Marxist Left Produces a New Leader

Lyndon Hermyle LaRouche, Jr., 52-year-old former computer specialist and one-time Marxist teacher and theorist, was reported in Baghdad this month. At the same time, the disruptive presence of 30 of his followers in York, Penna., was an all-too-easily documented fact.

Both visitations were in line with the new directions being taken by the National Caucus of Labor Committees in its search for revolution now.

LaRouche, who formed the NCLC out of remnants of Students for a Democratic Society, was presumed, in New Left groups, to be in Iraq seeking oil money to fuel his far-flung operations.

*New Solidarity*, the 16-page tabloid NCLC produced twice weekly, has suddenly taken an interest in Iraq. It reported in its April 10th issue that LaRouche was in Iraq “to participate in the celebration of the founding of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party.”

RECENTLY LaRouche, who has been carrying on his affairs under the nom de plume of Lyn Marcus for several years, reverted to his original name. Critics suggest this is because Marcus sounds “too Jewish.”

Besides *New Solidarity*, LaRouche’s views are presented in *The Campaigner*, house organ for NCLC’s political arm, the U.S. Labor Party. Both publications have devoted tens of thousands of words to the belief that the world is on the verge of famine and a catastrophic energy shortage, and that only NCLC can save mankind.

An energy alliance in the Mideast can help. The overall program is a bit sketchy at the moment. The immediate problem is holding off Nelson Rockefeller (called “FANG” in NCLC tabloids) who heads plotters intent on destroying the Labor Committees, and the CIA which is viewed as intent on capturing LaRouche.

While keeping Rockefeller, the CIA, the KGB and various metropolitan police departments at bay, the “Elsies,” as they are called in some labor circles, are trying to secure and expand beachheads in the trade union movement. Hence the concentration of cadres in York.

AT LEAST 98 U.S. Labor Party candidates are seeking office in 58 communities. Often rebuffed in their efforts to crash and take over public meetings and press conferences called by national trade union leaders, the political candidacies give the “Elsies” a convenient vehicle for communicating their revolutionary message at the community level.

The operation is coordinated from the NCLC command post, the top three floors at 231 West 29th Street in Manhattan’s garment district. New Left and *New York Times* reporters peg the total Elsie membership at between 800 and 1,200. Most are in their 20’s, and many appear to have wealthy parents.

*New Solidarity* lists addresses for Labor Committee outposts in 55 U.S., four Canadian, one Mexican, 28 European and two Asian communities. Many of these are Post Office boxes, but some are combined offices and living quarters.

According to *New Solidarity* “115 Labor Committee organizers attended the week-long NCLC cadre school” held in New York last December. The graduates appear under discipline, zealous, and at work. The techniques of confrontation and exploitation of resulting tensions show up in many of the NCLC forays. The York developments, however, go beyond that.

SIX of the “Elsies” appear to be assigned to York full-time. They live in and operate out of an ancient brick house at 484 West Market St., near the business district. They have a two-number rotary telephone system, and access to mimeographing equipment. District Attorney Don-
The chief targets of their abuse, however, are Edward B. Clinch, district representative of the International Association of Machinists and President of the York-Adams Labor Council; Jack R. Barnhardt, Council vice president and business agents for two building trades unions, and Earl W. Keihl, international representative for the United Furniture Workers of America and an acknowledged Council leader.

All three have deep roots in the community; have held their present positions for many years and enjoy wide respect in the area.

On March 9, the York-Adams Labor Council held a special meeting to consider what should be done about the rising unemployment problems in the area. The Elsies showed up, and were denied access to the meeting after a heated exchange.

Thereupon Donald Wirtanen, 28, and Roberta Brawer, 21, both listing the 484 W. Market St. address, and Steven Getzoff, of nearby Harrisburg, filed charges against Clinch, Barnhardt and Keihl, alleging "assault, harassment and criminal solicitation." The charges were dropped by District Justice Mildred Hunt Becker after a preliminary hearing.

The Labor Party followed that up with a leaflet implying that all three of the trade union leaders were homosexuals. The copy was racy and raunchy. The leaflet was illustrated with vulgar line drawings. It was distributed in shopping centers, downtown and on two picket lines.

