

To Save Civilization, Place Your Voice!

Edited excerpts from a talk by Lyndon LaRouche to associates on Nov. 10, 2015.

We are now in the process of moving our organization as a whole into the area of Manhattan, which is where it should have remained always, according to Alexander Hamilton's intention. What we're getting now is, we're moving rapidly. First of all, we are clearing up the question of music. We no longer accept mere music; it's a failure, it's a mistake, because it has no placement of the voice; and the basis of everything depends on the placement of the voice. Otherwise, you really don't have a basis of unity. When people use different terms, different words, idiosyncrasies and so forth, and try to make that set of idiosyncrasies and trade styles into a nation, that was always a failure; that was always an error.

And what we're seeing now, which I began to put into effect in October of 2014, my intention from that point on has been to eliminate that kind of system among the states; which is a change that must occur if the competence of the United States is to be brought into being.

Now what's happening, we've taken the placement of the voice, the true placement of the human voice, which is not a snarl or a growl or a coughing up of things; but it's a way which is not mathematical. Mathematics is the enemy of the human mind; it always has been. And the point is that mankind's creative powers,

the placement of the voice as such, is the principle of organization of a competent society. And that's where we are now; it's coming on fast. We're not getting all the results we would like to get immediately, but they're coming on fast.

And we're going to accelerate this continuously, because the principle is the placement of the voice, and you have a model of this in the case of Furtwängler's work. Furtwängler's work fits precisely into that question of the placement of the human singing voice. And what we're doing is, we're re-assembling our organization in that area; not just in Manhattan, not just in the New York organization, but in the surrounding area.

We are now creating a new kind of understanding of what the United States always was intended to be. And now we're going to have to make it come to be what it always should have been, advocated by Alexander Hamilton and such people as that.

So the point is, the use of music is legitimate as long as you don't sing the wrong way. Your voice has to be placed appropriately; you don't make sounds, you understand the principle of musical composition. And you work at maintaining that. We have a fairly enthusiastic bunch of people who are assembling around us in the Manhattan area and around that; and this thing is developing rapidly. This defines the true meaning of what the United States should have always represented. And the "blab, blab, blab," and "blab, blab,



picture by Ricardo André Frantz

A segment of Luca della Robbia's choir loft (Cantoria) from the Renaissance cathedral (duomo) in Florence.

blab,” and all those kinds of funny sounds will have to be purged.

And it’s working in the Brooklyn region where we’re working; it’s going to work. It takes time to adjust the pianos and other instruments; it takes time to bring a concert of the instruments into the right configuration which conforms to the principle which we call the Italian principle.

And the idea is, get rid of local states. Filling stations are allowed; but otherwise, we don’t want local states. We want a state; and a state which will be in harmony hopefully with other states. But the United States is a single state; it is not a collection of states. And that was always true—as Alexander Hamilton had already argued—and the United States has never worked successfully, except as a single nation.

It has to be a single nation with a single quality of singing voice; and that’s what we’re working on. We’re working on that standpoint of reference as a scientific principle; and to bring everything into conformity with the proper placement of the human singing voice. And the instruments will also be told to behave.

We are on the point that this whole system, the whole United States system in its present form, is ready to disintegrate. And the only way you’re going to prevent a disintegration is by learning to place your voice properly. And that’s the law; and it’s being worked on at this moment, as you sit here. That’s happening right now in the fringes of Manhattan; that’s where we’re going. Why are we going there? Because it doesn’t make a damn bit of good not to do it. And that’s what our project has to be.

We’re at a point of real desolation of all hope of mankind under the present global conditions. There are parts of China, parts of India, some other parts; but in the trans-Atlantic region, we have essentially degeneration. Not a regeneration, but a degeneration; and I think it will not hurt anybody to find themselves placing the human singing voice. It would take a little work on some parts, but it’s the principle that makes the difference. The old habits don’t work; they never did. But when you have the proper placing of the voice by people who are properly directed musically, then you have something.



Conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler (center) with the soloists for a performance of Beethoven’s Choral Symphony (the Ninth) in Bayreuth in 1954.

The Voice Seems Not to Sound

The point is—the thing to always go back to: You never sound music. You don’t sound the music as such; you place the voice. And the placement of the voice creates the music. It is not your throat driving some kind of machine that makes noises; it’s the idea of the placement of the mind.

