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Providing Leadership For a Time of Crisis

Mr. LaRouche gave this presentation by teleconference from Germany, to the cadre school in Mexico City, on Dec. 15, 2002. We include some of the discussion that followed.

You probably all have been acquainted with what I said in Budapest on Thursday evening, at the Schiller Institute event there.[1] So I think you probably are familiar with it. If you are not, you should be, I think.

This is the theme which is going to appear in my Jan. 28 "State of the Union" Presidential message, which will begin by saying that the President will have spoken—George W. Bush, Jr., has given his report of the state of the union—and now his successor—*me,* will present mine! And that is supposed to be a *double entendre* of certain significance.

But the point is, is that the key issue here, throughout the world, is the issue of leadership.

We've come to the end of a long process—especially about the past 37 years or so, since the beginning of the Indochina War, in which the world has undergone a transformation, especially the Americas and Europe, from what had been a producer-oriented society, to a parasitical, consumer-oriented society. And this has resulted in phenomena such as the *maquiladoras* in Mexico, and so forth—the destruction of Mexico's potential development as a true republic with advanced industrial and agricultural capabilities.

We've seen the virtual destruction of most of the nations of the Americas. Ecuador no longer has any sovereignty; it's totally dollarized. The Central American countries are virtually destroyed. Venezuela is a bunch of idiots, squabbling among each other over a lunatic, who's the President. A drug epidemic, which is really not being controlled—drug terrorists—in Colombia. The threatened destruction of Bolivia, by sending it back to the narcos. The temporary destruction of the true sovereignty of Peru. The horrible things that are being done to Argentina. The threats to Brazil. The situation in Paraguay and Uruguay. And so forth and so on.

Then, of course, Africa—that's another case, where virtually genocide is going on. Anglo-American/Israeli genocide south of the Sahara Desert. And it's deliberate.

And now the whole system, the whole international financial system is collapsing, and carrying the economy down with it. This thing is coming on fast. We're in the last phase before a terminal collapse, a general breakdown crisis of the entire world economy, or at least most of it.

So, at this point, you have a situation in which the parliamentary parties of the world generally do not work. They are in complete breakdown. For example, the Republican and Democratic Parties, under their present leaderships, are incapable of doing anything. It may do something bad, as a matter of accident. But it is not capable of doing any good. A similar situation exists among the parties in Europe. There are political elements in parliamentary systems, which have a certain capability, a certain virtue, but when one tries to get the majority of a major party, or a major combination of government to do something, it breaks down. They all fall short of reality. And of course, that's the situation, pretty much, around the world.

So, now we're faced with a problem of leadership, which has two aspects to it, as the problem does. First of all, people have been conditioned over the past 35-odd years, to a new set of values—so-called "post-industrial society," environmentalism, and so forth. It is this change, from an emphasis on production, and development of production, to consumer society, to post-industrial society, an imitation of the decadence of the Roman Empire—a decadence of Rome from about the end of the Second Punic War; this kind of decadence has gripped the world.

And there have been cultural changes—the destruction of Classical culture, the destruction of education, the destruction of all kinds of institutions, destruction of infrastructure. And all of these parties, and these so-called leaders, are conditioned to operate within the assumption that the trends which have been established within the past 35 years are not reversible. That maybe, solutions might exist, but the solutions have to fit within the generally accepted trends up to now, of the past 35 years.

And for precisely that reason, none of the governments, and none of the political parties, in most of the world, are capable of doing anything. Certainly not the present leadership of the Democratic and Republican Parties in the United States.

Parliamentary Politics Won't Work

Now, this brings up the question, of what kind of leadership is required in a time like this. Because you can no longer go by popular opinion. You come to a point—because democracy signifies popular opinion, and because popular opinion is hopelessly, morally degenerate—you come to a point in which all the political parties, the parliamentary systems, *don't work anymore.*

So, therefore, there is no democratic solution in the conventional sense of parliamentary politics. It doesn't exist. This means, as we've seen in the case of the way in which the Iraq war was, at least, postponed, if not deferred indefinitely, this came chiefly, from what would be called, the ministerial side

1. See "How To Reconstruct a Bankrupt World," *EIR,* Dec. 27, 2002.

of government. That is, the U.S. Presidency. Not all the elements in the Presidency, but the institutions of the Presidency reacted to this, and said, "We, the majority, effectively, we will not do this."

And the parliament—the Congress—failed to do anything significant. The political parties, including Clinton, failed to do anything. We did it through the Presidency, the Presidency of the United States. That is, the institutions of the Presidency, the majority of them, including the military, moved to make a shift, of strategy, into the United Nations Security Council, to get it out of the hands of the chickenhawks—these war-making draft-dodgers, who are controlling the war policy. And, in the process, to get Saddam Hussein to accept an agreement with the United Nations, under which the United States would not go to war.

We succeeded so far, in preventing a war from occurring in September, when it was likely. In October, when it was likely. In November, when it was likely. In December, when it was promised. And we've now so far, seem to be have pushed it into January, possibly February; if not there, we've got it out of the way for the time being. So that was done that way.

Now, this is dangerous, because, as I've said otherwise, we have to compare such a period like this, with a period in Germany, and around the world, between 1928 and 1933. And look at Germany in particular.

In 1928 you had the fall of the Müller government, because the plan for reorganizing the international debt structure—then the Versailles debt structure, didn't work. The Müller government collapsed. That was the collapse of formal democracy as a mode of government in Germany—in Weimar Germany. You had, therefore, a succession of ministerial governments—that is, governments which were appointed by the head of state. Not elected. Then finally, you had von Schleicher, who was a good choice of ministerial government, but on the 28th of January 1933, Hindenburg, under blackmail, and under pressure from U.S. and British bankers, kicked von Schleicher out, and put Adolf Hitler in. Then, with the Reichstag fire, emergency laws were enacted, under which the Nazis established a dictatorship, in various successive steps. But from that point on.

