 against a LaRouche follower and two other persons for felony election law violations. In addition, a federal grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia is reportedly investigating claims of tax fraud and violations of the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.

Fundraising for LaRouche's 1988 presidential campaign may have suffered a setback in January, 1988 when a Federal Elections Commission (FEC) staff report recommended against awarding presidential primary matching funds to LaRouche through his principal authorized campaign committee, the LaRouche Democratic Campaign. The FEC report cited "the historical and pervasive pattern of fraud and abuse of the public funding program exhibited by Mr. LaRouche, his authorized committees and associated organizations" in the 1976, 1980, and 1984 campaigns. The report also pointed up "certain irregularities" in the current campaign, including several personal checks from contributors which appeared to have been altered without being initialed to indicate the change was authorized.

ANTI-SEMITIC SENTIMENT

LaRouche's anti-Jewish, anti-Zionist, anti-Israel campaigns began as early as March of 1978, when the LaRouche newspaper, New Solidarity (replaced in 1987 by The New Federalist), published an article in support of an unsuccessful libel suit brought against the Anti-Defamation League by Liberty Lobby, the largest and best financed anti-Semitic organization in the United States. In the weeks and months that followed, the paper sustained its attack on the ADL and other Jewish organizations. It printed inflammatory articles about the danger of the "Jewish and the Zionist Lobby," Israeli political leaders such as Menachem Begin and Moshe Dayan, and "The ADL as Britain's Zionist Gestapo."

According to LaRouche, "Israel is ruled from London as a zombie-nation" and Zionism is a "hideous doctrine..." In his article on the "Cult Origins of Zionism," LaRouche espouses three common anti-Semitic themes: 1) denial that six million Jews were murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust; 2) assertions that the Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus Christ; and 3) Zionism is racism.

LAROUCHE'S LATIN AMERICAN APPEAL

Lyndon H. LaRouche has been able to garner support in Latin America by appealing to nationalist feelings of the people and their governments. He denounces the ever-mounting foreign debt and International Monetary Fund (IMF) measures that, he claims, compound the already severe economic problems facing these countries. However, LaRouche takes his criticism even further. He encourages the belief that the foreign debt is the root cause of all of the problems facing the Latin American nations today. He claims that the IMF-enforced austerity measures impinge on sovereignty, increase the threat of Communist subversion, and stimulate unemployment as well as narcotics trafficking.

LaRouche is also a staunch supporter of the efforts of many Latin American nations to curtail drug production and trafficking - what LaRouche calls the "war on drugs." However, LaRouche does not offer a meaningful and concrete program. His anti-drug campaign consists largely of attacks on public officials and prominent individuals who, according to his "intelligence network," are allegedly involved in the production and sale of drugs or in "narco-dollar laundering."

By "revealing" conspiratorial plots against Latin American governments and making himself useful to those in power LaRouche tries to win the support and confidence of Latin Americans. According to the LaRouche publication, Executive Intelligence Review (5/21/85), the United States government and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith are collaborating on a scheme to destabilize Latin American governments. Moreover, EIR claims

that the State Department is guiding the Mexican opposition party, Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), in its bid for power. A LaRouche activist in Panama, Mario Parnter, "revealed" and denounced the United States' "Project Democracy" as a plan to destabilize Panama and overthrow the government and leadership of the Panamanian Defense Forces.

THE PARTIDO LABORAL (LABOR PARTY)

The primary vehicle through which LaRouche and his followers propagate the cult's extremist politics in Latin America is the Partido Laboral, the Latin American arm of the International Caucus of Labor Committees (ICLC). The ICLC, of which LaRouche is the chairman, oversees the Ibero-American Labor Committee which directs the labor parties in Latin American countries. A Partido Laboral operates in at least four Latin American countries, but membership statistics are not available. In Colombia, Maximiliano Londoño leads PLAN (Partido Laboral Andino). In Mexico the PLM (Partido Laboral Mexicano) is directed by Marivilia Carrasco. Venezuela's branch is known as the PLV (Partido Laboral Venezolano) and its leader is Alejandro Peña Esclusa. In Peru the PLP (Partido Laboral Peruano) is led by Sara Madueño Paulette. All are members of the CELA, the Latin American Executive Committee, which runs the Ibero-American Labor Committee. Lorenzo Carrasco, the brother of Marivilia Carrasco, leads the small LaRouche office in Brazil.

These "Labor Parties" are not indigenous parties, despite their official-sounding titles, which conjure images of mainstream groups with mass based support. Although the title "Labor Party" seems to suggest a popular party linked to the international labor movement, the by-laws of the Partido Laboral Venezolano state "the party calls itself "labor" (laboral) because it considers that it is through work that the human being...perfects itself."

