

## **Who Listens to LaRouche? By Jody Powell**

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The Good Book says that where one's treasure is, there will his heart be also. For those who work in the White House or at top jobs in major federal agencies, the operative word is "time." It is the most precious of commodities; there is never enough of it to devote to even the most pressing of priorities or to spend with the people you really need to see.

What, then, can be said of an administration whose senior officials devote substantial chunks of time to one of the looniest groups to attach itself to the American political process in recent years. According to a mind-boggling article in the Nov. 19 issue of The New Republic and an earlier report on NBC's "First Camera," the people getting this attention from the administration are the followers of one Lyndon LaRouche, whose rantings became familiar to millions of Americans through \$3.7 million of paid political broadcasts during this year's campaign, when he told us, among other things, that Walter Mondale is a Soviet intelligence agent.

The officials, according to The New Republic, include: two members of the president's Cabinet, three senior members of the National Security Council staff (including the special assistant to the president's national security adviser and the architect of his Star Wars policy), an assistant attorney general, plus undersecretaries of defense, treasury and commerce.

What we (and the administration) are dealing with here is not your weird-but-harmless, garden-variety wackos. LaRouche and his front organizations -- the Fusion Energy Foundation (they're the ones in airport lobbies without the polyester gowns), the National Caucus of Labor Committees, and an organization called the National Democratic Policy Council -- are well financed, obviously well connected and vicious.

Among the things one might want to know about LaRouche and his followers:

LaRouche has charged that the CIA has kidnapped his workers and brainwashed them through homosexual rape.

They blame the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and John Kennedy on a Zionist-British conspiracy -- which LaRouche says is also trying to assassinate him, with the assistance of the KGB, the Anti-Defamation League, the FBI, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, The National Review and The New Republic.

They blame the international drug traffic on Queen Elizabeth and American Jewish leaders.

LaRouche sent groups of his followers for training in guerrilla warfare at a camp in north Georgia run by a noted arms dealer and mercenary.

If you doubt that these people mean business, check with reporters who have crossed them:

A reporter in New Hampshire was threatened by LaRouche and, after writing an unflattering series of articles, found his three cats strangled and deposited on his doorstep on three successive nights.

A researcher for a local TV station in Chicago found her neighborhood plastered with fliers charging that she was a prostitute after she began working on a LaRouche story.

A Baltimore Sun reporter had a similar experience.

An NBC researcher in Washington found her car riddled with bullet holes after a LaRouche story.

Other NBC employees received threatening phone calls following the same story.

This writer received several days of threatening calls after a 1982 column poking fun at LaRouche and his crowd.

The response of the administration officials involved was "they provide helpful information" and "they are supporting a number of our programs" (though the White House press office does say that contacts between the National Security Council staff and LaRouche have ended).

The only thing more surprising than the nonchalance of the government is the indifference of the press. Neither the NBC report nor the New Republic story has provoked substantial follow-up from other news organizations.

No one has asked how LaRouche was able to get a telegram, signed by the secretary of state, warning American diplomats not to speak disparagingly of the LaRouchies. No one seems to wonder why the IRS is not looking into the affairs of a man who receives millions of dollars from publications and contributions but pays no taxes and claims not to know who pays for the Virginia mansion in which he lives. No one seems interested in what sort of "helpful information" the administration received from this bunch of thugs and bigots.

I recall a press corps that stirred up a major, and mostly justified, furor over relationships between Libya and a president's brother. Wonder whatever happened to those guys?

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