At the same time, the union officials and their families began receiving threatening and often obscene telephone calls, including one call to Barnhardt's granddaughter.

They appear to be carrying out an elaborate "bait and switch" operation; attempting to bait trade union leaders into an excessive reaction which they could thereupon "interpret" for propaganda purposes.

view of obscenity, verbal or written. The nation's first capital, it votes unusually conservative for an industrial community. The Ku Klux Klan occasionally holds rallies in the area. The leaflet was patently designed to provoke a reaction of outrage.

Instead, County Detective Ray Melata quietly filed a charge of "harassment by communication" against Wittman, and Steven F. Berg, 24, who is the U.S. Labor Party candidate for York City Council. The warrants charged them with using "lewd, lascivious and indecent language." Both were held on $2,500 bail.

That prompted a leaflet, captioned "Stop Fascism in York, Vote U.S. Labor Party," and another giving the home telephone numbers of labor leaders Clinch, Barnhardt, and Keihl, Detective Melata and District Attorney Don Reihart. It urged readers to "Call these creeps and let them know how you feel about their gestapo tactics."

The charge was found to be improperly filed, and Wittman and Berg were released, "steering us as they left the court room," union officials noted.
The names used by the Elsies ... indicate an early intent to stimulate a working class movement. Most of the actual membership, however, appears to be drawn from outside labor’s ranks.

ONE LABOR PARTY leaflet called the arrests of the two Elsies, “a flagrant violation of democratic processes and must be seen as a frontal assault on American workers.”

The pattern which is emerging, however, is of a frontal assault on target community organizations by a disciplined, undemocratic force. The small cadre of full time professional “organizers” in York carries off its forays into meetings with trained aplomb. For rallies or projects, like distributing handbills or getting signatures on petitions, a crew comes in. It appears to be drawn from Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington and Wilmington, Dela., all within easy driving distance.

The tactics are similar to those used by the John Birch Society’s true believers in the mid-1960’s and the domestic Communists a generation earlier. The carefully orchestrated takeovers of community meetings, telephone harassment and assaults on character were noted in towns with Birch troubles a decade ago. (Today, the Society carries on its propaganda chores more circumspectly.)

But the Birchers nearly always operate out of anonymous cells. While the NCLC put no names or address on the material it distributes in York, the sponsorship is acknowledged and the headquarters telephone numbers are in the copies of New Solidarity hawked on the streets.

When their presence was first noted last November, no one paid much attention. Today, however, many York residents are asking, “Why York?”

York has unemployment problems and occasional strikes, but the states of the local economy and of industrial relations are in no way unusual. One theory is that York just happens to be close to urban areas where the Elsies have modest followings. Thirty persons usually do not make much of an impression in Baltimore. They can in York.

THE NCLC concentrated on the UAW in developing its formula. While other unions also got the treatment, handbills similar to those being distributed in York were beamed at a dozen or more UAW locals last year. Often the Elsies worked out of a house rented as an organizational center. Frequently the handbills implied that the UAW Local Union officers were homosexuals. When they encountered resistance of any type, they raised the cry of “gestapo tactics” in leaflets carrying the telephone numbers of union officials. A rash of harassing telephone calls followed.

In at least two instances, the Elsies rushed to court swearing out warrants which alleged that union officials were denying their First Amendment rights.

John Sedluk, president of UAW Local 1435, Perrysburg, Ohio, who has had the full treatment, notes that recently the Elsies have diverted their energies elsewhere.

"I think they have discovered that they weren't getting any response from our members so they decided to look for easier targets,” he said.

THE NAMES used by the Elsies, the National Caucus of Labor Committees and the U.S. Labor Party, indicate an early intent to stimulate a working class movement. Most of the actual membership, however, appears to be drawn from outside labor’s ranks.

both the outcropping of so-called Labor Party candidates and the York invasion appear to be part of an effort to devise new formulas for achieving old objectives.

For the past two years, LaRouche’s followers have appeared in strike situations in many parts of the country, usually seeking recruits among younger workers. Now they are carrying on a widespread intelligence gathering effort, apparently probing for areas of weakness. A possible tactic has been calling up the public relations department of a major trade union and impersonating a reporter from an established daily newspaper.

