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## Interview: Lawrence Freeman

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# LaRouche Democrats introduce reality into Maryland election

*Mr. Freeman is a candidate for Governor in Maryland's Sept. 15 Democratic primary. He has called upon Democrats to unite to defeat Gingrich Republican candidate Ellen Sauerbrey, who, in 1994, narrowly lost the race to Democrat Parris Glendening, when he was undercut by a faction of the Maryland party. Freeman heads the Marylanders for Justice slate of LaRouche Democrats running for public office around the state. He is also a correspondent on African affairs for EIR. Susan Welsh interviewed him on Aug. 31.*

**EIR:** I understand that your campaign has created quite a stir in Maryland. The Maryland Democratic Party leadership has issued a statement dissociating itself from you and from the slate of candidates that are running with you. What is all the fuss about?

**Freeman:** I don't know that it is the entire Democratic Party leadership. There is a faction within the state leadership that is in touch with a faction in the national leadership, around the previous head of the Democratic National Committee, Don Fowler, whom we have an ongoing suit against. It is a minority, and the Governor of Maryland, Parris Glendening, has disassociated himself from it. That has been confirmed.

So, there is a small group of people who don't like the fact that we are running a group of more than 72 candidates, including for positions on the party Central Committee and the state legislature, and myself for governor, Mark Nafziger for lieutenant governor, and Gerald Berg for comptroller. Basically, we are rebuilding the Democratic Party around the principles of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, for a commitment to progress and development, and supporting the President nationally, against the attempts by sex pervert Ken Starr and others, to overthrow the President and throw him out of office. In fact, I'm the only Democrat in the state who has issued a statement calling for the firing of Ken Starr.

Many of the local Democratic clubs have explicitly ignored this memorandum from the Democratic headquarters in Maryland that says that we are not *bona fide* candidates; they have ignored it, and welcomed us to speak at their clubs and to discuss our ideas, and have indicated that they are very appreciative of the fact that we are active in the Democratic Party.

**EIR:** Tell us something about your background. Have you run for office before?

**Freeman:** I ran for mayor of Baltimore in 1983, I ran for governor in 1986 and again in 1994. I am a close associate and friend of Lyndon LaRouche, who in 1994 forecast the financial collapse that we are now in. No other candidate would discuss this, so I thought that I had to tell the truth to the citizens of Maryland, and prepare them for the kind of economic consequences that are going to follow. I also have a background of work on Africa—I've made several trips there, and I am president of the Food for Peace organization of the Schiller Institute.

**EIR:** On the economic situation: The media say that Maryland is in an economic boom, that there is very low unemployment. How do you see it?

**Freeman:** What Governor Glendening is doing, is very similar to what President Clinton is doing nationally. They keep claiming that the economy is in great shape, and that we've created all these jobs. Now, there are a couple of things missing in that picture. First of all, we are in a major monetary collapse. Second, putting that aside for a moment, the economy is *not* in good shape. Around the state of Maryland, we are losing 30 farmers a month this year, because they are going bankrupt. That's devastating. We've shut down all our industry in the state. There's massive poverty throughout the state; there's a shortage of school construction; there's a shortage of housing for people in Baltimore. There are food lines in Baltimore—they became an embarrassment, so they moved them out to different locations, so that people wouldn't see them. There are 9,000 more people that are going to be thrown off welfare, which the agencies already admit they have no jobs for, and they don't know who is going to pay the rent on the buildings that these welfare recipients are living in.

So, there is no great economy in Maryland. There is this so-called budget surplus, the "Sunny Day Fund," which is about \$400 million, which everyone uses to say, "Look how well Maryland is doing." But that \$400 million comes from people making money off the bubble on Wall Street. There was a study done recently, that said that if the stock market remained flat, Maryland would lose \$350 million—the sum of the Sunny Day surplus; it would lose \$800 million if the



Lawrence Freeman (left) is interviewed on a radio talk show during his campaign for the Maryland Democratic Party's gubernatorial nomination.

stock market collapsed. So, the entire surplus, if there is one, is fictitious value, it's made from capital gains on the stock market. That could be wiped out in the blink of an eye.

