

story of how it's better, when the heavy storm comes, to be able to bend so as not to have to break: a fable inevitably political.

La Fontaine tells of the uprooting of "Celui de qui la tête au ciel étoit voisine / Et dont les pieds touchoient à l'empire des morts," which Shapiro catches up in the wind's uprooting "the one, who, just before, / Had risen heavenward with lofty head, / Whose feet had reached the empire of the dead." Spector's "The tree whose top thrust upward to heaven's domain, / And whose roots reached down toward the realm of the dead" is to be faulted not for its free-accentual looseness, but for the lack of point and effectiveness in its deployment, here as throughout.

In other instances, this causes Spector's version to lose the point of proverbial lines so famous in the French tradition that it's hard to know whether the poet has coined them, or is merely quoting them: for instance, the opening of the fable of the wolf and the lamb, which begins "La raison du plu fort est toujours le meilleure; / Nous l'allons montrer tout à l'heure," which Spector gives as "The strong are always best at proving they're right. / Witness the case we're now going to cite." But Shapiro's "The strongest argue best, and always win. / Read on: you'll find the proof thereof herein," although it pads the second line a little and defers the "tout à l'heure," makes up for it with the touch of wit in "thereof herein," and certainly gives the opening line its due. (If liberties are to be taken with it, I much prefer the artful chiasm of Elizur Wright, in 1841: "The strongest reasons always yield / To reasons of the strongest." Robert Thomson, on the other hand, an earlier English translator who takes unpardonable liberties that often totally deflect the moral point, represents the excesses of syntactic inversion in "Strength upon right with ease can trample, / As will appear by this example.")

The one advantage of Spector's version is its completeness, and with the accompanying French text it can be useful for reference (although it unfortunately lacks any annotations). It is indeed too bad that Shapiro did not give us some of the celebrated longer pieces, such as the moral essay addressed to Madame de la Sablière that concludes Book 9, or the wonderful *Les Compagnons d'Ulysse*, in which the poet, following Plutarch and other writers, works a splendid turn on Circe's magic. Ulysses' men, each transformed into a different sort of beast, all elect, with powerful pragmatic and satiric arguments, to remain animals rather than

being returned to human form: "Ils croyaient s'affranchir suivants leurs passions, / Ils étaient esclaves d'eux-mêmes." (Spector: "They thought indulging their passions had set them free; / Slaves of themselves, it would seem"; but even with its late-romantic syntactic inversion, Elizur Wright is tighter, and avoids the weak passing move of "it would seem" for the rhyme: "Where passion led, they thought their course was free; / Self-bound their chains they could not see." Here again, Spector has no ear for epigrammatic closure, and I long to hear what Shapiro would do with this.)

I also miss, in Shapiro's handsomely produced volume, the analogous bite and the deft turning of Grandville's celebrated illustrations, rather than the bland ones that are included. The jacket blurb suggests that they may have been chosen as being appropriate for children, for whom the way in which they merely depict literal animals, instead of allegories, will be even less helpful. But Shapiro's version reads aloud wonderfully, whether for children or adults, and works for readers with or without knowledge of the originals. The better you know them, the more pleasure his translations can give.

Among the fables Shapiro includes are two of the kind that would not be thought of by most readers as Aesopian. One, the fable of Discord, continues her story from Olympian surroundings to human life, by giving her a father named "Thine-and-Mine" and a brother named "True-False," and by having her end up in residence in the inn of marriage. The other is "L'Amour et la Folie," an etiological fable of the blinding of Cupid. This

was a favorite Renaissance motif, investigated over 50 years ago by Erwin Panofsky, which played on the fine ambiguity of the phrase "Love is blind": it could mean that Cupid, blindfolded, shoots his arrows randomly, and also that all lovers are blind to truths about their desires' objects and themselves as well. The translator's skill and wit come through beautifully. I can make no better recommendation of his work than to give the entire narrative part, starting with its inspired handling of the internal rhyme in the original's "La Folie et l'Amour jouoient un jour ensemble":

Folly and Love, one day at play together,
 Had a dispute. The latter wondered
 whether
 The Council of the Gods ought not be
 called
 Folly, incensed, punched, flailed away
 And robbed the other of the light of day;
 Whose mother, Venus, properly ap-
 palled—
 Shrieking for vengeance, woman that she
 was—
 Deafened the gods and won them to her
 cause:
 Nemesis, Jove, Hell's judges too—
 In short, the whole Olympian crew.
 "No punishment is hard enough," she
 pleaded;
 "My son is now an invalid.
 Do what you have to do!" The court
 acceded,
 And so, indeed, do it they did:
 In view of public weal and private woe,
 They sentenced Folly evermore to go
 Abroad with Love, withersoever,
 And be his constant guide, forever.