The AFL-CIO, United Steelworkers and United Auto Workers public relations departments have all circulated memos, calling attention to such calls and suggesting that when in doubt, union officials should ask for the paper’s telephone number and call back.

ONE OF LaRouche’s larger objectives is to have his National Unemployed Welfare Rights Organization (NUWRO) eliminate the AFL-CIO. On February 12, 1974, New Solidarity carried a special supplement captioned HOW NUWRO WILL REPLACE THE AFL-CIO WITHIN 4 MONTHS.

The paper asserted that, “Tens of thousands of workers are realizing that NUWRO is their only hope against layoffs and a shooting war.” It envisioned a chain-letter type of reaction in which the “900-1000 organizers who receive and pass on the daily briefings on the state of the class struggle around the world” would persuade more workers and unemployed so that by June (of ’74)
“NUWRO (would) be a striking force of 20 million workers and unemployed—larger than the AFL-CIO, and the only effective representative of Labor in the U.S. and Canada.

NUWRO fell about 20 million short of this objective. New Solidarity continues to blister AFL-CIO President George Meany and Vice President I. W. Abel, president of the Steelworkers, and has taken swipes at the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers, the Teamsters and many other unions.

Today the Elsies are concentrating NUWRO literature on the unemployment and welfare lines, but most of the material directed at union members carries the U.S. Labor Party designation.

Nothing the Elsies distribute carries a union label. NCLC opposed the Farah Clothing strike, the coal strike and has referred to Caesar Chavez as “a slave driver.” It is generally opposed to localized strikes as interfering with its larger objectives. The Elsies want to change the system, not reform it.

RECENTLY the New York City Police Department refused to issue the Elsies press cards because, spokesmen said, they were using these credentials to interfere in police and fire routines.

For the past six months, Elsies have periodically appeared at major trade union events and press conferences, often attempting to take them over. Establishing a noisy presence, they probably are hoping to become a magnet for dissenters.

When invited to leave, they rarely go quietly.

This month 10 Elsies, some with bullhorns, set up a picket line in front of Milwaukee’s Mark Plaza Hotel to disrupt weekend United Steelworkers district conference in progress.

Some of the most vituperative propaganda is directed against the UAW and its president, Leonard Woodcock. The UAW has responded with a suit seeking $30 million in damages because the NCLC publication is patently modelled after the UAW’s international union publication, Solidarity.

WHILE the probing for opportunities inside the labor movement is cautious, the Elsies openly boast of the violence used in Operation Mop Up in an earlier phase of their development. This was directed against Communists and members of the Socialist Workers Party, who spurned LaRouche’s bids for consolidation with his movement.

The Guardian noted, “Some 50 young thugs, led by a group calling itself the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), on April 30 (1973) attacked another meeting held by the Communist Party.

“It was the latest in a series of Fascist-like assaults on the CP and its mass organization. The young hoodlums marched up to the CP’s Center for Marxist Education in New York City ... and beat up several people including innocent bystanders. The goons were prevented from entering the meeting and forced to leave.”

The Liberation News Service, which feeds the so-called underground press, also found the NCLC’s militance outrageous. In a long, unsigned piece, it detailed another phase of the attack.

“After a number of attempts to lure NWRO (National Welfare Rights Organization) into a coalition, NCLC proceeded to infiltrate and disrupt NWRO meetings with little success. NCLC then declared that NWRO was dead and announced the birth of a new organization, the National Un-Employed Welfare Rights Organization (NUWRO).

“The theory behind NUWRO is basic to NCLC’s operations. They insist that to make a revolution within the next five years (Marcus’s date), all workers, unemployed, welfare recipients, etc., must join a common organization—NUWRO. Anything—including union organizing, welfare organizing, rank-and-file movements, etc., (that) distract(s) from the building of NUWRO and (is) counter-revolutionary. NUWRO is the only acceptable, legitimate organization, according to NCLC.”

