

The Case of a Living Stage Fright

A statement by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., written on Aug. 10 and issued by the LaRouche in 2004 Presidential election committee.

California politics have, so far, survived occasional fits of pure silliness. It survived Simple Simon. Will it survive Arnold Schwarzenegger's latest prank?

On the stage, as in politics, performing is not necessarily decent acting. Arnie has now broken the rules of decency on both counts. As any competent actor will agree, with a grimace, neither the stage nor politics is the place one should prefer to be employed in displaying carnival side-show qualities of freakishness. The time has come for the would-be "governator" to give up the steroids, politics, and acting in remakes of old Frankenstein-monster flicks.

When that confused fellow, Arnie, stepped upon the political stage, under the sponsorship of the world's worst theatrical director, President George W. Bush, Arnie showed what a bad actor he was really capable of becoming.

There is an important principle in Classical drama, which covers cases such as Arnie's current political freak-show performances. Being a high-paid feature, or "geek act," in a series of carnival freak-shows, is not necessarily an expression of the highest degree of artistic skills. Schwarzenegger should have avoided politics, and repaired his lousy career in entertainment, by studying German, instead. I mean he should either master the principles of those dramas of Friedrich Schiller which brought people out of the theater better citizens than they had entered, or he should keep away from politics, absolutely, and find a nice safe hobby as an alternative.

There is a politics in drama, of course; but also a place for drama in politics. That was Schiller's point. The Classical stage—in the tradition of the Classical Greek, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Lessing—is, as Schiller emphasized, potentially the most efficient way to inspire audiences of citizens into a sublime sense of the meaning of real-life history.

Properly done, performances of Classical drama enrich the development of society by affording the fellow who has entered the theater as a simple citizen, a subsequently higher sense of himself, politically and morally, than as thinking himself a poor fellow, "only me," situated proximate to the bottom of the heap. By insight into the errors by which societies ruin themselves, the citizen as spectator of Classical drama, rises to sit in judgment upon the characteristic combined errors of both governing powers and simple citizens

alike. From that experience with Classical drama, he recognizes his authority and responsibility as a citizen, for the care of the society of which he is part.

Therefore, the task of the Classical playwright is to present real-life historical situations on stage, and to present them in such a way, by such dramatic devices, that the crucially determining feature of that selected part of history is conveyed, as insight into real history, into the imagination of the audience. As Shakespeare warns, through the part of Chorus, in *Henry Vth*, it is not the artificiality of what confronts the audience's literal senses from the stage, or on the screen, which is the drama; rather, it is what the skills of author, director, and actors are able to bestir for view on an alternate stage, the Classical stage of the audience's imagination.



Those looking to the Terminator as governor may think life is just a movie; but the real-life tragedy of California reflects 30-years of disastrous national economic policy shifts, as LaRouche describes. Reversing them will take "a man, not a machine"; the Presidential candidate explains how Gov. Gray Davis can do it.

Good dramatic performances introduce nothing sensual which distracts the audience's attention from the stage of the imagination; good authors, directors, and actors will ruthlessly ban all such sensual distractions. Good politicians, as Abraham Lincoln's addresses, or, Franklin Roosevelt's do, do the same. The relationship between the Classical stage and real-life politics, is as Schiller emphasized in dedicating himself, as historian, to the work of drama.

There are deep, fundamental principles involved in the human mind's ability to assimilate the benefits of Classical drama in this way. I shall not explain those here, but simply refer those who wish to do so, to study my "Visualizing the Complex Domain," where the relevant principles are summarized (see EIR, July 11, 2003).

What Arnie Doesn't Know

Take my own case. What relevant things do I know that fantasist Arnie does not? In other words, why is Arnie so pathetically ignorant and wrong on the matter of the causes and cure of the present California situation?

I am a political-economist by profession, and the most successful long-range forecaster on record of the recent several decades. My original discoveries in the branch of science known as physical economy, and my related attention to the ancient-through-modern internal history of physical science and Classical European culture, are an essential part of my being.

In all that I do as a political figure, I act upon the knowledge that virtually all of my fellow-citizens are looking out at the world as a whole from a small niche in their society. My job, therefore, is to put that citizen in a seat in the theater of our nation's history: both our internal history, and the way in which that internal history interacts with the world as a whole. I wish that citizen, as Schiller did, to come from the experience of seeing these larger historical realities through my eyes, and to sense himself or herself elevated in the power to understand the processes which are currently affecting the destiny of our nation as a whole.

The contrary sort of political behavior, is the populist politician who says to his constituent: "I am small-minded, like you. I know that you are concerned with the immediate interests, here and now, of yourself, your family, and your community. I stick to those issues in the small." Arnie the actor is playing the part of that all-too-typical, small-minded politician, a typical small-minded, right-wing populist charlatan, like the wild-eyed exterminator from Houston, Texas' Tom DeLay, or former Senator Phil Gramm's wife, Wendy, of Enron notoriety. The Gramms, both of whom played a key role in bringing Enron to California, were among the worst of the small-minded political types which Arnie is mimicking in his own style today.

I see today's situation in California much differently than the small-minded political opportunists do. Ask yourself: What has happened to California since Spring 2000? Make a

list of all the most frightening developments within the state since then. The most important of the bad things which happened, are chiefly evidence of the fact that the world outside California, the world the populist politicians refused to see, has come crashing down on the state. California is feeling the effects of a long-overdue collapse of the 1971-2003 "floating-exchange-rate" world monetary-financial system. The "Information Technology" bubble has crashed. National deregulation mania tricked California into being looted by Enron and similar pirates. The list goes on and on.

What do I do in this situation? What do I put on the political stage before you, for you to see?

I take you back, briefly, to the Flapper Age of the 1920s, the Age of Coolidge. I show you the terrible Crash of 1929-1933 and what a cruel President Hoover did to make it worse. I show you President Roosevelt leading the grey faces of ruined American citizens out of the debris which Coolidge and Hoover had wrought, to make our nation the greatest economic power among the nations of the Earth, the only real power to emerge at the closing moment of World War II. I show you the continued role of the United States as the world's leading producer nation, until things changed to ugly with the 1962 missiles-crisis, President Kennedy's assassination, and the Indo-China war.

I show you how our nation, and California itself, was transformed from the tradition of the world's great producer power, to a predatory, consumerist society teetering at the ruined brink of national bankruptcy.

All this happened, because you were not watching. You let it happen. You were so narrowly focussed on "the interest of me, my family, and my community," that you went along with those national policy-trends which finally brought their inevitable result, the present situation.

See that part of your history as it were the subject of a great Classical drama, performed by great Classically trained actors, written perhaps as if by Sinclair Lewis, or Eugene O'Neill. Find yourself in a seat in that theater. Find your mind focussed not on the real-life actors on stage, but on the stage of your powers of imagination. Hear yourself thinking, "How did we let this happen to us? Why didn't we see it coming? Why were we so blind?"

Then, see Arnie playing "Elmer Gantry" to the crowd. The choice is yours to make.

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