And the best example of that, of course, for modern purposes of practice, is Furtwängler: Furtwängler’s notion of the placement of the voice. Now this is not unique to him, but the emphasis, shall we say, on the question is very strong; there’s nothing that matches it. You see other things in the musical domain which have the same thing; you don’t sound the notes. You create the activity of the voice; and there’s a difference, a fundamental difference. And therefore the idea in the Italian model, which is the Classical Italian model, is the most efficient standard model.

Now Helga and I, in our various occasions in Italy, working with the Italian music people and forces,—that’s what they did, and the placement is there. If you go to the Italian performers of that generation—our generation—the placement is there. You do not make a sound; that’s not music. You make a vacuum in a sense, which is the voice. You resonate something in that sense; you don’t generate a noise. You place the voice. And that term “place the voice,” and the most exacting kind of placement is Furtwängler. Furtwängler is the actual measure of what the principle of the voice is.

And we have people who are practicing as musicians, and they work on the basis of the placement of the voice; not the voice as such, but the placement of the voice. The placement of the voice is what's important. And anyone who has a beautiful voice, has it essentially because of placement; and that placement is what's crucial. That placement is what makes the meaning of "human" pleasant. And that's the truth of the matter, and it is rarely understood very well.

And I have had the opportunity of living in Italy at various points during my whole career. And with the Verdi commitment, which is the best; it's the best we have in general knowledge in modern experience. And the best of the Italian singers: they live to make music; and they understand what that means. They free their voice of garbage and litter; and they let the voice speak for itself. The voice does not sound apparently; it does not have a sounding character; it captivates people because it is not a form of noise. It involves the question of placement; placement above all.

And I know there are people in this room who have some knowledge of this matter. But don't fall into the trap of singing jazz.

Why Are They All So Stupid?

People have the simplistic conception of the sound of the voice as such, and things like that, as the principle of human behavior; that is not true. The characteristic is, and the music is, that the music itself, the musical voice as such is the standard. Not the decorations, not the noises, not anything else. It's the placement of the voice, and the placement of the voice is not something that you generate physically. It's not that way. What it is, is the character of the mind.

Now, for example, what's wrong with the average citizen of the United States today? Just the average citizen. Why are they all stupid? What is their stupidity? They believe that they make noises; they talk, they make noises; they rub, they make noises. This has nothing to do with mankind, but quite the contrary. The idea of placement of the voice is not making a sound. The placement of the voice is an act which has an effect; but it's not a noise. It's not a sound; it's not noise as such. It has a very specific kind of character, and any attempt to imitate that character without the right placement, is a failure.

Now, what's the result of the failure? Well, most people are stupid; most modern people are stupid. Why are they stupid? Because they don't have a placement

of the mind. And the placement of the mind is not a noise; it's not a sound as such. And it's exactly what Furtwängler defined it to be, exactly that. That concept of placement of the voice. And art and so forth, the idea of physical art,—physical this, physical that,—that is not the point. That has an effect, and the effect has an implication; but the point is the placement of the voice. The voice is *placed*; it is not sounded. It is placed by tuning, the tuning of the voice.

And that's where the problem is. Because the question is here: What's important, making noises? Well, we can get skunks to make noises. As a matter of fact, skunks will make noises.

A Place which is No Place

The tuning principle we're organizing in Manhattan now, is a complete overhaul of the idea of music relative to what the standard has been heretofore for a long period of time. The placement of the voice is not something that's arbitrary. The placement of the voice is a particular area of the human mind, and the human mind's behavior, which responds to the human mind itself.

So, it's not tuning something; it's not tuning an object. The problem is most people tune objects. They don't tune the mind, they tune objects. What we're doing now in Manhattan, is we are now in a mass mobilization, relatively speaking, in Brooklyn and other areas, where we're working with people who are actually in the Italian school of placement. And placement is not something you can deviate from, and it's not a sound! It's a resonance, it's not a sound. And if you want to get the effect, the audible effect, you have to tune your mind to go to the right tuning.

