

## Will prosecutor murder his witness to 'get' LaRouche?

In one of the most shocking instances of what political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche has termed "administrative fascism" in America, an Illinois state prosecutor on March 7 put an elderly woman on the witness stand, raked her over the coals to try—unsuccessfully—to get her to charge three associates of LaRouche with "robbing" her, and, when she suffered a stroke on the stand after 45 minutes of testimony, he demanded that she resume her testimony the following week.

The ugly scene took place in Ogle County, Illinois, where State's Attorney Dennis Schumacher, the local enforcer for the nationally directed "Get LaRouche" Task Force and the state task force run by Illinois Attorney General Neil Hartigan, have brought a political frameup trial against Patricia Noble-Schenk, Ron Fredman, and Richard Blomquist, all associates of LaRouche. Schumacher charges the three with "robbery" and "burglary" against Mrs. Harriet Driver, an 89-year-old political supporter of LaRouche, whose family and stock-broker connived to force her to cease her financial support for LaRouche's political movement.

Michael Null, the attorney for the three defendants, told the Court that Schumacher's request to continue Mrs. Driver's testimony on March 12, despite her stroke, is immoral, unethical, and reckless. He charged that Mrs. Driver is merely considered by Schumacher as bait to convict the defendants, even if it means doing so at the expense of her life. Null requested a dismissal of the case and, on the basis of these developments, has said that he will not cross examine Mrs. Driver if she is forced to retake the stand. As he told both the Court and the press, if Harriet Driver's life and well-being are to be put at risk, the consequences will be for Schumacher and the rest of the "Get LaRouche" Task Force to account for.

Judge Alan Cargerman reserved a ruling on the ultimate disposition of the case until March 12, when Schumacher

can give a more specific account of Mrs. Driver's medical condition.

### LaRouche: 'I cry for justice'

LaRouche, who is currently incarcerated in a federal prison in Rochester, Minnesota on phony "conspiracy" charges, issued two statements on the case on March 8.

Referring to Schumacher's decision to force the stricken woman back to the stand, LaRouche said, "This is an example of brutality beyond belief. What does Schumacher wish to do? Does he wish to kill the woman? He appears to be in total reckless disregard of the fact that he might.

"Now, in the case as a whole, Schumacher has continually pressed this woman, who is a supporter of mine, to testify against three of my friends. It's a completely fraudulent charge, it's a charge of robbery. Mrs. Driver had given contributions on a number of occasions, and Mr. Schumacher, desperate to have some sort of Illinois criminal case against me and my associates, has attempted to armtwist, intimidate this woman into telling the lies she has refused to tell. . . .

"Mr. Schumacher is a part of a federal, multi-agency, multi-state, prosecution, which on the state level, is associated with my enemies in the Democratic Party, enemies in the Democratic Party, who happen to fear my candidacy, and that of my friends.

"This fear became most acute in March of 1986, when, as had been forecast a year before, by the Democratic Party's official forecaster for the state of Illinois, two of my friends won top positions in the Democratic primary of March 1986, and others who did not win, made very credible, very substantial showings.

"The Democratic Party is afraid of the power of my faction among Democratic Party voters, particularly as the crisis comes on and their policies are discredited."

In a second statement released to the press, LaRouche added, "To describe Mr. Schumacher's conduct as 'zealous' would be perhaps the understatement of the decade. Mr. Schumacher manifests a passion, an irrational hatred, a zeal to victimize my friends, a complete disregard for all fact and truth, and he has cared not that, in the attempt to pursue his wicked ends by aid of a criminal trial which should never have been conceived, he has driven Harriet Driver, a sweet, delightful, valuable person, to a stroke on the witness stand, purely as a result of the evil permeating his malicious zeal in this unholy cause of his. . . ."

"If he were an honorable man, on this occasion, Illinois Attorney General Neil Hartigan would do the decent thing and resign his office. Because it's his hand which is rather immediately behind Schumacher. Certain elements in the U.S. Department of Justice should also come out and tender their resignations over this affair, because they, too, are immediately behind Schumacher's actions and are his accomplices.

"I cry for justice. I cry it for Harriet Driver, the victim of the prosecution in this case, and I cry it for all those others who have suffered, those who have suffered under the administration of President George Bush on this account."

LaRouche's statement was seconded by Amelia Boynton-Robinson, a distinguished civil rights leader from Alabama and collaborator of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. In a statement released March 8, she called for a day of prayer and candlelight vigils for justice for Mrs. Driver.

"It is unbelievable to think," she said, "that men dressed in robes of black and pretending to be practicing law according to the U.S. Constitution, sitting upon the throne of justice, with a bible of constitutional rights of this United States of America, could defy God and the constitutional rules and regulations and deal with a human being with such abuse, with no mercy. . . ."

"'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' saith the Lord. Let us do our own part by having a prayer vigil through the entire United States and the entire world, asking God to remove these stumbling blocks of injustice that have caused citizens to cry out in mental pain: 'How long, Oh, God? How long, before You will remove these stumbling blocks which obstruct Your justice?'"

### **Case should never have come to trial**

The case against the three LaRouche associates has been a blatant political frameup since its inception. Schumacher has charged each defendant with three counts of burglary, one count of robbery, one count of theft by threat, and one count of intimidation, claiming that they forced Mrs. Driver to make contributions to publications and companies associated with LaRouche's political movement.

Yet Mrs. Driver herself was a very reluctant witness. Throughout her testimony, she continued to refer to the defendants by their first names, and described the reasons for

her political support. In a fashion hardly consistent with that of someone who has been robbed, she described each of the series of conversations and visits that occurred with "Pat and Ron." The worst she had to say was that she had been victimized and had acted "like a fool." Never did she say she had been robbed, threatened, or had ever felt afraid. Her testimony demonstrated that she has been pressured to testify, and that pressure has been applied by Schumacher as well as by family members. It is known that Mrs. Driver's health has been a concern among her friends, as a result of the pressure she felt from Schumacher.

When the trial opened on March 7, defense attorney Michael Null, in his opening statement, stressed that this is a political trial. Mrs. Driver contributed willingly to the cause represented by the defendants, he said, because she wanted to be part of the LaRouche movement, and was "thrilled to death to make a difference." She only stopped giving money at the urging of her financial adviser and family members.

"Harriet Driver was perfectly happy to contribute to a cause she thought would change the world," Null said. "She did not want to die without making a difference. She did not and was not held hostage by anybody."

Null said the defendants are part of a movement that is trying to change the world. LaRouche is a political dissident, like Andrei Sakharov or Nelson Mandela. The movement is trying to promote ideas about politics, philosophy, morality, and aesthetics. All movements need money, and these defendants raised some of the money for this movement.

Null told the jury that contrary to what they had been told, the LaRouche movement is not "far out" or extremist. They promote ideas which jurors will find are consonant with many of their own beliefs. They have been fighting satanism. They have been promoting policies to help farmers, to stop AIDS. They support people who run for office, like Mark Fairchild and Janice Hart, who won Democratic primaries in Illinois in 1986.

**Michael Billington**, the associate of LaRouche who was sentenced by a Virginia state court to 77 years in prison for political fundraising, on top of a 3-year federal sentence for the same alleged "crimes," was transferred to the federal penitentiary in Petersburg, Va. on March 6, and swiftly placed in administrative detention, also known as "the Hole." No reason was given. Billington has been subjected to continuous harassment in the prison system, since his jailing with Lyndon LaRouche and five others in January 1989. He has been held in lengthy solitary confinement and, in the Danbury, Connecticut federal prison, where he was incarcerated before his transfer to Petersburg, he was also confined in "the Hole."