So we're now in a period like that. Fortunately, we had Roosevelt in the United States, otherwise we would have had a fascist dictatorship in the United States too.

Now we're back in that kind of period, in which, for a short period of time, *perhaps*, ministerial governments—that is, governments without a real parliamentary base, will act to prevent terrible things from happening, maybe. But that will not go on indefinitely. If we do not get new leadership, if we can not reform the processes of democracy, so they correspond to reality, rather than to present-day popular opinion, we are headed for probable dictatorship, or total chaos thoughout the world—one of the two.

The Example of Jeanne d'Arc

Therefore, what kind of a leader do you require for a period like this? And that's the question I posed in this Thursday evening presentation in Budapest.

And I've used, again and again, this comparison of the historical Jeanne d'Arc, who is actually accurately portrayed, in principle—with some dramatic license, but in principle, correctly—by Schiller, in his play. You contrast that with Shakespeare's Hamlet, which I did there. And Hamlet was incapable of leading his nation, Denmark, or the legendary Denmark, in a period of crisis.

Jeanne d'Arc, on the other hand, in a period where perpetual warfare was likely, intervened with her leadership, to save European civilization as a whole. Her sacrifice, her determination not to compromise, resulted in the British being kicked out of France, the first modern nation-state was established in France, under Louis XI, as a result of this. And later, you had Henry VII, in England; the defeat of Richard III, the tyrant, resulted in a second nation-state.

But then, you had this Venetian process, and so forth and so on, which was an anti-Renaissance movement, led by the Venetians, and by Charles V, and the Hapsburgs generally, which drowned Europe in prolonged religious war. And out of that you got this horrible mess called the Anglo-Dutch liberalism, which, together with the Hapsburg reign, destroyed much of Europe. Europe was saved from that, but Europe never got an actual, modern republican government.

At this time, as through most of this period, the governments of Europe are based upon the neo-feudal model of a parliamentary system. These parliamentary systems are characterized by a lack of a real head of state, and a control over the parliamentary government by an independent central-banking system, which has veto-power over the economic and related policies of the government. It is a tyranny of financial interests, which exerts its command over the state, above the state, through its control over the central-banking system, which is nothing but an agency—not of banks, but of financier interests, who control, and destroy, and create banks.

So we've come to a point, in which a fundamental change has to be made, in which the governments of the world generally, and the popular opinion of the world, is insane. So you have to have a leader as you did not have, in the case of Hamlet, as you did have in the exemplary case of Jeanne d'Arc, who intervenes in a seemingly impossible situation, to introduce a principle upon which the revival of society, or its step upward, can be accomplished.

Now the person who is capable of doing that, requires certain qualities. Democracy will never do that for you, by definition. Democracy in a time of crisis like this, is a *failure*, and always will fail. Because popular opinion will fail, because it's rotten. It's wrong. Therefore, you have to have something exceptional introduced into this situation to save society.

The principle of true leadership is dramatized by the contrast between Joan of Arc, whose sublime, selfless action saved her nation, and Hamlet, whose fear of immortality led to the destruction of the Danish kingdom. (Here, a statue of Joan in Paris; and actor Derek Jacobi in a PBS production of Shakespeare's play.)

What are the qualities of a leader, who goes *against* popular opinion, as a leader, and has the knowledge and will to lead society out of its own self-destruction? Hamlet did not. And what was Hamlet afraid of? Hamlet was not afraid of death. Hamlet was a soldier. A killer! By instinct and profession. But he knew that he was wrong. But as you see in the famous Third Act soliloquy, he states that he could fight, but what happens after you die? It was not fear of death that caused Hamlet to fail. Quite the contrary: It was his fear of immortality.

Now, immortality means, to a leader—as a functional characteristic of a qualified leader for a time of crisis—immortality means, what it means in the case of Jeanne d'Arc: the ability to go against popular opinion, on the basis of willingness to spend one's life, even by death, for the sake of future generations, and for the sake of the long process of humanity's existence.

Therefore, only a leader, who operates from that kind of sense of immortality, which is shown in one case by Jeanne d'Arc, and is shown by every great leader in a time of crisis—.

For example, in the case of France, when France was about to be destroyed by a fascist coup d'état over the Algeria issue, Charles de Gaulle for a moment in that case, as well as other times, showed himself a true leader, by standing, on television, before the French nation and the world, describing the crisis, and saying, "*Aidez-moi.*" "Come to my assistance." And he succeeded. They came to his assistance. The improbable thing happened. He saved France from the fascist coup. Because he was willing to put his life on the line, for the sake of the immortal outcome of his life for future generations.

Now it wasn't entirely a success, as we see today. But it was a great moment. And it was a moment of true leadership.

We've now come to a time where that quality is required. Those of you, who are adopting the role of becoming leaders, or becoming part of a leadership of society, will find the only source of strength you have, that really counts, is your commitment to the future of humanity and the nation. And your willingness to spend your life's energies, in devotion to the *outcome* of your life. To spend your mortal life wisely. Not to get killed prematurely! That's not in the program. But to risk everything—fortune, welfare, security—everything, for the sake of your immortality: what your life will mean to future generations.

And only a person who has that kind of commitment, who has development which qualifies them in knowledge to do that job, can be a leader in time of crisis. And as you look around you in this hemisphere, for example, there are very few people who can do this. For example, *I'm probably the only person, the only living person in the United States today, who is actually qualified to become the President of the United States under these conditions—under these world conditions, as well as U.S. conditions.*

So that's the point. And what one has to do: Looking at things in that manner, gives you an instinct within yourself, for knowing what you need to understand. What you need to do, how you need to proceed, to mobilize people for this.