JOHN HOLLANDER is the author most recently of *Harp Lake* (Knopf) and *Melodious Gile* (Yale University Press).

The Making of a Madman

By JOHN JUDIS

Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism by Dennis King

(Doubleday, 312 pp., \$19.95)

America has had its aristocratic anti-Semites, like Henry Adams and Albert J. Nock, and its gutter ideologues, like William Dudley Pedley and George Lincoln Rockwell, but almost none of them has achieved the sheer notoriety of Lyndon LaRouche. An obscure Trotskyist and a leader of a minor New Left splinter group, LaRouche was trans-

formed sometime in the early 1970s into a publicity-hungry, mob-tied, neo-Nazi crackpot with zealous followers around the globe, friends on the Reagan administration National Security Council, and federal matching funds for his Democratic presidential bids. Even last year, as LaRouche and his followers faced numerous federal indictments for credit card fraud, they played a critical but

largely unacknowledged role in undermining Michael Dukakis's presidential prospects.

LaRouche has often been misconstrued by his opponents. Many type him as a "conservative Democrat," somewhere to the right of, say, Sam Nunn. When Daniel P. Moynihan attacked his LaRouche-allied opponent in the New York primary in 1982 for being anti-Semitic, he was criticized by CONDUCT, a citizens group composed of Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Bishop Paul Moore Jr., and other leading New York clergy, for injecting "issues of bigotry" into the campaign. Other critics have been intimidated by LaRouche's physical and legal threats, and by his willingness to say anything and to print anything to discredit an opponent.

As a result, the job of unmasking LaRouche has been left primarily to a small band of courageous free-lancers, led by Dennis King. King deserved a Pulitzer Prize for the investigative reports on LaRouche that he published in the Manhattan weekly *Our Town* and in *THE NEW REPUBLIC*. Now he has written an authoritative biography of LaRouche and his movement. It will probably not win any awards, either (it is fairly disorganized and difficult to read), but it will be the definitive work on its crazy, chilling subject. The book deserves to be bought not only for its plot, but also to reward its author for sticking it out in the face of constant harassment.

Lyndon LaRouche was born in 1922 in Rochester, New Hampshire. From King's researches, and from LaRouche's repeatedly revised autobiography, *The Power of Reason*, we know that LaRouche's father, a small-business man, was a creature of resentments, moved by ancient grudges. (With his usual lack of self-reflection, LaRouche says of himself, "My father and I always differed; grudges were not my predilection.") Lyndon Sr. quit the United Shoe Company when he was passed over for a promotion, and spent the next decades trying to do the company in, even testifying in a government case against it.

LaRouche's parents were fundamentalist Quakers who became deeply involved in the politics of the church. In 1937 LaRouche's father, writing under an assumed name, privately published a polemic against left-wing Quakers. He accused the American Friends Service Committee of being Bolsheviks, and criticized its members for attacking a country that was opposed to Bolshevism—King reasons that he referred to Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy. Lyndon Sr. also chastised a Rhode Island Friends group for not applauding an anti-Jewish speech

by a Palestinian. His political positions, as well as his petit bourgeois anger, would eventually be echoed by his son, but not until Lyndon Jr. had undertaken a tortured journey through the sectarian left.

LaRouche, who as a Quaker pacifist rejected military service in World War II, fell under the spell of Marxism at a conscientious objector camp. After the war, he enrolled at Northeastern University to study physics, but dropped out to participate full time in politics. In 1948 he applied for membership in the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, and the next year, under the name "Lyn Marcus" (that is, "Lenin Marx"), he went to work in a factory on the party's behalf. In all, LaRouche spent 17 years in the SWP.

