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## Australia

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# LaRouche's CEC Launches Drive for National Bank

by Allen Douglas

“An Urgent Call for a New National Bank” was the title of a full-page advertisement placed by Lyndon LaRouche's associates in The Citizens Electoral Council (CEC) in Australia's major national daily newspaper, *The Australian*, on Sept. 26. The ad's prominent appearance and the impressive array of 582 elected officials and institutional leaders who signed it, vaulted LaRouche's name into media headlines throughout Australia.

This reflects a lawful process: All over the world, from the Italian Parliament to Ibero-America, and now in a core country of the British Commonwealth, leading figures who want a pathway for their nations out of the current global, systemic crisis, are finding leadership and competent policies from LaRouche.

Now that a strong move for nationalist banking—the “American System” of political economy—is being made in Australia, the uproar has been amplified by the existence of an intense slander and harassment campaign of a decade's duration, conducted by the Rupert Murdoch-dominated news media and the rabidly Jabotinskyite Anti-Defamation Commission of B'nai B'rith, against LaRouche's associates in the CEC. With LaRouche already a red-hot issue in Australian politics, the “national bank” ad escalated the fight to save the nation with LaRouche's ideas.

### To Revive the ‘Commonwealth Bank’

The “Urgent Call” excoriated the policies of globalization introduced into Australia beginning in 1983, with the Australian Labor Party governments of Prime Ministers Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, and continued by the Liberal-National Party coalition of Prime Minister John Howard. These policies “have also produced an international economic crisis, with potential dire consequences for Australia,” it warned.

“Therefore, we urgently *demand* that the Parliament begin immediate moves toward the near-term establishment of a new national bank, with the kind of broad-ranging powers necessary to bring our callous private banks into line, and to initiate a recovery of our industries, our agriculture, our environment, and of our social and physical infrastructure, in order to provide the chance for a happy, optimistic future for all Australians, of whatever creed, colour, or country of origin. Such was the dream of the courageous founder of

our original Commonwealth Bank, King O'Malley; it is now urgent that we make that dream a reality.”

This Commonwealth Bank was Australia's first national bank, the fight to establish and defend which, defined most of the major political battles in the country during the 20th Century. It was founded in 1911 by Member of Parliament King O'Malley, an immigrant from the United States, who proclaimed himself “the Alexander Hamilton of Australia.” The Commonwealth National Bank, as it was known, officially lasted until it was privatized in 1995. Thus the fight over national banking is by no means foreign to Australia, nor even a matter of the distant past.

The ad concluded, “The Citizens Electoral Council hereby initiates an urgent call for one million Australians from all walks of life and all parties, to sign and circulate the above petition for a national bank, to thus constitute a mighty political force, in the face of deepening national and world political and economic crises.”

### A National Campaign

The CEC began this campaign in the early Summer, and expanded it through the circulation of one-half million leaflets, and through telephoning thousands of parliamentarians, local government officials, and prominent Australians from all walks of life. Some 1,500 of these agreed to distribute the leaflet, which spread the campaign through institutional layers all over the country.

The leaflet located the fight for a national bank in the global strategic picture, featuring LaRouche's role: “The world is now hurtling toward the worst financial crash in history, as long forecast by physical economist and U.S. 2004 Presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. This crash, LaRouche and his associates at *Executive Intelligence Review* magazine have documented, has been brought on by globalisation, beginning with the elimination of the old, fixed-exchange-rate international monetary system by U.S. President Richard Nixon in 1971. LaRouche has proposed to replace the current, bankrupt international monetary system with a ‘New Bretton Woods’—a return to the successful fixed-exchange and national-protectionist features of the old Bretton Woods system.

“LaRouche described the connection between national banks and national prosperity as follows: ‘The essential difference between a sovereign nation-state and a financier-rentier-dominated form of feudal, or pro-feudalist—e.g., financier-oligarchical—society, is expressed, typically, as the difference between national banking and central banking. It is precisely the intentional and vicious elimination of such protectionist measures, peculiar to the modern nation-state institution, which has brought the world as a whole to the now-catastrophic, rapidly worsening, global financial and physical-economic state of affairs today. The placing of the world under the control of private banking interests, would quickly doom civilization for perhaps decades to come.’”