The LaRouche Youth movement—"like a university on wheels"—shown here organizing in Chicago.

Build a Youth Movement

Generally, the leadership will work the following way: We have now a youth movement in the United States. It took about three years to get it started. As you will see, it is now working well. Who says it is perfect! Nothing is perfect. But it's working well. We have a *real* youth movement. Not a *sans coulotte* youth movement, but a youth movement of people who are functioning like a university on wheels. Who are studying some of the most profound concepts, the essential profound concepts of science and history, at the same time they're doing the laboratory work, on the streets, in the university campuses, in the parliaments, in the legislatures, and other institutions. They're exerting leadership.

They are inspiring people of an older generation, who otherwise would be moral and intellectual corpses, to come out of their death-like state, and to get out there and do something. And these people are inspired; they say, "Hey, these young people are moving. It's wonderful. We do have a future!"

So, you guys have got to create that impression in places such as Mexico: that there is a future. And to mobilize young people to do their work, to provide that kind of leadership, to inspire older generations, who are still living, to believe again, that there is a future. To waken them out of their torpor, and get them in motion.

I think we're going to win. We have no guarantees. It's going to take everything we have in us, to do the job we have to do. But I think we're going to win. I can smell victory. And I would like you to have that smell too.

So go ahead, and "shoot me"! What have you got to ask?

Dialogue With LaRouche

The Judeo-Christian Heritage

Q: I think that Judeo-Christian civilization has given us a great contribution to this victory. As you say, you can "smell victory." This is very important. However, we have also seen a pessimistic society: this process which has led to a post-industrial age. My question—what I wonder—is what have really been, let us say, the failures of our Judeo-Christian culture, its axiomatic or ontological shortcomings, which allowed for this process to take place, which should never have occurred? If these can be identified—although of course we know perhaps that they have been undermining these principles. On the other hand, I also wonder whether we might not be now at the threshold of victory, of arriving at a deeper cultural concept, a higher conception of culture which would give rise to a better civilization; which, as the Pope has said, would be a "civilization of love." This is a concept which I wonder about, and I would like to know if you have any thoughts on this?

LaRouche: Yes, I have a very definite and specific response to this question. You mentioned the Pope. Now, he's one of my friends; he's one of my boys. He's a little older

Pope John Paul II and the late Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan. Cardinal Van Thuan's "spiritual exercises" embody the Platonic method which is also at the core of LaRouche's work.

than I am, not much; and he's fighting, and his health has improved lately, which pleases me greatly, considering all things. We just lost a great friend who died recently of cancer, Cardinal Francis Xavier Van Thuan. He was head of Justitia et Pax. Some people consider him as having been a person who was a candidate for the succession to the papacy. He was a dear friend and he and I had a special relationship. We knew each other—Helga and I knew him back in the 1980s, when he was still a younger bishop in Justitia et Pax, and we had a pretty good relationship.

But then, I met him again and he had written a book called *On Spiritual Exercises,* which I've referred to. This book was the result of—the Pope had invited him to present this lecture on spiritual exercises to a convention of bishops in the Vatican. And the Pope had concealed himself during the presentation in the adjoining room with an open door, where the bishops in the audience could not see the Pope. And then the Pope appeared after the lectures to embrace the presentation. Then the book was published.

Now, this book, while the subjects are simple theological, biblical themes, represents my method, my Platonic method. What are called spiritual exercises, in true terms—that is, exercises which actually evoke the sense of the spiritual quality that distinguishes man from the beast—these exercises are *purely Platonic.* There is no Aristotle in any of them. They are purely Platonic, as all Christianity is purely Platonic. Because, what the spiritual aspect is, as identified with Vernadsky, as an example: we have three categories of efficient universal principles in the known universe. The first we call "abiotic," non-living processes, as Vernadsky defined that from the standpoint of physical chemistry. You have a second group, which are physical effects which are generated *only as effects of action by living processes,* not non-living ones. They are never generated by non-living processes, only by living processes. This defined what Vernadsky defined as the "biosphere," that is, an area which includes non-living processes and living processes, in which the living processes, in the long term, are transforming the non-living universe into a fossil of a living universe.

Then you have a third category, of physical effects which are introduced to the universe only by the mental actions of man, which can not be copied by any beast. This third category, we call spiritual, or the domain of reason. Thus, we have three categories of universal physical principles. One, the so-called abiotic, the non-living principles. Secondly, the principle of life, which exists among the animals, for example. Thirdly, we have the spiritual concept, which is reason. The spiritual quality of man can be explicitly addressed only by spiritual exercises of the type that conform to Plato's Socratic dialogues. The only method.

Corruption in the Church

Now, when you look at matters in that way, and you look at the condition of the Catholic Church and the decadence in the Catholic Church, as I do, you find that there are a few priests and missionaries, especially missionaries, or people of missionary disposition, who care about the inside of the minds of the people with whom they are working, to whom their mission assigns them. As opposed to someone who is merely doctrinaire, laying down the line, you know, the party line for the Church. And the party-liners tend to be corrupted all too easily, especially with lack of inspiration. So therefore, you have a Church, which as we know in the case of the U.S. Church, is predominantly corrupted. Those priests in the Catholic Church in the United States who are not corrupted—priests and nuns—are a minority. And once you take the slide down toward corruption, you tend to go all the way, which is some of the problems we have there.

You have a similar sort of thing in Germany, where you have outright fascism, Satanic fascism, as expressed by leading circles of the Church there. You have the French problem, where there's some question as to whether Napoleon is God or not. Then you have the problems in Italy. In the Italian Church in general, you have a lot of good people in the priesthood and in the congregations. In the Curia, you have some problems, internationally influenced problems.