The SWP was a tiny sect bedeviled by the Communist Party on one side and an indifferent, or hostile, working class on the other. Its members were united by their opposition to capitalism and to Stalinist communism, and by their conviction, derived from the history of Lenin's Bolshevik Party, that what matters most in a revolutionary organization is not its size, but its understanding of historical forces. This conviction, combined with a measure of internal democracy, led to innumerable schisms over seemingly minor issues (like the class character of the Ceylonese government). It also later provided LaRouche with a ready rationalization for the size of his National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC). "If a small group not only accurately assesses the nature of this lawful course of [historical] developments," LaRouche wrote in 1979, "but is able to chart the merging course of events, that relatively small group can exert an unusual influence upon larger groups."

During LaRouche's years in the SWP, he read extensively in economics, history, and popular science. He also became a successful management consultant for May & Co., counseling corporations on methods of reducing their labor costs at the same time that he was trying to overthrow the capitalist system. LaRouche has always had an ability to conceptualize. His grasp of Marxist economics, for instance, was certainly as good as that of a bright left-wing graduate student; and he could hold his own in conversations with engineers about fusion or computer technology. In 1966, after he was expelled from the SWP for trying to organize a radical schism with British schismatic Gerald Healy, LaRouche began teaching Marxist economics at the Free School of New York, where he assembled a following of New Leftists, including the leaders of the Columbia University branch of the Maoist

Progressive Labor Party. During the Columbia strike in 1968, LaRouche organized his own faction inside SDS: the SDS Labor Committee.

LaRouche's faction was distinguished by its theoretical seriousness and its rejection of Weatherman-style violence and Black Panther-induced guilt. In the fall of 1968 his group broke with the rest of SDS when it backed the teachers' union against black community groups in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville strike. Like other New Left groups of that period, the SDS Labor Committee had a fanatic edge, but it was expressed in its members' conviction that they had the most far-reaching and penetrating analysis of world capitalism. Many of the activists that LaRouche attracted would later become historians, economists, and computer programmers. They were among the more moderate, thoughtful members of the Days-of-Rage New Left.

But several years later LaRouche's organization, now christened the National Caucus of Labor Committees, was well on its way to becoming a neo-Nazi cult. By 1973 LaRouche was spurring his followers to assault and break up the meetings of Communists, Trotskyists, and Black Nationalists, in what he called "Operation Mop-up." King observes that LaRouche's tactics were explained in the ideological terms of the left, but were consciously modeled on the Nazis' physical assaults in the 1920s against rival factions.

At the same time LaRouche began to fear assassination. He also began to worry that his followers were being "brainwashed" by the CIA and British intelligence to betray him; his prime suspect was one Chris White, a British member of the NCLC. LaRouche began subjecting his followers to "ego stripping," a process of psychological abuse similar to that practiced by other cults. By 1975 he was beginning to meet with neo-Nazis and members of the Ku Klux Klan, to veer sharply from left to right, from being anti-capitalist to anti-Semitic.

Two kinds of things had probably happened to LaRouche. First, LaRouche was a person whose zeal and imagination flourished in the revivalist atmosphere of the '60s. His was an evangelical passion transmuted into the arcane language of Marxist politics. In the '60s this passion found an apparent basis in the teeming student left, but when the Marxist, Maoist, and Trotskyist parts of the left burned themselves out in the Nixon era, LaRouche, like other New Left leaders, was left without a *raison d'être*. While some leftists withdrew or temporarily stepped back, La-

Rouche retained his passion. Without a reality to nourish that passion, however, it began to move in bizarre directions, like a missile that has lost its guidance system. In this respect, LaRouche's trajectory was similar to that of Haight-Ashbury rebel minister Jim Jones, who established a neo-fascist cult in Guyana after flower power wilted.

Second, LaRouche was widely believed to have undergone a personal crisis in the early '70s. In 1972 he turned 50, an age when his father was securely ensconced in his own business. LaRouche had been through one marriage and divorce, and the woman he had lived with for a decade, who had been his closest political collaborator, had left him for Chris White, a younger man. It was probably no coincidence that White became the first object of LaRouche's Manchurian Candidate fantasy. One former NCLC member told the *Boston Phoenix* in 1974, "I date the change [in LaRouche] for the worst when Carol Schnitzler, Lyn's mistress, left him the summer before last."

