

Du Pont Smith takes stand in rights case

Lewis du Pont Smith, the du Pont family heir who was declared mentally incompetent to manage his affairs more than four years ago because of his political affiliation with Lyndon LaRouche, left his enemies looking stupid when he took the stand on May 8 and May 9 in a court hearing before Judge Lawrence Wood in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Du Pont Smith's lucid testimony established his competence beyond a doubt, while the chief witness against him, the American Family Foundation psychiatrist David Halperin who was relied on by Judge Wood in his 1985 ruling, came off looking like an ideological fanatic who would, in the tradition of Nazi and Soviet psychiatry, say anything if it helped to advance his politically motivated theories about a "LaRouche cult."

The 33-year-old du Pont Smith was on the stand May 8 for four hours of direct examination, and on May 9 for three hours of cross-examination.

On direct, Smith made clear the real issue in his case: the ideas and policies of Lyndon LaRouche. He discussed his meetings with prominent political and human rights figures from Europe, Ibero-America, and the United States, pointing out that the importance of economist LaRouche's ideas and policies is widely recognized outside the United States.

He also explained his understanding of LaRouche's economic method, based on the tradition of American System economics. From that standpoint, Smith testified to his admiration for the historical accomplishments of the founder of the du Pont family in the United States, and his critical role in the fight for American independence, as well as those du Ponts who were political allies of Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War.

Smith's testimony prompted local papers to give prominent coverage of his family's mismanagement of his financial affairs, including two occasions on which Wilmington Trust Co., which is acting as his court-appointed guardian, failed to take his advice prior to major collapses in the stock market which LaRouche had forecast. The *West Chester Local Daily News*, for instance, headlined, "Smith: Bankers didn't listen, lost \$3 million of his money."

Questioned on his relationship with his family, which brought the original petition to have him declared incompe-

tent, and which is opposing his efforts to regain control of his affairs, Smith replied that he would like to be reconciled with them. "All they need to do is to simply recognize my right to lead my own life—my right to disagree politically. What they have done is an affront to the First Amendment, is an affront to my dignity."

Smith detailed his family's hostility to him and his wife for their decision to support the ideas of LaRouche, describing how his father, E. Newbold Smith, committed burglary against their home in Leesburg, Virginia; his family's attempt to have him kidnaped; their racially motivated attacks upon his Italian-American wife; and the family's collaboration with such persons as Henry Kissinger in operations to "get LaRouche." As Smith testified on cross examination, "My family has stated they know I'm not mentally incompetent. My mother stated to me in the hallway, yesterday, that my only problem was Lyndon LaRouche."

Smith also pointedly compared the 15-year sentence meted out to political prisoner LaRouche, and the 77-year sentence given to LaRouche associate Michael Billington, to the short jail terms given to junk bond hoaxsters Michael Milken and Ivan Boesky.

The 'Filioque' is put on trial

On cross examination, the family's attorney David Foulke attempted to badger, provoke, and embarrass Smith by portraying him as someone unaware of the significance of his own statements. For example, Foulke demanded he explain the theological concept of *Filioque* and how this "represents the fundamental difference between East and West." Du Pont Smith discussed how this Christian concept, which asserts that the Holy Spirit emanates from both the Father *and the Son*, establishes the importance of the individual human soul in Western European society, as opposed to the "collective soul" which characterizes Russian culture.

American Family Foundation psychiatrist David Halperin took the stand afterward, and attempted to characterize Smith's remarks on the *Filioque* as "incoherent, incomprehensible, and clearly dissociated." But the *West Chester Local Daily News* described the scene this way: "David Foulke, the du Pont family attorney, at one point asked him to explain something he wrote for a political publication concerning theology. Foulke told . . . Judge Wood he wanted to see if Smith understood his own words. Smith thought for a moment; he then held the courtroom spellbound with a five-minute dissertation on the basic theological differences between East and West."

No wonder that courtroom observers were not overly impressed when Halperin repeated his previous diagnosis that Smith is suffering from a "schizo affective disorder, with paranoid features." Under cross-examination, Halperin appeared more and more to resemble those Soviet "psychiatrists" who create their findings of "mental illness" out of whole cloth in order to eliminate political opponents.