So, what has happened in the collapse of society, is that the Church has not measured up to its mission. We've had some great Popes—from Leo XIII, Benedict, Pius I, Pius II, and of course our friends, including Paul, including John Paul

II—but the Church as a whole has not been living up to its mission. And if you live inside the United States in particular, you know it very well. You find all these fellows who are Adam Smith followers. Well, Adam Smith, theologically, is a Bogomil cult, a Cathar cult. Calvin himself was a Bogomil in terms of his theology. And you have priests who are teaching that sort of thing. The problem is that many of these bishops and priests depend upon money. Where does the money come from? It comes from wealthy families, financier families. And the priests and bishops are attuned to this money, which comes from these wealthy families, and they are careful to shape their conduct in ways which will not offend these sources of wealth.

We had a friend of ours, Stefan Kozak, who was a U.S. diplomat, a senior, professional diplomat, who died a few years ago. Now, Kozak did an investigation for the Vatican of the problems inside the clergy, and the large-scale homosexuality which was prevalent, was documented. The role of the bishops' negligence in sending priests to universities where they studied William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience;* or you had this pseudo-Catholic faction at Chicago University around people like Leo Strauss and so forth. The corruption is immense. It's this type of corruption. So you have corruption *in the Church,* and it's been there for a long time, and you have those who fight against it, like the Pope and like our dear, departed friend, the Cardinal. But the problem is, the quality of leadership has been largely lacking.

Now, this is, unfortunately, the usual case of mankind. Until mankind rises out of what we see today, the level of popular opinion, mankind will always tend to slide into decadence. And it's only then, through times of crisis, where fortunately some leadership appears of quality, that mankind is able to crawl out of this kind of decadence and survive. In the long run, I'm optimistic that, as mankind, we shall succeed in curing this problem of epidemic, or endemic decadence, which causes these cyclical behaviors in cultures.

But the problem today is, you can not say that the Church as an average institution is an efficient institution for combatting these kinds of problems. The Church, by and large, has become increasingly corrupted by precisely these kinds of problems. And it's corrupted largely by one thing: the lack of priests and other leaders who actually embody the method of spiritual exercises that is the Platonic method, the method of Plato's Socratic dialogues—which is epitomized, in terms of Biblical New Testament issues, by Cardinal Van Thuan. It's the lack of a sufficient number of such priests and others, with that specific quality of commitment to spirituality, and the prevalence of priests who have an inferior understanding of spirituality which melts too easily under the corrupting pressures of the surrounding society. That's the problem.

So, I'm confident. *I have confidence in myself* on this question. I embody the principle of spiritual exercises. That's my method, it's what I've always relied upon, at least in all my adolescent-to-adult life. That method. I know some people in the Church, like the deceased Cardinal. I see the same reflection in the Pope. I see it in some other leading figures in the Church, who represent that same method. So we have a certain kinship, based on having the same method. But I can tell you, when you get outside that, you get some honest good priests who will respond to that, but you also get a lot of members of the clergy, and others, who are totally corrupted by the present society, the present culture.

And then you go over to the other side, you look on the Protestant side, and you've got a much more serious problem, in general. You have the prevalence of this Moonie cult, which actually had a big control over the Christendom College crowd, among other things—was integral to it. The so-called Christian Coalition was totally corrupted by this stuff. We had a fight against that, because of that.

So, we have the problem, and the answer to such questions, the question you posed, is extremely important, but you've got to know where the answer lies. The answer lies in those of us who have a devotion to the concept of spiritual exercises which I've identified. And it's upon *us*—whether we're in the clergy or not—on whom the rescue of civilization depends for our role as leaders.

Has Technological Progress Failed Us?

Q: My doubt is in respect to my education. I received an education according to which, with respect to the knowledge of man, everything was cumulative, and the education that we receive today, everything that is taught today, they say that we are better in this epoch than in the past, precisely because of the question of so-called technology, that we are now better off than in the 1960s or the 1430s, because of the scientific principles that were discovered. But, what draws my attention is that this isn't the case. Which process is determining—because I see that there has been an advancement in technology, but if we don't have the cultural conditions that transmit those discoveries, what would happen to that knowledge if we don't have a transmission into the relationships of human beings?

LaRouche: You have to have clarity about the nature of this transmission of knowledge. The first thing you have to understand about European civilization, of which we're all a part—we who are speaking together today, chiefly—European civilization is a little over 2,700 years or so old. It has two leading currents in it. One is the Classical current, as typified by Plato, and Pythagoras before him. The other is the reductionist tendency, which is typified by the empiricists, the Aristoteleans and so forth and so on. Those are the two currents.

In the whole span of this, there was the rise in Greece to the point of the stupidity of the Peloponnesian Wars, which destroyed Athens—destroyed itself, and much of Greece besides. But from the destruction of Greece in the Peloponnesian Wars, a group of the followers of Socrates, such as Plato, developed a program for the revival of the kind of knowledge

and development which had been placed in jeopardy by such events as the Peloponnesian War.

So, from this we have, in the last period from about the time of the death of Socrates [399 B.C.] until about 200 B.C., the death of Eratosthenes in Egypt, and Archimedes' murder by the Romans, you have a period which is dominated largely by Classical culture. A Classical culture which in turn is dominated by the Pythagorean tradition and, specifically, by Plato. All the great accomplishments in science and knowledge of ancient Greece, are consistent with the teachings of Plato, not with Aristotle.