During this period LaRouche began to show signs not simply of quasi-religious eccentricity and fanaticism, but also of outright lunacy. His autobiography, which was published in 1979, reads like a case history of paranoid schizophrenia, with LaRouche ricocheting from fear of assassination to delusions of power and fantasies of genius. LaRouche warns of his assassination. "The most powerful adversary presently available to anyone in the 'Western world' has not only expressed his wish for my early demise, but has visibly deployed a coordinated force of slander and physical harassments, and has set into motion specialized capabilities of an assassination-relevant sort," he writes in *The Power of Reason*. But he reassures the reader that "if I survive the months immediately before me at this moment of writing, it will become reasonable—at a rapid rate—that I might be inaugurated president of the United States in January 1981." And LaRouche is rather in awe of his own genius. He is, he writes, "by a large margin of advantage the leading economist of the 20th century." He tells the reader that he understands "greatness." "I know what the realized pinnacles of human personal development are in our time and, to large measure, in earlier times. I have essentially matched them. Thus I can address a concerned parent, or a child, and inform them of the nature of greatness as it is experienced from the inside."

Like other madmen, LaRouche retained his analytical and practical powers. As King notes, LaRouche offered

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The "New" PLO Or: Can the Leopard Change Its Spots?

After more than 20 years of ostracism by most of the civilized world, Yasir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO, has finally uttered the "magic words" demanded by the U.S. It didn't come easy, and he didn't get it quite right. But it was good enough for Secretary of State George Schultz who, "the words" having been spoken, declared the willingness of the U.S. to talk with the PLO. One wonders whether that surprising opening will bring peace in the Middle East any closer to realization.

What are the facts?

■ Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, having wrung major concessions from Israel, promised that the U.S. would not deal with the PLO unless it fulfilled two conditions: (1) it would accept U.N. Resolutions 242 and 238; (2) it would recognize Israel's "existence". Congress added a third condition, namely that the PLO would renounce terrorism. Finally, after 20 years of obdurate resistance, Yasir Arafat, as spokesman for the PLO, did make those statements. Secretary Schultz decided therefore that the U.S. must establish contact with the PLO. Only a week earlier, the Secretary had refused Arafat a visa to enter the United States, because of his personal association with and personal responsibility for widespread terrorism all over the world.

■ What are the goals of the PLO, and is it likely that they have changed by the uttering of those three sentences? The PLO is a terror organization, created in 1964 by the Arab League. It has only one aim: the destruction of the State of Israel through force and violence. Any apparent deviation from this single-minded aim is a temporary tactical maneuver.

■ The basic charter of the PLO is the so-called "Palestinian National Covenant." Its main theme is that the State of Israel has no right whatever to exist. It states clearly that "Palestine... is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland," and that "the Arab-Palestinian people... reject all solutions that substitute for the total liberation of Palestine." Those PLO and Arab leaders who have from time to time ventured to propose a less inflexible approach have invariably paid with their lives for such deviation from PLO "orthodoxy".

■ The recent unilateral declaration by the PLO of a "Palestinian State with its capital in Jerusalem" on territory administered by and under control of Israel is an attempted step in that direction. The PLO was founded long before Israeli administration of Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza Strip. Its avowed purpose was then, has always been and continues to be, not the establishment of a Palestinian state, but the destruction of Israel proper.

Can the leopard change its spots? It does not seem likely. And it does not seem likely that the PLO, engaged in unrelenting terror since its creation 24 years ago, could suddenly become a factor for peace, just because of the intonation of a few "magic phrases". It is comforting to think that peace in the Middle East can be achieved by bestowing respectability on the PLO. But the only way to bring about peace in the Middle East is by direct negotiations between Israel and representatives of the residents of the administered territories, as agreed in the Camp David Accord: a period of autonomy, after which the final disposition and status of the territories will be decided by the people involved. The PLO cannot be a party to the peace process, because its charter calls for war and destruction and because terror and peace cannot exist together.

■ The PLO is the kingpin of international terror. It maintains a complex network of relations with all of the main terror organizations throughout the world. It has written a blood-spattered record of unrelenting terror. Some of their more "glorious" exploits: the mid-air explosion of a Swissair jetliner (47 dead); the attack on pilgrims and passengers at Ben-Gurion International Airport (26 dead, 76 wounded); the attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics (11 dead); attack on the Ma'lot school (24 dead, 62 wounded—mostly children); the hi-jacking of a passenger bus on the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway (35 dead, 80 wounded); the coordinated shoot-outs at the Rome and Vienna Airports (16 dead); and the murderous attack on the Istanbul Synagogue, in which 21 worshippers were killed.