There is no success story in Maryland's economy; it's like every other economy in the country: It's in very bad shape, and has to be rebuilt, reindustrialized.

**EIR:** It is also claimed that crime in Maryland has gone down. You were interviewed by the *Washington Post*, in a roundup of candidates' positions, and when they asked you about this decrease of crime in the state, I understand that they censored your answer. What is the real story?

**Freeman:** That's another thing that the Governor and others are trying to push, that there's been a decrease in crime in Maryland. No one believes that. In Maryland, as in most states, the majority of people arrested are African-Americans; they are the majority of the people filling up our jails. The majority of arrests are either directly related to drugs, or are crimes in which people are trying to raise money to pay for drugs. The drug problem continues in Baltimore City, especially, and throughout the state of Maryland. There is a group of people saying, "Let's arrest everyone, let's build more prisons." But that doesn't deal with the crime problem.

One of the problems we have in the state, and in Baltimore, is that Mayor Kurt Schmoke has for years been a darling of the drug lobby, and has called for the legalization—in his words, "decriminalization," which is really legalization—of drugs. He says we don't have to wage a war on drugs, this is

a health problem. The other major person in the world who has said this, and has funded every legalization measure, is George Soros, a speculator-billionaire who is under investigation in six countries. Soros is a strong supporter of the coca growers in Peru and Colombia, where the drugs come from. The government of Taiwan, at this point, won't even allow him in! But he has come into Baltimore and set up a beach-head there, his biggest operation in the United States.

His Open Society set up offices in Baltimore last year, at the invitation of Kurt Schmoke, to spread around \$25 million, including for the needle-exchange program and programs for legalizing drugs. It is well known that this is what Soros believes, and it is well known that this is what Kurt Schmoke believes. When I responded to the *Post* and said that this is what they say, and that this sends the wrong message to our youth and to the criminals involved in drugs, that specific sentence was deleted from my answer in the *Washington Post*, because people don't want to admit that

Soros and Schmoke are working together for the legalization of drugs.

**EIR:** What specific legislation are they backing?

**Freeman:** They have called for the penalty for being arrested for drugs to be eliminated, and therefore drugs should be legalized. There has been a discussion of creating state dispensaries of drugs for addicts. We have already had in Baltimore, since the campaign I ran in 1994, a needle-exchange program. They give drug addicts clean hypodermic needles, so that they can shoot drugs into their arms, because dirty needles would spread AIDS. The idea is, we'll let people kill themselves with drugs, instead of killing themselves with AIDS. The state board of health in Maryland is requesting a program to simply provide more health facilities for drug users, and eliminating all criminal penalties for all those involved.

It is exactly the wrong direction. Our youth in this city are turning to drugs, which are rampant, especially in the African-American community. Drugs are not the only cause of the problems—the cause is also the collapse in the economy, and the terrible direction of our culture. But if you say that people should not be penalized for taking drugs, then you've sent a message out that is going to spread the epidemic, instead of reducing it.

**EIR:** How does this intersect the fight over gambling, and the gambling interests moving into the state?

**Freeman:** There's a very interesting connection. Earlier this year, there was a candidate in the Democratic primary, Eileen Rehrmann, a county executive from Harford County, who came out and said that she would raise all the additional revenue—\$100 million—for schools, based on bringing slot machines into the race tracks. The argument is that Maryland is losing money to Delaware, which has slot machines at the race tracks. This is opposed, correctly, by Governor Glendening, and I support him on that. A coterie of people inside the Democratic Party split with Glendening, and that includes Wayne Curry, the county executive for Prince George's County, who is an African-American; and Kurt Schmoke, who heads the African-American community in Baltimore City; and Larry Gibson, who is the brainchild of all three campaigns. They viciously attacked the Governor, because they want to bring in organized crime, legalized gambling, to the Maryland race tracks, which would be a foot in the door to open up the entire state.