The New York Times reported that “by their own count at least 40 political opponents, principally members of the Communist Party” got “savage beatings” during Operation Mop Up.*

DECLARING VICTORY, the NCLC launched another group, the Revolutionary Youth Organization (RYO). According to Liberation News Service it was formed by “organizing gang youth” into a paramilitary set-up. This is loosely a counterpart of Youth Against War and Fascism, a CP organization. NCLC also sponsors its International Press Service, a potential competitor for Liberation News Service. In short, it is covering all the bases.

LaRouche has been building his movement for a long time.

In a rare, four-hour press interview with Paul Montgomery of the New York Times, LaRouche provided considerable biographic detail.* He said he joined the Socialist Workers Party, a Trotskyite group, in 1948 and remained a part of it for nine years before striking out on his own. He met with little success until 1966, when he founded the (Greenwich) Village Committee for Independent Political Action. This had a joint caucus briefly with S.D.S. and the Maoist Progressive Labor movement.

The National Caucus of S.D.S. Labor Committees emerged out of the 1968 strike at Columbia University, with Marcus (LaRouche) at the center. It attracted a number of strike leaders. In 1969, “S.D.S.” was dropped from the name.

WHAT CONFOUNDS many citizens encountering LaRouche’s followers for the first time is the paranoid flavor of their beliefs and their obvious intensity of purpose.

In a speech January 3, 1974, which was reprinted in News Solidarity, LaRouche said a victory for the NCLC is imperative. “The human race is at stake,” he said. “Either we win or there is no humanity. That’s the way she’s cut.”

AND EVER pressing is the need to keep the CIA, Russian Secret Police, FANG and various metropolitan police departments from destroying the organization. Accordingly, LaRouche devotes a great deal of time to coping with brainwashing and psychological warfare.

In another long speech to members reprinted in New Solidarity, he asserted, “We are the third world power in psy-war at the present moment.”

The NCLC is to use its psychological warfare capacity “in every possible way to wreck both the CIA and the KGB,” he said.

LaRouche explains that the KGB brainwashed one
Konstantine Georgue in an attempt to take over the West German Labor Committee in 1973 and that he not only uncovered this, but figured out the key and undid it.

"The CIA has discovered that I have the capability to break Soviet brainwashing jobs that they do not have," he said.

Believing that, he has to be protected against both the CIA which wants him alive and the KGB which, presumably, would prefer him out of the way. LaRouche does not travel alone. He is sometimes concerned about attempts to program associates to assassinate him.

MARRIED to a psychiatrist and later divorced, LaRouche told Montgomery that he lived with Carol Schnit during the years when she was involved in helping Rouche told Montgomery that he lived with Carol Schnit during the years when she was involved in helping.

Last year LaRouche had White very much on his mind when he told his followers about the CIA’s brainwashing techniques. Again quoting from New Solidarity:

"The number of our members who are suffering brainwashing—although few—is a fact. Anyone who says this is a hoax, let him . . . hear the tapes of what Chris White went through. Let him see what Chris White has to go through to get rid of this damn thing.

". . . You know what they do to you? When they really start the heavy programming, first of all they give you heavy electric shock. Heavy electric shock. First you’ve been built up with fear of the electric shock. Everything possible has been done to induce fear. This was done to White first on October 12. He had started his brainwashing course on September 17 and on October 12 he was given his first brainwashing. Some character named Trevor in England was responsible for some of the fingering work to set him up for the operation. An Irishman named Trevor.

"But then, you know what they do to you? It’s not the pain which brainwashes people.

"What kills you is when you eat your own excrement as a way of inducing your torturer to lay off the pain. In permitting a bottle to be inserted in your anus and sitting on it on a chair for hours while interrogation continues, as a way of avoiding greater pain, as a way of getting your torturers to lay off. Or permitting yourself to be subjected to homosexual rape, oral and anal. . . . First they say your father was nothing; your father was a queer; your father was a woman. They play very strongly on your homosexual fears. It doesn’t work on women because in women homosexuality is much more accepted and more easily taken among women than men."