■ In their attacks against Americans, the PLO hand is suspected in many of the kidnappings of U.S. hostages. American citizen Leon Klinghoffer was brutally killed in the PLO ship-jacking of the *Achille Lauro*. Some of the most brutal PLO attacks against Americans have been against U.S. diplomats. In the Sudan, in 1973, two American diplomats, Ambassador Cleo Noel and Chargé d'Affaires George C. Moore, were mercilessly machine gunned to death when blackmail demands were not met. *The Washington Post* reported on reliable evidence that Yasir Arafat personally was in charge of these executions. In 1976, Ambassador Francis Meloy, Jr. and Counselor Robert Waring were assassinated in Beirut, an attack widely believed to have been the work of the PFLP, a faction of the PLO. In March of 1988, a bomb-laden car was placed in front of the Hilton Hotel in Jerusalem in an attempt to assassinate Secretary George Shultz. There have been many bombings, hi-jackings, and terrorist attacks in virtually every Mid-East and European country, leaving countless dead and wounded. While the final verdict is not yet in, it is generally assumed by our government and by those who are investigating this terrible crime that one of the Palestinian factions patterned after and instructed by the PLO is responsible for the bombing of Pan Am flight #103, which cost over 270 mostly American lives.

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prescient analyses of the Third World debt crisis (though it was an analysis that one could find regularly in Paul Sweezy's *Monthly Review* and other Marxist journals) and the potential of fusion energy. He ran a multimillion-dollar worldwide organization that with its strong-arm tactics, shady financial deals, and mob connections increasingly resembled a criminal racket. But at the same time his overall politics became clouded with the mythology and sheer nuttiness of the American and European far right.

When LaRouche turned right in the mid-'70s, he did not move toward conservatism. He went directly to European fascism and Nazism, which he blended with American populism and technocracy. LaRouche abandoned Marx's theory of history for that of the *Protocols of Zion* and of proto-Nazi theoreticians Alfred Rosenberg and Houston Stewart Chamberlain. At its heart was a stark vision of good and evil: LaRouche and his followers were "golden souls" or supermen, and the Jews, with their British allies, the evil "oligarchy" that must be destroyed. In the confines of the NCLC office, the LaRouchians joked about incinerating Jews. ("How many Jews can you fit into a Volkswagen?" NCLC members would ask. "One hundred. Four on the seats and ninety-six in the ashtray.")

In the world after Hitler, however, anti-Semitism must be, for tactical reasons, a little disguised. Sometimes LaRouche resorted to a kind of moral inversion. Jews became Nazis. "America must be cleansed for its righteous war [against the Soviet Union] by the immediate elimination of the Nazi Jewish lobby . . . from the councils of government, industry, and labor." Henry Kissinger is "far worse than Hitler." At other times LaRouche resorted to allegory and to allusion. Both European and American anti-Semites had historically identified the Jews through the Rothschilds with the British. In LaRouche's anti-Semitic iconography, the queen of England came to symbolize the Jewish oligarchy. In LaRouche's *New Solidarity*, the drug trade was depicted as a Star of David with the queen of England at the top, flanked by Henry Kissinger and Milton Friedman.

Like many American populists, LaRouche blamed Wall Street for America's economic ills. He also fell back on the same kind of monetary conspiracy theories that had clouded the minds of Coin Harvey and other populist rabble-rousers. But anti-Semitism was merely an offshoot of American populism. In LaRouche's case, it is integral to his outlook.

LaRouche's politics were religious in

temper, but not in values. LaRouche placed himself and his followers above morality and religion. They invented anything they pleased about political opponents: Kissinger, for instance, was a member of the "Homintern," a secret homosexual brotherhood operating "at the highest levels of government." They regularly impersonated reporters from established newspapers and magazines to gain interviews that they then used to discredit LaRouche opponents. They railed against drugs while allying themselves with Mafia and Teamster drug lords and with Manuel Noreiga, whom LaRouche praised as Latin America's foremost fighter against drugs. They raised millions of dollars a year by taking out loans over the phone, which they had no intention of repaying, and by doctoring credit card receipts.