Your mouth, your mind does not control music, not really, not under the Italian school. The placement of the voice, the exact *pitch* of the voice, that pitch is what your contract is; that pitch, the placement of that pitch. And you have to let it project. You don't utter it. You don't actually utter it; you cause it to be brought forth. And for example, the best example of that, the one that's most easy to see—look precisely at what Furtwängler did in his work. There's no such thing as tuning to a music that you impose. No such thing! It's a noise.

It's the placement of the voice, and the placement is a vacation—it's a place which is not a place. And you move, you become tuned. *You* become tuned. How? By



EIRNS/Frank Mathis

The New York Community Chorus rehearsing under the baton of Diane Sare.

placing your voice; but you don't make the voice. You hear the voice, but you don't make it. But you act in such a way as to respond, to resonate, with the voice that cannot be heard as such *per se*; not generated *per se*. It's the *placement* of the sound, but it's not the sound itself. And the placement authorizes the application of what you call the amplitude of the sound.

But it's not amplitude as such; it's the amplitude of the tuning. It's what we have now in Brooklyn, for example, which we're going to take about a year or so to get the pitch, and we're going to take the whole instrumental structure of the Manhattan musical performance; we're going to tune *everything* according to the Italian standard, the true Italian standard. And all the instruments, and the voices, and the voices are not spurting out noises,—they're receiving something, they're resonating, they are *tuned into the environment* in which they're speaking; they're tuned into the environment of their expression. Not the expression, but the tuning into the environment. And, that's the difference.

And that's a subject which is almost lost, unknown, to most people in music today. They have no conception of what the placement of the voice means. And yet the greatest singers and composers, musicians as well, instrumentalists as well, all understood it.

What's happened is today's population has no comprehension of what the whole damned thing is about! And only a handful of people have any real conception of this.

A Sound Which is Not

The best thing is the Furtwängler standard. The most precise approach is Furtwängler. Because that is perfect. Furtwängler's conception of this is perfect; the Italian thing is perfect, because it is the tuning principle,—the tuning of the voice is restricted. You cannot impose a tuning on the voice. You have to follow and adapt to the voice. And you are compelled to be obliged to that; otherwise it doesn't work!

What it means, is that it's not the sound that's created; not the sound as such. It's the human being, the tuning of the *mind* of the human being! Not the tuning of the voice; it's the tuning of the mind. And the tuning of the mind, and the tuning of the function of the mind are one and the same thing. And if you don't have the right placement, that does not work. And that's what the problem is. And the best thing we have, the best training, is the performance of Furtwängler! And the Italian school, as such. That is perfect.

And what do you think we're doing in Manhattan now? We're cleaning everything up, we're changing all the instruments; we're tuning them. We're tuning up the people, based on this principle of tuning. And you don't make the sound. Your presence makes the voice; you obey the voice. You don't generate the voice, you obey it. And you learn to obey. The successful singer learns to behave well, according to those standards. And what comes out of the singer, is something which the singer just does, because they under-



Schiller Institute

Italian soprano Mirella Freni (left) on stage in Barcelona in 1993, and American bass William Warfield at a Schiller Institute event in May 1994. Both were signers of the Institute's petition to return to the Verdi tuning.

stand what they must do; they understand what they must let their voice do, and at what pitch, at what tuning, at what mode.

And that gets lost, because people try to make sounds, and making sounds is the wrong way to go at it. And Furtwängler made it very clear: what you have in tuning, is you have a non-sound. That's the genius of it. It's not a sound; in other words it's not a sound projected by the voice of the singer or an instrument.

What you have, is you tune yourself to mankind; you tune yourself to humanity. You do not direct a sound as such; you get something that flows from around the singer's mind, and so forth. But it's not created as making a noise, or a sound as such. It's the tuning of the body, the tuning of the mind. And all of the good things that come out of that process are of that nature. And the Furtwängler model is perfect on this thing; and Furtwängler, of course, uses one method, you know, the Italian method. And that's how the best work was done.

You don't make a sound, you don't push a sound out. You resonate in a certain way. And you look at Furtwängler's performances, which are on record and so forth, these things demonstrate the principle precisely; and that's the only true principle of music: the placement of the voice which is not generated by a *push* from a voice. It's a vacuum area, it's an area where it seems almost like nothing.