Then, you have the rise of Rome from about 200 B.C., toward the end of the Second Punic War, the conquest of southern Italy, the invasion and conquest of Greece and so forth, these developments characterize the rise of Rome. Now, Roman culture was a degenerate culture, despite a few figures like Cicero and so forth, but was a degenerate culture, as Augustine describes it. And the prevalence of the Roman Empire imposed a long wave of degeneracy, which dominated all European and Mediterranean civilization from about 200 B.C. until the 15th-Century Renaissance in Europe. The 15th-Century Renaissance was the revival of Classical knowledge.

Many Renaissances

There had been revivals before. The important role of the Arab and Jewish renaissance in Spain, as typified by the case of Alfonse the Wise, or similar things with Frederick II in Italy, before he was killed. And a similar thing around Charlemagne, with the Abassid Dynasty in that time. So, there were many renaissances. Augustinianism was generally crushed in Italy; moved to Isadore of Seville, was crushed to a large degree there; and moved north to the Irish; and it was the Irish monks who civilized the Saxons, who civilized some of the Franks and created France. But then the Normans were sent in to destroy Christianity by conquering the Saxons. And so forth and so on. And Europe was dominated by this long wave which was predominantly evil, even though there was some persistence of progress, as in the cathedral-building of Chartres and so forth, in the meantime.

So, it's only with the 15th Century, in the wake of the New Dark Age of the 14th Century, that there was a revival of Classical Greek method; i.e., the method of Plato, in Europe. The Venetians—who were the imperial maritime power, a financier oligarchy, which dominated Europe from about the time of Otto III as emperor of Europe until the end of the 17th Century—the Venetians staged a counteroffensive against the Renaissance; and the rise of the Hapsburgs, as in the case of Charles V of Spain, is an example of this. But from about 1511 to 1647, all of Europe was destroyed by religious wars which were orchestrated entirely by the Venetians. They created the Protestant sects and they created the other groups, and they set each against each other's throats in bloody warfare, to attempt to destroy civilization.

The Venetians introduced a reductionist philosophy. You had two versions: one was a neo-Aristotelianism, which was introduced by Venice at the beginning of the 16th Century. Then, near the end of the 16th Century, Paolo Sarpi introduced Empiricism. And Empiricism and Cartesianism became—together with Existentialism and later Positivism—became the reductionist currents that dominated all aspects of European thought, *in conflict with* the Platonic current flowing through Nicholas of Cusa, Leonardo da Vinci, Kepler, Leibniz, Gauss, and Riemann.

So, most culture—or what is taught as culture in education today—over most of this period, with rare exceptions of Classical renaissances, has been corrupt. So, what has been transmitted as knowledge, including so-called physical-scientific knowledge, has been largely corrupt.

A Youth Movement Based on Real Knowledge

For example, in this youth program, I've emphasized early on, the key thing in starting a university-level education among young people today—you start with Gauss's 1799 attack on the empiricists, the neo-Cartesians in some part, D'Alembert, Euler, and Lagrange. Because what's the issue? It's the Platonic issue. In this paper of Gauss's, he defines what he calls a fundamental theorem of algebra, which is actually the definition of what we call mathematics of the complex domain. Now, that definition, which is not entirely original to Gauss—it's simply a new way of putting the point—is already presented by the Pythagoreans and Plato, in such forms as the question of the doubling of the cube by construction. These conceptions involve *spiritual exercises*, and creativity is a spiritual exercise.

What you've had in education is corrupt education, largely based on Aristotelian and other reductionist programs, in which the students *learn doctrine*, they do not experience the spiritual exercise of the actual discovery of a principle. And society functions on that basis. You're told, "Learn, learn. When you're old enough and have degrees, then you can make up your own mind about these things." But by the time you get to that point, by the time you reach the age of 25-27, if you don't already *know* this, in a Platonic way, you probably never will, because your mind is too much destroyed.

So, the problem is, we've had corrupt cultures. And people have sat back and said, well, for a time, we've gotten by nicely on the inertia of what we've accomplished. But then the culture becomes totally decadent. But the decadence was already embedded in our failure to develop adequately, earlier. What we're trying to do now, is change that, and the way I've defined the youth movement, as a political youth movement, is actually new in modern history. This youth movement is like no other, which can be adduced from, shall we say, the 20th Century. There's no comparison. This is a youth movement based on knowledge, based on *the process of discovery of knowledge,* which is what people ought to be doing in their university years, and even before then. So,

the difference is, *we represent potentially the difference, the margin of difference to begin to reverse this long crisis in history* of advancing and collapsing, advancing and collapsing. At last, we're challenged. We've got to change the way things work. We have to have a new conception of culture, and this youth movement, which has emerged in the past three years, has demonstrated that we're on the right track.

The Need for Exceptional Leadership

Q: We had a class yesterday which was very interesting, I thought. Except one idea was not very clear to me, and I'd like to see if maybe you can help me out. Between the classes yesterday at the cadre school, and Marivilia [Carrasco] gave a class on the sublime from the standpoint of Schiller, and yes, LaRouche. And they were quoting some parts of Schiller where he speaks of when, technically speaking, in a crisis, there was something that lifted people from that crisis, so that they could overcome and achieve something greater. And it could be explained or defined as the sublime. I there had a doubt, and we discussed this for a while. I tried to compare it with what Roosevelt did with the economy in the '30s, which is that he took it to the limits of the overall, off-the-shelf industrial capabilities, and what happened is that a breakthrough was made. These limits were overcome and things went further, quite opposite to the idea that, perhaps, when pushing to the limits, things could break and collapse.

So, I'm not sure if this is exactly the principle that is referred to, whether this is a correct comparison, but if so, my question would be: This issue of facing up to the crisis at this time, where it's fairly apparent among youth and society at large, but mostly youth—you must face up to the crisis in order to make that breakthrough. But since it is more than apparent, what would it be—a matter of bringing it to [people's] self-consciousness, so that they face the crisis, and then we help them to break through, or how would it work? What do you think about this?