CEC National Secretary Craig Isherwood told *EIR* shortly after the publication of the ad, “The campaign for a national bank followed soon after the circulation of the Feb. 2002 of our newspaper, the *New Citizen* in 50,000 copies, with the groundbreaking 32-page feature, ‘The Infrastructure Road to Recovery—Let’s Build Our Way Out of the Depression.’ This featured a series of long-overdue major projects, particularly in railroads and water.

“Since then,” Isherwood said, “Australia has plunged into one of the worst droughts since the European settlement beginning 1788. In discussions with many engineers, local and state officials, and infrastructure specialists of all sorts regarding these projects, we repeatedly got the question, ‘Tremendous, but how are you going to finance it?’ This led to the campaign for a national bank, for which we already had drafted legislation after consultations with Mr. LaRouche in the early 1990s. We have 20,000 signatures so far, with clear indications of the pressure that this is starting to put on Parliament. We have also gotten the first of what we intend to be at least several hundred signatures for the new call for a New Bretton Woods.” He referenced the Italian Parliament’s Sept. 25 breakthrough vote for a new international monetary system, and Helga Zepp-LaRouche’s issuance of an international New Bretton Woods resolution.

“That’s the only context in which a national bank can work,” Isherwood said, “and we intend to force that issue into the center of Australian politics.”

### Signers Surprise Australia

Signers of the ad included:

- Members of Parliament—national Senator Len Harris and three state MPs; 12 former national MPs, including former Deputy Prime Minister, The Hon. Jim Cairns, and former Minister for Labour, The Hon. Clyde Cameron.
- Local government mayors and councillors—the entire country was represented, including New South Wales (85 signers from 55 councils); South Australia (11 signers from 11 councils); Victoria (27 signers from 18 councils); Western Australia (65 signers from 34 councils); Queensland (72 signers from 41 councils) Northern Territory (3 signers from 2 councils), and Tasmania (38 signers from 20 councils).
- Fifty-one labor signers represented most major unions; 22 were state or national secretaries or presidents.



*Activists for Australia’s Citizens Electoral Councils organizing in late September for revival of the Commonwealth National Bank of King O’Malley (above), the “Alexander Hamilton of Australia.” CEC’s drive has surprised Australia with its extent of support; it’s linked to LaRouche’s New Bretton Woods monetary system concept.*



- There was prominent representation from the business, media, military, academic, and cultural professions, from religious and ethnic leaders, and from political party officials.

The CEC held Sept. 26 press conferences in most major cities around the country, garnering extensive regional press coverage, straight coverage on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News Website, and a ten-minute interview on the country’s major radio station, ABC Radio National. The ABC announcer interviewed national bank opponent John Sutton, Assistant National Secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Energy and Mining Union (CFMEU), the country’s most powerful. Sutton mustered weak slanders about the CEC being a “right-wing conspiratorial mob” associated with Lyndon LaRouche. He was repeatedly asked what his objection to Lyndon LaRouche was, but made no coherent reply.

Melbourne’s major paper, *The Age*, also attempted a slander under the title, “Name Behind Bank Petition Has Signatories Running for Cover.” Despite the misleading title, and the reporter’s obvious efforts to intimidate people into withdrawing their support, he managed to extract only a couple of equivocal statements from among all those he called. Former Deputy Prime Minister Jim Cairns, a past supporter of the New Bretton Woods idea, stoutly defended his participation even to provocative and hostile reporters, as did other officials interviewed by media.

Additionally, in their numerous radio shows, CEC spokesmen broke the news about the dramatic developments in Italy just hours before, where the Italian Parliament had called for a “new financial architecture” inspired by LaRouche’s New Bretton Woods.