LaRouche's political views would ordinarily have consigned him to a park bench in Union Square, but through a combination of guile, deceit, and fanatic intelligence, he was able to achieve surprising prominence and even influence. LaRouche never had more than a thousand followers worldwide, but they made up in zeal (they worked 16-hour days, for cult wages) what they lacked in numbers. Around-the-clock fund-raising in airports and over the telephone, credit card fraud, and successful printing and computer software businesses netted LaRouche as much as \$30 million a year, which he used to fund campaigns, conferences, and publications. Running for president, LaRouche raised enough money in 1980 and 1984 to qualify for federal matching funds.

LaRouche's NCLC enjoyed certain kinds of success by picking up early on issues that were being ignored or dismissed by the scientific and political mainstream. LaRouche's Fusion Energy Foundation established links to the Department of Energy's Office of Fusion Energy; government officials spoke at its conferences. The NCLC began promoting space weaponry in the late '70s, and it became a part of the right-wing coalition that convinced Reagan to adopt his Star Wars program in 1983.

LaRouche set up an international intelligence network and published a glossy weekly, the *Executive Intelligence Review*. As King and Ronald Radosh reported in *THE NEW REPUBLIC* in November 1984, LaRouche and his operatives briefed Reagan administration officials from the CIA and National Security Council. Thanks to sheer tenacity and a willingness to break the rules of journalism, LaRouche's private intelligence army was often able to find genuine scoops. In the spring of 1986, for exam-

ple, six months before a Lebanese daily broke the story, the *Executive Intelligence Review* published the details of secret American arms sales to Iran.

As a presidential candidate, LaRouche attracted few votes, but he was able to exploit the media's hunger for the odd and sensational to garner considerable publicity. He created a front organization, the National Democratic Policy Committee, that recruited candidates, many of whom knew little about LaRouche, and who ran on vaguely populist and anti-drug, anti-AIDS platforms. According to King, these candidates got over 20 percent of the vote in at least 70 statewide or congressional races between 1982 and 1988. In March 1986 two NDPC candidates in Illinois won the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor and secretary of state, forcing gubernatorial candidate Adlai Stevenson to run on a third party ticket.

LaRouche and his operatives even played a minor role in the 1988 presidential election. At the Democratic convention last July, LaRouche followers began circulating leaflets asking, "Is Dukakis the new Senator Eagleton?" According to King, they called newspapers around the country warning them that their competitors were about to break the story about Dukakis's mental illness. Numerous newspapers, notably the *Washington Times*, took the bait, and printed front-page stories about the rumor. Then, at President Reagan's press conference on August 3, a reporter from the *Executive Intelligence Review* asked the president whether he thought Dukakis should make his medical records public. "Look, I'm not going to pick on an invalid," Reagan replied.

But LaRouche's outlaw mentality finally proved his undoing. In October 1986 federal agents seized LaRouche's financial records at his Leesburg estate, and a series of fraud indictments began against LaRouche and his key staff. Last January LaRouche and six of his followers were convicted and sentenced to prison, LaRouche for five to 15 years for fraud and tax evasion. His followers bought roadside billboards demanding that Bush pardon the political prisoner ("C. Boyden Gray knows LaRouche is innocent," the billboards suggestively declare). LaRouche's wife claimed that he was a victim of "Satanism," but Assistant U.S. Attorney Kent Robinson insisted that LaRouche's was "not a political case. This was a case of theft."

King believes that LaRouche is not simply a madman whose success rested on his willingness to break the rules, but a political genius who could have de-

stroyed the country. "LaRouche was a man with a coherent program, subtle tactics and—what is usually lacking in American politics—a long-range plan of how to get from here to there. Both in word and in deed, he was a serious ideologue in the classic European fascist mold." King also hints that LaRouche's movement, like Hitler's in the 1920s, might weather a prison term. "The LaRouchians are an ideological movement with an intense collective spirit," King writes. "Such movements often function most vigorously under attack, even when their top leaders are in jail or exile."

But King, who has spent a decade tracking LaRouche, overrates him. LaRouche's long-range plan always rested on a crazed view of himself as above the law. Like Jim Jones, or like the New Left émigré Bob Avakian, he has made a theory of history out of his own marginality. In his trial, LaRouche tried pathetically to parlay a few connections with government officials and CIA gun-runners into a national security defense, claiming that he was acting under CIA orders. (If anything, LaRouche may have worked during the '70s for the CIA's adversaries. King recounts how LaRouche followers met with KGB agents and attended Moscow conferences, and undertook various suspect missions, like coming to the defense of two Soviet spies arrested in New Jersey in 1977.)