LaRouche: Well, it's fairly simple. You see, I lived through all this. I have the advantage of having lived through the entire period you've referred to, the 1930s, the 1940s, the postwar period, and I saw exactly how the degeneration occurred. This is not a lawful process, in the sense that it had to happen that way. Roosevelt died and the enemies whom he had fought all his life were able to move in and take over. Now, there were reasons for it. Part of the reasons were that this is *not* a great society. Most of the people of my generation were extremely backward, morally. The 1930s was not exactly a good time to live. It was a decadent culture. Remember, the United States had been in a decadent culture since the successful assassination of William McKinley. McKinley was not the strongest person in American history, even though he had essentially a good commitment, but there were terrible weaknesses in that time, in that administration.

So, it's not quite that simple. The good comes, not by trying to find a magic formula for, how do you orchestrate success? The problem is that people look for magic formulas because they want to say, "How can we be sure we're going to succeed? How do we know that our effort on this is going to be worthwhile? How do we know we're not going to fail, like so many have before us?"

Well, the answer is largely two things: First of all, you have to be determined not to fail. You have to have this sense of immortality, which I've described. And without that sense, you're not going to succeed. Look, I had people all around me—I'm a success, but all the people around me from that period turned out to be more or less failures. And what you're experiencing in society is just the result of the fact that most of them were failures. Most of the people with whom I was in military service were failures, they proved failures in the postwar period.

So, you depend on people like me, who are not failures, to get you through this period.

Take the case of Germany, before Hitler. Now Germany was at a very high level of culture, but unfortunately, had never overcome the fact of having a Kaiser, which is a very backward kind of institution, to have that kind of imperial conception. And the Germans wreaked their own death, the German military wreaked its own death, by refusing to coup, when they should have couped. Not waiting until 1944 to try to do it, until the British would betray them. And they *brought upon themselves* their own destruction in that way.

So, the secret is one of leadership. It's quality of leadership. Roosevelt was an exceptional quality of leadership. If Roosevelt had not succeeded, the United States would have become a fascist state, as Germany did. It was Roosevelt's ability, his development of the qualifications to make that revolution, which caused it to occur. And once they got rid of Roosevelt, the revolution collapsed. Not entirely, because the effects were not completely wiped out immediately, but it collapsed. And I saw it. It was my generation that was rotten, and today, my unique position is being a survivor of that generation, who did not betray that legacy.

And, therefore, through my commitment to that at any price—I've always refused to compromise on this issue. And the fact that I've refused to compromise has given me the strength to deal with this kind of problem. Normally a society would say, no, it never works. And all the successes of society were successes of what might have seemed impossible to people at that time. Just like Roosevelt's success. It seemed impossible to people at that time, but he succeeded. It was not just an ordinary success, it was not some kind of thing, some kind of recipe. It was a *personal impulse, a personal commitment, a drive to succeed,* and the knowledge to match it.

People underestimate Roosevelt. They underestimate his knowledge. He understood the American System, which is the finest, highest level of development of economic thinking in the world today. There's no society on this planet that has matched the American System in terms of economic thinking. That is, the American System of Political Economy. *Nothing.*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt at West Point in 1934. Roosevelt was an exceptional leader who carried out a revolution; had he failed, the United States would have become a fascist state.

The American System of Political Economy was the basis for most of the great successes in the Americas and other states, especially after the success of Lincoln, to develop in that direction. And the idea of the United States' method of economy, the heritage of Lincoln for example, was one of the great inspirations for the development of the nations of the Americas.

So, the thing to look at is not some system, it's not some systematic thing. It is systematic in the sense I've said. But what determines the success or failure of society in any time of crisis up to the present, is the presence or absence of exceptional individuals who represent the quality of leadership which, in a simple way, Jeanne d'Arc represented in the history of Europe. Without such leaders on the scene, society will go to Hell. It may come out of it later, because human beings naturally have this gift which enables them to recover, but the general tendency of society will be to go to Hell, every time, without the exceptional leaders. The only thing that saves us is that society does tend to produce, in a most remarkable way, some exceptional leaders. And because of that, society has survived.

But many societies have not survived. Many cultures have not survived. They were decadent. They were not capable of generating survival. What worries me today is that it's possible that this European civilization might not survive. It might not make it through this period of crisis. That's a possibility. A very real possibility. I think that we can save it. I know that the potentiality for saving it exists. I know that I have the ability to lead that kind of process. I understand it. Therefore, I have confidence. If you don't have the adequate basis for confidence in that kind of process, you can't succeed. You need that. But fortunately, I have that, and I have it for only one reason: because I've stuck to this devotion over so many decades. People said I was wrong, but now it all becomes clear. I was right all along. And therefore, I think that I'm qualified to say, we are going to succeed.

How Can a Breakthrough Be Made?

Q: My question is something that you have touched on before during this conversation, that throughout history, there is progress, and then civilization backtracks throughout its history. What do you think is the difference *we* make now, to ensure that the constant fight between empiricism and the search for truth, is won for truth, particularly now that there are so many more advanced elements of manipulation, such as television and the mass media, which have such a massive effect on public opinion. So, how can we ensure that we do not return to this process of one step forward, one step back?

One further question, just a small thing here, the issue of self-consciousness: This ability that you have had, to always say the truth, regardless of public opinion—do you think you got that from self-conscious love, which is received from parents, or is this something that can be generated internally by someone, regardless of the lack of self-consciousness in the maternal or parental relationship? Thank you.