The Latin American labor parties appear to have used deceptive and fraudulent means to accomplish their goals. Maximiliano Londoño, Secretary General of PLAN, presented himself in a news bulletin (11/6/82) as a legal advisor to the UTC (Unión de Trabajadores Colombianos) in Colombia. According to a Colombian newspaper, the president of the UTC denied any such affiliation. The Supreme Electoral Commission denied legal status to the Partido Laboral Venezolano because of "false signatures" on petitions which it submitted. Thirteen members of a LaRouche group were arrested and expelled from Venezuela in 1985 for interfering in domestic politics and acting as journalists without regard for Venezuelan law. The Venezuelan daily newspaper, El Universal, cited documents linking the arrested and expelled LaRouchites to the Soviet KGB and the Cuban DGI intelligence service. According to the Venezuelan Minister of the Interior, Octavio Lepage, the LaRouche followers "claim to

be members of a labor party," but "this is a phantom party."

Although ostensibly concerned with issues affecting the welfare of local workers, the LaRouchite "Labor parties" seem to concentrate on international activities. For example, they actively support Peruvian president Alan García, denounce the IMF austerity measures, and attack prominent individuals. In Latin America, they have publicly libeled Mario Vargas Llosa, noted Peruvian author and Gustavo Cisneros, a prominent Venezuelan business man, as well as other public personalities for alleged involvement in narcotics trafficking. They also denounce efforts to control the increase in Mexico's population as part of a world anti-Mexican conspiracy.

EL CLUB DE LA VIDA (THE CLUB OF LIFE)

The Club of Life is another LaRouche organization that established branches in various Latin American countries. Lyndon LaRouche and his wife, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, head the International Board of Directors of the "Club." Founded in 1982, its stated purpose is to "stop the genocide being pushed by the Club of Rome and the Global 2000 program, and to fight for a new world economic order." The "clubs" are active in Colombia, Mexico and Peru where they promote LaRouche's ideas through "conferences."

The Club of Life, was one of the first LaRouche organizations in Colombia, and Jaime Sanin Echeverri, a writer, was one of the organizers of the group. Listed among the founders of the Club of Life in Mexico are: Marivilia Carrasco, Secretary General of the Mexican Worker's Party (PLM) and Dr. Demetrio Sodi Pallares, cardiologist and the former president of the Mexican National Academy of Medicine in Mexico City.

In Mexico, the "Club," one of four groups affiliated with the PLM, attempts to appeal to women, older people and the handicapped. That the various LaRouche front groups are interrelated is particularly obvious in Mexico where they share offices and staff and often have members who are active in several of the LaRouche organizations.

PUBLICATIONS IN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

The LaRouche cult controls at least two publishing companies in Latin America, Editorial Benengeli and Proyectos Siglo XX, but many of the ostensibly Latin American publications are produced in the United States. His Spanish language propaganda usually has its counterpart in the United States; the publications often use articles which appeared originally in the English language.

The LaRouche publications in Latin America are: Solidaridad Iberoamericana (formerly Nueva Solidaridad), Fusión Nuclear, and

Resumen Ejecutivo (Spanish version of LaRouche's Executive Intelligence Review). While Fusión Nuclear is designed to appeal to and attract support in the scientific community, Solidaridad Iberoamericana seems to be directed toward the general public and Resumen Ejecutivo is geared to the corporate community. (The U.S. New Solidarity and Fusion have not been published since April, 1987, when the publishers -- Campaigner Publications and Fusion Energy Foundation -- were put into interim trusteeship as part of government-initiated involuntary bankruptcy proceedings. New Solidarity has been replaced by The New Federalist, and Fusion will reportedly soon be replaced by 21st Century Science and Technology).

The LaRouche book, Dope Inc., was published in Spanish in 1985, under the title, Narcotráfico, S.A. The Spanish language version includes a chapter, prepared by the Venezuelan EIR, which attacks prominent Venezuelan personalities.

The LaRouche organizations enjoy the support of some indigenous publications. In Venezuela, the Caracas newspapers, Ultimas Noticias and El Mundo echo the news and opinions of the LaRouche cult. In Argentina, Masonería, which has an anti-Semitic, anti-British, pro-military and pro-fascist philosophy, describes LaRouche as a "leader in ascendancy in the Democratic Party of the United States... and a fervent defender of the right of the Iberoamerican countries." The article goes on to claim that "Argentine nationalism can subscribe to 90% of the principles that LaRouche preaches."

The LaRouche publications and indigenous Latin American publications that are favorable to LaRouche organizations have utilized information distributed by NSIPS (New Solidarity International Press Service) which was founded by LaRouche in 1974, in New York City. In the United States, NSIPS appears to have been replaced by EIRNS (Executive Intelligence News Service) in 1987.

