

Wieczorek campaigned for development in South Dakota election

by Suzanne Rose

While the Nov. 8 congressional election in South Dakota took place amidst voter hysteria over whether video gambling would be returned to the state by a referendum, making it possible to restore savage budget cuts made by the governor when such gambling was declared unconstitutional by a State Supreme Court ruling in July, the independent campaign of Mt. Vernon farmer Ron Wieczorek focused on getting the people of South Dakota to understand and fight for real economic development policies. Standing apart from his two opponents, incumbent Democrat Tim Johnson and Republican Jan Berkhout, Wieczorek made the economy and his association with the policies of Lyndon LaRouche the primary issues in his campaign. Johnson and Berkhout refused to address the imminence of a monetary collapse, the record decline of family farms, which are the mainstay of the South Dakota economy, or the implications of the expected expansion of gambling, which, before the court decision, was the third largest source of state revenue.

Wieczorek's vote total of 10,000, or 4%, was up from the 6,000 votes his campaign received two years ago, and reflected in part a new openness in the media in parts of the state to the economic growth perspective provided by LaRouche, which the campaign represented. On election night, a KDLT news anchor in Sioux Falls interviewed a political science professor from South Dakota University and asked him about the Wieczorek campaign, its association with LaRouche, and Wieczorek's plans for reorganizing the banking system. The response of the professor was that the campaign was a part of the political spectrum. Absent, except in the Sioux Falls paper, the *Argus Leader*, were suggestions that LaRouche or his policies were "extremist," a label which LaRouche's political opponents have used in the past to discredit him.

Media blackout broken

Print media and radio in parts of the state were unusually open to the Wieczorek campaign. He gave at least 50 interviews to news media during the last three weeks of the campaign. On several of the radio interviews, the interviewers solicited his extended comments on the potential for a blow-

out of the "derivatives"-based monetary system, and the need for new monetary arrangements which would foster development. Radio interviews which were scheduled for 5-10 minutes, often went on for an hour.

On two extended television spots, one an hour on public television on Oct. 22, and the second a televised debate with his two opponents, Wieczorek made it clear that his aim was to represent in Congress the best interests of his constituents, which he had educated himself to understand by becoming an associate of economist and political leader LaRouche. He said that his first actions in Congress would be to declare a national economic emergency to bring the U.S. monetary system back under the authority of the Constitution, and to move for the exoneration of his friend Lyndon LaRouche.

On the televised debate, Wieczorek struck at the fantasy world inhabited by his opponents. Berkhout, an enthusiastic supporter of the Federal Reserve System, believes that the economy is doing fine, and has in the past supported the legalization of drugs. Johnson says that he believes his job is to represent a consensus or middle ground of the voters of South Dakota. Wieczorek attacked Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) and the Milton Friedman school of economics, which underlies his opponents' preoccupation with budget cutting and budget balancing. He called for lifting the sanctions on Iraq, and a worldwide reconstruction effort to be financed by a return to Hamiltonian economics. In their concluding remarks, both opponents made clear they were only offering "mainstream" measures. But failing to buck the tide means turning the state over to reliance on gambling revenues and a takeover by organized crime.

Water projects highlighted

Both the *Rapid City Journal* and the Brookings newspapers printed lengthy commentaries by the Wieczorek campaign, featuring LaRouche's development orientation. Water is a major issue in this arid state. During the campaign, at a meeting of the Mid Dakota Rural Water Systems Conference, Sen. Tom Daschle (D), a sponsor of a new rural water initiative which is piping treated water from the St. James and Missouri rivers right to rural farms which have been relying on well water, lamented that there is no new funding for water projects in the 1994-95 budget. Wieczorek's literature cited the North American Water and Power Alliance (Nawapa) project as an example of the kind of great infrastructure project which his campaign upholds, a proposal made in the early 1970s to direct water flows from the Yukon River in Canada through a trench in the Rocky Mountains, which would increase flows to states like South Dakota. Wieczorek also called for the completion of the Pic Sloan plan of water management systems along the Missouri River, and attacked the new Army Corps of Engineers plan to alter flows, supposedly to benefit wildlife, recreation, and tourism, at the expense of the productive economy.