

## Editorial

# Democracy in Harris County

The national media have thus far blacked out the fact that in Harris County, Texas, the third largest electoral county in the United States, a "LaRouche Democrat," Claude Jones, was elected Democratic Party chairman on March 8. In contrast to what happened exactly two years ago, when LaRouche Democrats Janice Hart and Mark Fairchild were nominated to statewide office for the Illinois Democratic Party and the news flashed around the world, reports of the battle over whether the voters' mandate will be fulfilled have been stifled nearly everywhere but in Houston itself.

Jones campaigned vigorously on behalf of the programs of Democratic presidential hopeful Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., and was "exposed" as a LaRouche backer by Houston newspapers on the eve of the election. No one could possibly pretend that the voters "did not know" for whom they were voting, as was claimed (desperately) by Democratic Party functionaries in the 1986 Illinois election.

Hand in hand with the global press black-out, the local "limousine liberals" who control the incumbent Democratic Party machine are taking steps to suppress the vote. The Harris County Democratic Executive Committee has started to move to strip Claude Jones of his mandate. On March 11, the Committee set into motion a "rule change" for the county's Democratic Party, to set up a steering committee and a party secretary which would have control over party funds, party records, and effectively all party functions. The chairman, who had these powers before, would become a member of this steering committee, with only one vote!

Earlier in the day, chairman-elect Jones (who will take office on May 2) had obtained a ruling in state court from Judge Ruby Sondock, setting a hearing for April 11. The judge will hear arguments to overturn any attempted rule change, which results in modification of the legal or traditional statutory rights of the party chairman, that threatens to disenfranchise voters. This is precisely what the clique around the defeated incumbent chairman, Larry Veselka, did.

*The proposed rule change, if maintained by the vote*

*of a full executive committee meeting, will slap down the voters who elected Jones, and give his mandate to Veselka, whom the voters have just rejected!*

One of the most famous moments of the great Apollo Mission of the 1960s is embodied in the quotation, "Houston, we've got a problem." The Apollo 13 space capsule reported back to the Manned Space Flight Center in Houston that an oxygen tank had exploded. Thanks to the built-in redundancies of the U.S. space program at that time and the skill and dedication of the people operating it, the endangered Apollo 13 was brought safely back to earth.

No doubt, it was not only because Texas Democrats are bearing the brunt of the economic collapse, that they voted to bring in a LaRouche Democrat to replace the old party machine. A similar mandate was received in 1984 in San Antonio, when a LaRouche Democrat won the largest number of votes in the first round of elections for the Democratic Party county chairmanship. The foolish post-industrial policies of the Reagan administration have littered the landscape of the U.S. Southwest with failed banks, shut-down industries, empty office buildings.

Yet the Jones vote also reflects a will for optimism, related to the large aerospace industry located in Houston and the presence of the Johnson Space Center there. Five days before Claude Jones defeated Larry Veselka on March 8, Lyndon LaRouche in a nationally televised program proposed a Mars colonization project by the year 2027, as the key to U.S. economic recovery.

In the wake of Claude Jones's victory, Houston could spark a renaissance of scientific progress around that program. If the Harris County Democratic Party "rule change" is allowed to prevail, it must become an international embarrassment to the United States, which pretends to impose "democracy" on Panama. Like the 1986 machinations of Adlai Stevenson III in Illinois, the Harris County liberals' fascist-like moves against the voters who elected a LaRouche associate are ludicrous—but the threat they imply for the survival of Western civilization is tragically immense.