

## Will Democratic Party give death penalty to itself?

by Mel Klenetsky

The selection of Al Gore by "Slick Willie" Clinton as his running mate is one more signal that the Democratic Party is on a likely path of self-destruction, as it alienates two of its historic constituencies since the days of FDR: minorities and the working class.

Gore embodies all of the features of what Lyndon LaRouche denounced in a recent memorandum as the "southern strategy" being used by both the Republican and Democratic parties in the "present trend toward the self-destruction of the United States." In 1991, Gore voted for the "fast track" for NAFTA. Gore headed the U.S. delegation to the Rio Summit. Gore appeared as a featured guest on an environmentalist show narrated by Prince Charles. His book, *Earth in Balance*, is a rabid environmentalist tract (see *EIR*, April 3).

Gore's Virginia campaign manager for his 1988 presidential campaign was Mary Sue Terry, the Virginia attorney general who has gained world notoriety for her zeal in carrying out the death penalty. Gore's presidential campaign was formally endorsed and financed by Armand Hammer, the late "Red Billionaire" who presided over Occidental Petroleum, of which the Gore family coal company, Island Creek, was a subsidiary.

### Clinton's cynical 'toughness'

As we write on July 10, just before the Democratic National Convention in New York, Arkansas Governor Clinton and his backers on the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Platform Committee have taken steps to quash discussion in any area that can create embarrassment for Clinton.

Two of the policies that Governor Clinton has advocated alienate him from the traditional constituencies of the Democratic Party. First, his pro-death penalty stand is an affront to the minority community, where it is well understood that

minority citizens are executed—not Wall Street bankers or high government officials, no matter how heinous their crimes of genocide or drug money-laundering may be. Second, the Democrats' traditional base in the labor movement is angry over the governor's support for NAFTA.

Clinton presents himself as one of the new breed of tough governors who can be more "law and order" than George Bush himself. He was chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council, which began after Reagan's defeat of Mondale in 1984, with the explicit idea that the Democratic Party had to become more like Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and the Republicans if it was ever going to win the presidency. Virginia Sen. Chuck Robb, Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn, and House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt from Missouri, were other leaders of the Leadership Council.

### No debate on life

Clinton, who was previously opposed to the death penalty, changed his position after losing the 1980 gubernatorial race. He ran again for governor in 1982 and won on a pro-death penalty platform. During the 1992 presidential primary races, Clinton flew back to Arkansas twice to oversee executions, in a breathtakingly cynical ploy to prove that he wasn't a "soft on crime" Democratic "wimp." Clinton knows, however, that many delegates in his camp were upset at the execution, during the New Hampshire primary, of the lobotomized Ricky Rector.

Clinton has been lobbied by members of the Arkansas National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and black leaders around the country to commute the sentence of Barry Lee Fairchild, a black death row inmate in Arkansas who currently has an appeal before the federal courts. Fairchild not only was not the triggerman in the crime he was convicted of, but also had his confession beaten out

of him.

On June 27, Bob Fittrakis, an Ohio delegate committed to Jerry Brown, who is running for Congress from Columbus, introduced an anti-death penalty resolution at the Democratic Platform Committee hearings in Washington, D.C. This resolution, first introduced as an Ohio-New York amendment, received 49 of the 186 possible Platform Committee votes. Having failed to receive a majority, the Fittrakis amendment was re-submitted as a minority plank with 44 signatures—7 beyond the 37 required.

Upon receiving the signatures for the Fittrakis plank, Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado stated that all minority planks would be debated unless two-thirds of the signatures were withdrawn. Yet by July 3, the DNC claimed that the Fittrakis plank was based on “fraudulent” signatures and was not going to be submitted. Subsequently, the DNC told the American Civil Liberties Union and others that five of the 42 signatures were not valid, and therefore the minority plank could not go through—although this decision flouts the very rules Romer had announced.

Meanwhile, the DNC announced that all means for introducing emergency, or last-minute, resolutions on the floor of the convention had been eliminated. Normally, provisions have been made for state delegations, or petitioners meeting a certain threshold, to bring an issue to debate. Now that era of free speech is over. As of this writing, Fittrakis is taking legal action to get the DNC to submit his plank to the convention for a vote on July 14.