INSTITUTO SCHILLER (THE SCHILLER INSTITUTE)

The Schiller Institute, was established by LaRouche in July, 1984 in Arlington, Virginia, "to prevent the decoupling of Western Europe and the United States." Helga Zepp-LaRouche is the head of the Executive Board and Lyndon LaRouche is head of the Advisory Board of the group.

In 1984, the Schiller Institute appeared on the Latin American scene by sponsoring conferences in Peru, Colombia and Mexico. In Colombia, approximately 75 people were in attendance to hear the keynote speech delivered by Lorenzo Carrasco, then PLM leader. In his speech, Carrasco stressed the danger of Henry Kissinger returning to the White House, saying it would threaten the survival of the Atlantic Alliance.

In 1986, the Schiller Institute sponsored a conference in Peru in conjunction with Fusión Nuclear, Solidaridad Iberoamericana, and La Federación Médica. Among the attendees were Dr. Debra Freeman from the United States and Bertha Farfán from Mexico. "Dr." Freeman is a longtime LaRouche activist who claims to have a PhD from Johns Hopkins University, but the school has no record of her attendance. Dr. Bertha Farfán, coordinator of medical research for the Schiller Institute in Mexico, also an active LaRouche supporter, has stated that the Mexican economic problem is the principal cause of the outbreak of AIDS in Mexico.

The activities of the Schiller Institute in Latin America are obscure and unfocussed, seemingly dedicated to spreading LaRouche's message of grandeur -- that only he can save the world from imminent destruction.

LAROCHE CONTACTS IN HIGH PLACES

Following a pattern established in the United States and other parts of the world, such as India and Turkey, the LaRouche network has managed to obtain contacts with Latin Americans in high level positions. In 1982, LaRouche himself was received by Mexican President López Portillo at the presidential palace and he also met with Argentine President Raúl Alfonsín in Buenos Aires in 1984.

Five influential Latin Americans involved in LaRouche activities participated in a LaRouche " Fact-Finding Committee of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States." They are identified by EIR (9/87) as: General Lucio Añez, former Bolivian delegate to the Inter-American Defense Board and advisor to the Bolivian Joint Chiefs of Staff; Mario Parnter, member of the National Directorate of the ruling Revolutionary Democratic Party of Panama; Juan Rebaza, Coordinator of the Iberoamerican Union Commission; Juan Valdivia, a Peruvian Congressman; and Wilber Bendezú Carpio, Congressional representative from Lima who is an expert in labor legislation. Despite the official sounding title of the committee, it appears that its major "investigation" of human rights abuses was the alleged persecution and harassment of Lyndon LaRouche and his followers in the form of federal and state indictments for credit card fraud, obstruction of justice and securities fraud.

Another influential Latin American involved with LaRouche is Dr. Ricardo Martín, former Congressional Attorney General of Peru, who has stated that corrupt forces in government have allowed the Soviets to turn drug trafficking into a tool of subversion. Like many LaRouche followers, Dr. Martín proposes theories that appeal to Latin American conservatives' fear of Communism.

These people are representative of Latin Americans whom the LaRouche network seeks to involve -- politicians, military personnel and other government officials who have the potential to influence their nations' future, and to shape public opinion as well.

CONCLUSION

Despite the continuing efforts of the LaRouche cult to establish itself in North American politics, it has failed to win significant positions in public office. Neither has it gained legitimacy in the United States mainstream, because the vast majority of U.S. citizens reject the extremism of LaRouche politics.

Moreover, the credibility of LaRouche has been seriously weakened by the indictment of LaRouche and his associates.

In Latin America, where fledgling democracies and nascent pluralistic philosophies struggle to survive against seemingly insurmountable odds, the LaRouche network, thriving on secrecy, deception, fear and hatred, may be a threat to democratic values and institutions. The camouflage of front groups and nationalistic propaganda imperfectly conceals the fantasy-filled politics of self aggrandizement practiced by LaRouche and his disciples.

There is, unfortunately, insufficient public awareness-- especially in Latin America -- of the sordid and bizarre components of LaRouche and his political apparatus. Because the LaRouche cult thrives in an atmosphere of ignorance and disinformation, the best way to combat its extremism and fanaticism is to educate people about its methods and aims, and to point out that a LaRouche inspired flight from reality can only deepen rather than ease the problems of Latin American societies.

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OTHER ADL REPORTS ON LAROCHE:

1. "The LaRouche Political Cult: Packaging Extremism," Spring 1986 (Also available in Spanish language edition)
2. "LaRouche on Trial: A 1987 Update", Winter 1987

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