New York Times reporter Montgomery subsequently heard portions of the tape of White’s deprogramming. He observed, “There are sounds of weeping and vomiting on the tapes, and Mr. White complains of being deprived of sleep, food and cigarettes.” He quoted LaRouche as assuring him that White was not mistreated in anyway, however.

ever, and that a physician member of the group, Dr. Gene Inch, was in attendance throughout.*

Last July, Montgomery reported on another case of deprogramming, directed against the NCLC’s influence. The subject was the 19-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Roeshman of Bryn Mawr, Penna., who had been a member of the NCLC for two months.

The Roeshmans retained Ted Patrick, formerly a community relations consultant to Gov. Ronald Reagan, who had, the Times said, developed a specialty of “rescuing” young people in the grips of religious fundamentalism.

Both Patrick and Roeshman told reporter Montgomery that the deprogramming was successful. Roeshman said his daughter realized “she was mesmerized and put into a zombie-like situation.”**

Earlier Montgomery reported on the rescue of Alice Weitzman, whom New York police retrieved from her apartment in Washington Heights after she sailed a paper airplane out of the window reporting that she was being held against her will.

Six persons, all between 22 and 30, were arrested in connection with the case. Among them were, “the son of a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, the daughter of an Episcopalean preacher in Connecticut, the son of the chairman of the electrophysics department in Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Other members who emerged later included the daughter of the president of Sarah Lawrence College and the son of a vice president of the Ford Foundation.”***

A year ago, Montgomery reported:

"Former members say it is difficult for outsiders to imagine the pressures to believe within the group. Part, they say, is rooted in the militants’ sincere commitment to left political work, and the fact that the Labor Committee presents one of the few opportunities now to exercise it.

"Another part they attribute to the gradual development of Mr. Marcus’s beliefs, making each small step toward the current brainwashing mania seem logical after what has gone before.

"There also seems to be the attraction of a closed but coherent intellectual system in which there is an answer to every question from marital relations to world war; such a system might be difficult to leave for the uncertainties of what the Labor Committee calls bourgeois reality.”**

While some members do break out, indications are new recruits outnumber them.

LaROUCHE'S FOLLOWERS are expected to be totally committed to their cause. Jobs and family become secondary to party work. Dues are $24 a month. In addition, members are expected to sell copies of New Solidarity at 25 cents, another source of income.

LaRouche told Montgomery that only six officials at the NCLC headquarters get paid and that he gets the top salary, $50 a week. While no annual budget figures have been published, LaRouche's followers clearly attract and spend considerable money, probably more than a million dollars in the past year.

They rent houses, put in headquarters equipment, run up huge telephone bills and do a lot of travelling, some of it by airplane. While Maoist Marxist revolutionaries make a point of swimming in the stream of people, that technique is not available. Operation Mop Up closed a lot of doors. The Elsies produce as much fear as they do friendship.

Washington Post reporter Paul W. Valentine, who also was permitted to enter the NCLC command post last year for a 5-hour interview with LaRouche, noted:

"The headquarters is manned 24 hours a day by a 60-member staff. They function in a tightly structured, almost puritanical atmosphere, rejecting the free-wheeling self-indulgence of much of the radical counterculture. Clothing and hair styles are subdued. Workers rarely utter obscenities. The smoking of marijuana is specifically prohibited. An authoritarian air hangs in the office."

VISITORS report elaborate security precautions at the NCLC's door. When the NCLC holds public meetings in New York, outsiders have been frisked before they could enter rented halls, and "security officers" have been seen juggling nunchucks, a Korean weapon made of two blocks and a chain.

Valentine reported that NCLC "acknowledges existence of its elite 'defensive squad' of 30 to 40 members trained in the 'martial arts,' including karate."

One former member told Montgomery, "It's the saddest thing I've ever seen. The Labor Committee used to say that people have the power to change the world by thinking. Now they have come to just the opposite conclusion—by thinking or questioning, you can damage the organization."

A year ago, a student newspaper in Madison, Wisc., concluded, "... NCLC, as it seems to exist today, has the makings of a truly indigenous fascist movement."

Liberation News Service observed, "Until the financial records of the NCLC are made available to public scrutiny, we will not know who the real sponsors are. In the meantime, NCLC is a dangerous organization which must be guarded against."

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