The strongarm tactics of the Clinton crowd have become an issue among the 680 Brown delegates, the Paul Tsongas delegates, and others. The Platform Committee voted down all of the amendments that were presented by the Brown and Tsongas delegates and allowed only four of Tsongas’s amendments to go through as minority planks. Brown’s planks were all voted down. Brown is not being asked to speak at the convention unless he agrees to endorse Clinton.

Jesse Jackson was also not invited to speak, unless he agreed to speak for Clinton. He did agree, but the move to disenfranchise black Democrats was already clear. It was underlined by the choice of a white southerner, Al Gore, as Clinton’s running-mate, and the scheduling of the Democratic Convention on concurrent dates with the NAACP convention in Nashville.

Workers for Lyndon LaRouche’s presidential campaign are circulating a resolution against the death penalty which is broader than that proposed for the minority plank. As of July 9, some 150 delegates had signed it, joining the leading civil rights fighters, like Rosa Parks and Joseph Lowery, who had already endorsed the resolution. Among prominent constituency leaders lending their support to this drive are the Baptist Ministers’ Conference of Los Angeles; Bishop Francis A. Quinn of the Roman Catholic diocese of Sacramento, California; Rev. Willie Barrow, of Operation PUSH in Chicago; Hon. Richard Hatcher, former vice chairman of the DNC and former mayor of Gary, Indiana; and Annie

Coleman, president of ILWU Local 2 in San Francisco.

Two state delegations, South Dakota and Washington State, endorsed anti-death penalty resolutions for the convention. The Arizona and Iowa Democratic Parties have passed anti-death penalty resolutions for their state planks. Fourteen states are opposed to the death penalty, and an additional 16 states have death penalties, but have never used them. This translates into a substantial faction within the Democratic Party in opposition to the policy that Clinton has decided he will use to show the electorate that he is tougher than George Bush.

Also disenfranchised by the Clinton clique is organized labor. Owen Bieber, the head of the United Auto Workers union, denounced Clinton during the Michigan primary for his support of NAFTA and his support of the UAW workers in Arlington, Texas who broke union solidarity in signing a separate contract with General Motors.

“A large proportion of American labor is very unhappy” with Clinton’s stand on NAFTA, even though institutionally, the AFL-CIO is backing his candidacy, a high-level staffer at the AFL’s Washington headquarters told a journalist on June 9. “NAFTA is an issue that extends beyond the concerns of labor,” he said. “The key issue for the U.S. is whether we decide to retain and maintain our manufacturing base.” The push for NAFTA indicates that those who favor “a low-wage, low-technology future for the U.S.” are in the ascendancy.

### **Southern strategy**

In a memorandum dated June 28, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. warned, “The key to the present dominant feature in the trend toward self-destruction of the United States is the southern strategy of the Republican and Democratic parties.” The “southern strategy” launched in Richard Nixon’s 1968 election campaign, LaRouche said, “put an ape in the White House,” Jimmy Carter in 1976. The pattern continued ever since: George Bush as a nominal “Texan” was added to the Reagan ticket in 1980, and “the southern, Atlanta-centered crowd” stuck an “unelectable dummy, Dukakis” at the head of the Democratic ticket in 1988 and “thus ensured the election of an otherwise unelectable George Bush.”

Presidential candidate LaRouche continued: “The Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite [of Freemasonry] has exacted terrible penalties, inclusive of the present Supreme Court and justice system” in return for these electoral deals. The lineage of the Southern Jurisdiction traces back to the founding of the Mother Lodge in Charleston in 1801, which produced as spinoffs, not only the Confederacy but also the B’nai B’rith which participated in the founding of the Ku Klux Klan in 1867, LaRouche explained.

Abraham Lincoln said that a nation cannot be half-slave, half-free, he recalled. “The chattel slavery in the southern states reduced the poor white population of the southern states to a condition not unlike that of pigs in language and morality . . . and was destroying the entire United States.” Similarly, the slavery imposed on Mexico through NAFTA “destroys the United States economy today.”