LaRouche: Oh, I am sure that—I didn't get much benefit—I didn't have the worst family conditions imaginable, but my greatest advantage was that I recognized that my par-

ents—like most people—lied all the time. There was some good in them, of course. I am not knocking them in that sense. But the idea that somehow they transmitted to me some great tradition—not really. What they transmitted to me was recognition of the corruption of what their culture represented. I mean, their religious beliefs were horrifying to me—increasingly so. I was a child, I didn't know how to deal with it, but it horrified me: It made no sense. So, it was not that. No, it doesn't come by any spontaneous rule.

You see, we are individuals. And what we accomplish, we accomplish as individuals. To be an individual, creative personality is a very lonely thing. And one of the problems that people have in becoming creative is to deal with that loneliness. Because the nature of creativity is: You are right, when society and opinion around you are wrong. Now, you have to know the difference. You have to have a standard. You can not go around assuming that you are right, just because you wish to assume that. You have to actually be right. And you have to take the personal responsibility for making that difference.

I knew people around me would tend in that direction—a lot of young people I knew. They would *tend* toward that. Then they would back off. They'd become frightened. They'd say, "Look, you know, you are a smart guy, and so forth, but look, you are not going to succeed. You can't win by going against popular opinion. *You got to learn to live with popular opinion.* You got to learn to swing with the punches." And I didn't. And my advantage was entirely that. My advantage was not what I *got* from my culture. My advantage was what I *rejected* from my culture. When I recognized the flaws.

It's the same in science. That's what the nature of science is. Scientific discovery is not learning to repeat something you learned in school. That's not science. Science is not taking the bit, like a horse. You recognize that what you've been taught is *wrong.* So now you set out to *prove* it is wrong. Not only to prove it's wrong, but to find out what's right! All knowledge is based on that. That's what I've always done. And it is because of that, that I have succeeded.

Now, as to the future: Why I fight so hard for this youth movement, is because I recognized what was wrong in the education which the older generation got, and my generation before them. And I was determined, where people were open—you know, you've got people out there, most people you know, really, know that what their parents gave them, was no future, was a no-future society. Most young people today know that, in one way or another—that their parents were failures. Terrible failures, who gave their children a no-future society. Any young person who *thinks,* frankly, knows that.

So therefore, what you have to address today, is the failure of the generation that produced these fellows of, say, today's college age. That is the first thing that you have to recognize. If you don't recognize that, you get nowhere.

Now then, what do you want to do then? You have two objectives. First of all, you want to overcome that problem: You want to have a future. You want to change society to bring about a future, but that's not enough. If you are going to succeed, you have got to think about—since your parents failed *you,* morally, in this way, what are you going to do for the generation that follows you? Are you going to be a failure like your parents were? A moral failure in this way? Or are you going to take steps to make sure that what was done to you, is not done to your children and your grandchildren?

Therefore, you have to think about the transmission of knowledge. And that's what we're doing that's different. What we're doing is, we are emphasizing a method of education based on the critical significance of Gauss's attack on the work and opinions and methods of Euler, Lagrange, and so forth, the methods that are commonly taught in universities today—the empiricist method. We are building an education system with these young people, based on the best knowledge from the past, but with the intention that we will create an educational system that is a cultural system, not a formal educational system, but a cultural system. A cultural outlook: habits of thinking about ideas, discussing ideas, debating ideas. This kind of thing. To create that kind of society which will not make the kinds of mistakes that the recent generations have made, will not try to get along with popular opinion, will have the courage to *challenge* popular opinion. You say, "You say it's true? Prove it!" And that's the difference. Yes, otherwise we get into a cyclic business of saying, "Let's hope it works out."

But the other thing here is also crucial, which is implicit in what you are saying. The other problem is this: People say, "You've got to trust popular opinion"—*vox populi.* The quality of a leader is a person who is not awed by *vox populi.* Someone says, "Well, all my friends will disagree with you—" Hmm? You say, "Well, you should get better friends, or re-educate them—one of the two."

If you don't have that attitude, if you have the sense that you somehow have to apologize for disagreeing with your friends, that is the beginning of corruption. That's where you lose it. And that's where I get tough. "No. You have no right to raise the argument, that since 'all of my friends will disagree with you,' that I am wrong." Naaah, I'm not wrong! I've been there too many times! I've been consistently right, when all the so-called "your friends" crowd were wrong. So I have enough confidence to know, that I can *know* the truth. Once you get that sense of reliance upon knowing the truth, not looking over your shoulder to see what your friends are saying: Are they going along with you?

You see, the fear of rejection by your friends, your peers, is the biggest source of corruption. You had this in the case of St. Augustine. He reports about a good friend of his, who went with popular opinion. He went to the games, the Roman games, the gladiator struggles. He came back from those games, having been converted to admiring those games, and he never recovered his morality after that. It is popular opinion

that is corrupting, and it is *fear* of popular opinion, it is asking for *assurance* from popular opinion, that what you are saying is acceptable—*that is the essence of corruption.*

The Case of Benjamin Franklin

Q: Hello Lyn. I'm Lisa and I'm deploying in Mexico City now. I'd like to know how much influence there was with the principles that established the United States—what was the influence of that on the creation of the Mexican Republic? How much did that feed into it? Thank you.

LaRouche: Well, first of all, the remarkable thing about the United States is, you've got to look at the case of Benjamin Franklin, and look at the genius shown by some people, while Franklin was still alive, in crafting the leadership of the American Revolution, and that was over a long period of time. And look at how they collapsed, once the siege of the Bastille occurred, the degeneration of the struggle in France occurred. Of course, take into account the number of people who think that the siege of the Bastille was the beginning of some great movement for freedom. They celebrate it as a great event.