It's not uninteresting that they want to bring in criminal elements around Las Vegas-style gambling casino houses, and at the same time, Schmoke is bringing in Soros, who is also involved in organized crime. So, there is a *heavy criminal element* that Schmoke and others are trying to bring into the state of Maryland, under the ruse that this will provide increased revenue. And it won't provide *any* increased revenue: Gambling just takes money out of people's pockets. Nothing new is created! We already have a lottery, which is officially part of our budget. We depend on \$400 million from the lottery. What I said is, it's immoral for us to use gambling slot machines to pay for children's education.

This story has not yet been fully told: what the organized crime element is, that Schmoke and others are working with. We hope to dig it out over the next few months.

**EIR:** Looking back to your last campaign for governor, how does the situation look different today? The state of Maryland has been the scene of bitter fights in the legislature, for example, around the ouster of State Sen. Larry Young, and there are fights raging in the African-American community. How have these intersected your campaign?

**Freeman:** Our campaign has now emerged as probably the most active and largest campaign in the African-American community, especially in Baltimore City. I recently held a town hall meeting with State Rep. Harold James from Pennsylvania, and we had 80 people come. After the meeting, we had people tell us, "You guys are holding the largest meetings in Baltimore."

One of the reasons is, I said at the very beginning of my campaign that we were going to tell the truth. We were going to tell the truth about the economy, and we were going to tell the truth about what was done to Senator Young.

Senator Young, by the way, has not been a friend of mine. We have been on opposite sides for many years. But, he rose to prominence as a State Senator, an African-American, espe-

cially in the area of providing health care to the African-American community. He was a recognized expert, among black state legislators around the country. Now, there were allegations made about his involvement with various contracts in the state of Maryland, and his representing those industries. But there was no *proof*. There were stories written in the *Baltimore Sun*. And what happened was, that the Maryland Ethics Committee (so-called), threw him out. He became the first State Senator removed from the Maryland Senate in 200 years. There was *never* a criminal charge presented; there was no crime presented; there was no grand jury handing down indictments, even to this day. In eight months, there has been no crime charged, and yet he was thrown out of office.

It is no coincidence that he is an African-American: We have identified people who have a policy called Operation Fruehmenschen, which targetted African-American officials. Why? Because they represent their constituency. The same reason that a non-African-American, Lyndon LaRouche, was targetted: because he represents the interests of people, against the interests of banks, opposed to the cost-cutting policies of Gingrich and some of the extremist Republicans. And it's the same reason that President Clinton is being targetted: The Justice Department *takes out people*, elected officials or leaders, like LaRouche, who would oppose a bankers' policy. That's the reason that Senator Young was kicked out of office: because he stood up for the people.

Interestingly, no one else but me has brought his expulsion into the campaign. Even the African-American officials and candidates running for office. Nobody will touch this issue, except for me. And even though Senator Young and I have not been allies in the past, I have stuck to my principles from the very beginning: This is a crime, this is an atrocity, and it shouldn't be tolerated. So, people have watched us, over these many months, and there is a very great respect for us, and as a result, our organization in Baltimore has grown significantly during the course of this campaign.

**EIR:** Is there anything else you'd like to say?

**Freeman:** Given the nature of the financial meltdown that's going on now, and the fact that this has been the lead item which I have been educating the citizens on, who knows, maybe in the last days of the campaign, all kinds of interesting things could happen in terms of our campaign. It is the fear of our ideas that led the *Washington Post* to censor some of my remarks, and the *Baltimore Sun* to not even cover my campaign at all, which I think is going to make them look very silly, as what we're saying turns out to come true in the next days and weeks ahead.

So, I'm very happy that we have put out these ideas, we've educated citizens in the state of Maryland, and even if we don't achieve the total victory that we hope to, we have already enriched and developed and built our movement in the state around those ideas. And I think that is something that is very positive.