And follow this stuff with Furtwängler's work: He never makes a sound as such. He places the voice, the

placing of the voice. And the people who are good in their singing, will do that. They won't push a noise out. They will *tune*, they will tune the entire environment. And that's what's been lost! And you get singers who learn to do it, but when they really do it well, they don't think in those terms; they think about projecting, they think about forming the effect. But it has to be *tuned* right. The human voice is tuned, it isn't making noise, it's tuned.

In other words, just imagine an area of sound, a fluid

of sound: absolute, indefinite sound. Now what, in that indefinite sweep of sound *per se*,—what constitutes real music? The thing that stands out, *the vacuum*; the place that is different. And when the singer is trained, the voice is trained, the voice follows that rule. And the most perfect example of this was done in examples by Furtwängler, who laid down what is essentially the Italian school, the true Italian school, which is based on this: you, your body, everything about you, has now been tuned,—like water,—tuned. And when you're tuned, then you're in harmony with the universe. And the purpose of music is to find mankind's sense of harmony, of mankind in the universe.

They're Being Human

The Classical Italian artistic composition, that's the principle. But if you want to do the Italian model in the right pitch, the right focus, you have to follow this rule. You have to say, "No, I'm not making a sound, I'm tuning myself against an environment which is different." And the point is, it really is, when you think about it, you think about real musical performances,—and instrumental as well as vocal, otherwise, same thing; and that is where the mistake is made. It's like this whole thing about mathematics. Mathematics is shit, that's the best thing that can be said for it. Because that's all it is. And you know, I've known this, I've been steeped in this thing in Italy! And the Italian standard is there, but the perfect expression today to define this definition about how this principle works, is Furtwängler. The most precise. You get it also in other

places, but the most precise thing for modern purposes is that.

And what we have, is we have the whole musical program we're running in Manhattan, and out of Manhattan, is all based on this. Everything you need, the instruments and the singers are being tuned, tuned according to law. And it's by inspiring people to accept being tuned in that sense that they become human, and don't make non-human noises any more.

This is something; it's well-known, but we're so corrupted by assuming that different styles and different kinds of things,—and all these things,—make a sound! And it actually is the non-sound that you want to hear. The non-sound that is different than all the sounds around you.

All you have to do, is get into—you know, sing it! Singing and finding out the placement of the voice. And people who can place the voice will tend to understand that; they may use another word for it, they may use another term, they may get distracted. But what they are is they are *human*! And what they're doing is, they're being *human*. As opposed to people who ain't so human.

And the Furtwängler model is the perfect one. The more general model is the Classical Italian or the modern Classical Italian. That is the most convenient one, the Italian, and Furtwängler had that, and Schlusnus had much of those qualities in placement of voice. Take recordings of Schlusnus's songs, and you will get a lot of that, and you will recognize exactly how that works.

Beauty by Subtraction

It means something when it's something which is different, where you change the atmosphere according to a principle. And the Italian school, the best Italian examples are the best models to use for general purposes. But Schlusnus of course has a particular capability for this matter.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

A sextet at the Schiller Institute's May 1994 conference at the Howard University Rankin Memorial Chapel, for a Marian Anderson National Conservatory of Music Movement. From left to right: Rev. James Cokely, George Shirley, Detra Battle (largely hidden), Kebeme (Valerie Eichelberger), William Warfield, and Robert McFerrin.

And the point is, the problem is that our minds don't function properly, because we're too busy trying to make noises, according to some principle. We don't realize that when you organize the process in the proper way, that's what makes life rich and good. The good Italian school is also other schools of the same thing; people sing: beautiful voices. People sing. Why do they sing? To impress something upon the environment? On the contrary! They sing to eliminate the noises. And the remainder after that deduction is music.

I have enjoyed beauty for many years,—not recently so much; I'm in no condition to be involved in the music business otherwise, practically. But I know about it, and I haven't forgotten about it. I know when it's right; I'm also very aware when it's wrong.

You make people happy by getting the dirt out of the atmosphere and creating a blank area, where there is no dirt. And that resonates, by subtraction, by eliminating noises. I've said this for a couple of weeks already on this thing; the emphasis on this question. But the placement of the voice is not adding something to the voice,—it's subtracting from the noise! That's what's beautiful: You subtract the noise. And that's what makes you dream well, and think well, and enjoy life, by getting rid of bad noise in all forms.