King suggests that, in warning of conspiracies by Kissinger and the queen of England, LaRouche was not uttering mindless nonsense, but following a strategy of "fantastic lying" that he learned from a study of Stalin. But one must still wonder what beliefs the lying was supposed to conceal. Does it make LaRouche any less nutty that he believed that AIDS, drugs, and depression were promoted by an international conspiracy of Jewish bankers, rather than by the queen of England?

King also overrates LaRouche's political success. Many of the candidates that LaRouche's National Democratic Policy Committee recruited to run for office were drawn by his populist rhetoric or his get-tough message on drugs or AIDS. In 1984, for instance, the *Houston Post* found that 14 of 25 NDPC candidates in Harris County were unclear or had doubts about what the NDPC and LaRouche stood for. When voters realized who they were voting for, moreover, they looked elsewhere. In the Illinois general election in 1986, LaRouche's candidates received the lowest percentage that any statewide Democratic candidate ever received.

Unlike the European fascists, LaRouche was forced constantly to camou-

flage his own message. Like the American Communists of the late '30s (or the Unification Church today), he practiced a popular front politics, campaigning against AIDS and drugs while warning the cognoscenti about the dangers of the "Old Testament parasites" or "Israeli dopers." It was thus possible for a group like CONDUCT in New York not to know that LaRouche and his followers were neo-Nazis.

At times LaRouche developed a mass following for certain ideas—for instance, for his California AIDS quarantine plan—but not for himself or for the NCLC's overall ideology. LaRouche's personal success rested largely on his own reckless disregard for the rules of politics, journalism, and morality. It also rested on the vulnerability of the modern media-dominated political system, which allows candidates with virtually no followers but with a hunger for publicity to command political attention. Through it all, however, LaRouche never achieved popularity, only celebrity. He didn't establish a political base, only a minor racket.

If there is to be a "new American fas-

cism," it will probably not come from a crackpot like LaRouche. It will come from practicing politicians who are willing to court the voters' darker impulses. In the United States, it is likely that racism rather than anti-Semitism will be the underlying appeal. This is not to deny the existence of anti-Semitism, but rather to recognize, in Richard Hofstadter's words, that populist anti-Semitism has functioned in America as "a rhetorical style, not a tactic or program." Race, by contrast, has been a pivot of American politics for the last 150 years on which the fortunes of the right and left have shifted. Segregationist George Wallace was a far more dangerous figure than George Lincoln Rockwell. David Duke and what he represents now deserve far closer scrutiny than LaRouche. King's book, it is to be hoped, will be LaRouche's epitaph. LaRouche is now 66, and he will not be eligible for parole until he is 71.

JOHN JUDIS is senior editor of *In These Times* and author of *William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives* (Simon and Schuster).

Hyping the Hordes

BY EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

History of the Goths by Herwig Wolfram translated by Thomas J. Dunlap

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The Goths have been fortunate in their public relations. The Vandals rapidly graduated from despoilers of the Roman Empire to its earnest protectors (the Vandal Stilicho was arguably the last great West-Roman statesman), and the Huns did little damage in the West before they served most loyally in the armies of the East (they were a corps d'elite for Belisarius in the sixth century). The far more numerous Goths, by contrast, were the most destructive invaders of late antiquity. Their hordes successively ruined the Danubian provinces and both the Greek and Italic lands of the Empire, before engulfing southern Gaul and Spain, where they long remained. Yet it is not of Gothism that we speak when a telephone booth is wrecked. Nor do we say that so-and-so is somewhere to the right of Alaric the Goth, even though Attila was merely a

suave extortionist, and it was Alaric who sacked Rome in August 410, causing Jerome in his hermit's cave at Bethlehem to mourn that the light had gone out from the world.

The great p.r. man whose artful wordings prevailed over nasty facts, who successfully constructed a positive image for the Goths, was one Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus (b. 487), a latifundist, a leading Roman collaborator with the murderous Gothic regime of Italy, and founder of the monastery of Vivarium. Because Vivarium was explicitly dedicated to the preservation of Classical literature as well as to Christian piety—and thus became a vital link in the transmission of texts to our own days—Cassiodorus acquired an aura of scholarly sanctity that lingers still, certainly a great asset for a publicist. Cassiodorus's history of the Goths is now lost, but by way of a later crib (the *Getica* of Jordanes) it is still