So, if you know Franklin as I know him—it was this one individual who was most crucial; there are many people who played a very important role, but continuously, Franklin's influence was crucial in making the American Revolution. Once the United States was hit by the terrible effects of what happened in France and elsewhere, the degeneration of people like Jefferson, Madison, and so forth; John Adams to a lesser degree but to a specific degree; these people had been leaders of a great revolution, and suddenly they degenerated. Franklin wasn't there. They degenerated because Franklin wasn't there. This is often the case in history, that we depend greatly upon individual leaders for all the great movements. And the principle of assassination is, that the people who understand these things will commit assassinations, knowing that if they eliminate an indispensable leader, they will beat the entire movement that leader represents, or conquer the nation that leader represents. That's the big problem.

Now, my concern is to try to develop a depth of leadership for the future, so that does not happen after the effort we are making now may have succeeded. But the problem is a shortage of leadership, and in these days, it's not considered popular to say that. You're supposed to be so-called democratic. I'm telling you that the great revolutions are made not by democratic movements; they're made by great leaders, and we have a shortage of them. My concern is to develop more leaders. My concern in developing a youth movement is to produce, from a youth movement, a quality of leadership which will not fail, as many Americans failed who had been leaders under a crisis, where they were hit, without Benjamin Franklin as their leader to guide them.

By the way, that puts a big responsibility on you, Lisa. (laughs)

Did I scare you?

Lisa: No, no one here is scared.

Benjamin Franklin's inspired role in the American Revolution was indispensable; after his death, a degeneration occurred among many of the other revolutionary leaders.

LaRouche: Good. I didn't think so. I just thought I'd provoke you a bit, in order to come up to the level of what you really represent. You must sense what greatness is, to achieve it in yourself.

How Can We Influence a Corrupt Society?

Q: Some time ago, Bush made a statement that can be taken as a threat to the entire world, to the effect that any country that dares—this was ostensibly aimed at Iraq, but any country that attacks the United States, he would be willing to respond with a nuclear attack. This is a worrisome attitude for most of us. Another concern I have is that society does not make much of this. They're more interested in discussing TV programs, soap operas, and other useless trash on TV, rather than this situation which is of such great concern and which can be seen as a threat against the entire world. What do you think about this?

LaRouche: Well, first of all, Bush is not much of a President, to put it lightly. But we have to deal with this situation. I can't say, "Well, I can't do anything until we get another President." I had a moral responsibility to do something, and I did it. What we did was to go to other institutions in the government, or influencing the government, and we tried to

"In order to be effective, don't be like Sancho Panza. Be able to govern, get the qualification to govern." Here, a drawing by Gustave Doré.

build an assortment of forces which could influence the decision-making process around the president. And we succeeded. Despite the ugly things he said, the President for the time being has acceded to things which are, shall we say, promising. Not reassuring entirely, but promising. And we're going to have to work from there, to deal with the next stage of the crisis, because there will be a next stage. This President may have probably learned something from this experience, or he may not have. I don't know, but that's where we stand.

So, this is typical of society. Of course it's awful. But also, you said something else, really. Think about it. What you are really talking about is the influence of the present older generation, that is, those who are in their 50s and 60s. They and the people they influence, are reacting with indifference to the reality of the present situation. That's why the youth movement is so important. As a youth movement, you have to be the conscience of the nation; you have to be, in a sense, like Cervantes was in the case of depicting the self-destruction of Spain by a crazy monarch typified by Philip II, and the crazy Spanish peasant, the Spanish people, typified by Sancho Panza. You have to have a certain sense of humor of a higher kind, about the reality of the situation. We've got a stinking society. We poor fellows have to solve the problem. And the youth generation actually has the power to reach the older generation. That's how youth movements work.

But sometimes the youth movement is not adequately developed, and it only works badly or doesn't work at all. My insistence is that the youth generation must not only be dedicated to arousing the conscience of the older generation—of their parents' generation in particular—but the youth movement must develop in itself the competence of knowledge to become policy-makers of society. And that's the difference I'm trying to make with this kind of youth movement, is to create a youth movement not only capable of provoking the adult population into sensible responses, to stop their silly indifference to reality of the type you describe, and others, but to actually be qualified to assume the responsibility of government.

If you don't like government, make yourself qualified to assume the responsibilities of government. Not like poor Sancho Panza, who couldn't resist his belly's demands long enough to govern an island. So, in order to be effective, don't be like Sancho Panza. Be able to govern, get the qualification to govern. And I think that's what we're doing. So let's have confidence in ourselves. I think that we can do the job, and have fun. I keep telling people all the time, have fun. Cognition is fun. Spiritual exercises are fun, they're the highest form of pleasure. Have fun. I think we can do the job.

Peruvian Youths in Dialogue With LaRouche

Here are excerpts of the Peruvian youths' and other supporters' discussion with Lyndon LaRouche, by telephone, on Dec. 27, 2002. The questions are transcribed from the simultaneous translation.

The Heritage of the Monroe Doctrine

Q: I'm a representative of the Peru LaRouche youth movement. I want to ask a question to clarify things for all the young people here, and all the other invitees, who are beginning to learn about your work, especially regarding the real historical relations between the United States and Latin America. Basically, the heritage of the Monroe Doctrine, and how that principle really represents the original tradition of a hemispheric policy in all the Americas. I would like very much to address this. Thank you very much.

LaRouche: Let's not talk so much about the Monroe Doctrine. Let's talk about the Monroe Doctrine as a symptom of a long process, which goes back to the 15th-Century Renaissance.

First of all, the American Revolution, which was a product, largely of the influence of—well, you had two things: The Renaissance, first of all, in the 15th Century, which was an absolute miracle, which saved Christianity, in the sense