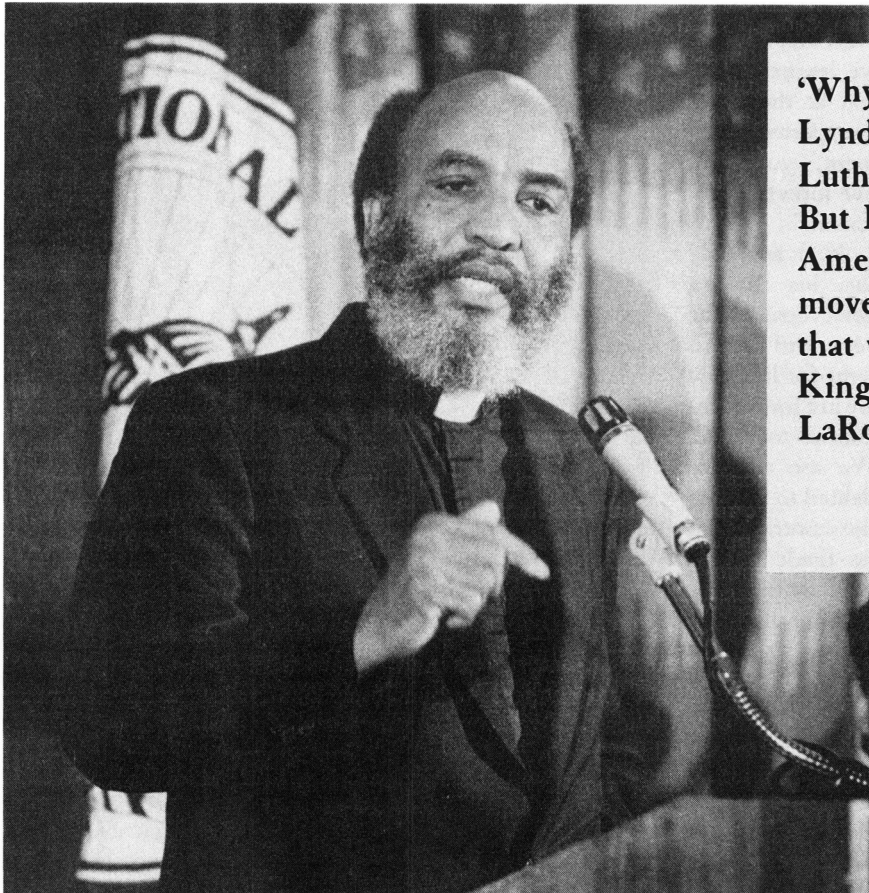


INTERVIEW



ERINS/Stuart Lewis

‘Why God passed the baton to Lyndon LaRouche, the Martin Luther King baton, I don’t know. But I’m of the same opinion as Amelia Robinson, that that movement to redeem this nation that was led by Dr. Martin Luther King, God has chosen Lyndon LaRouche to lead.’

—Rev. James Bevel
Schiller Institute Conference
Sept. 5, 1992

Reverend James Bevel: ‘One Man Maintaining Integrity’

The Reverend James Bevel was one of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s closest associates in the Civil Rights movement. In 1960, he was the co-founder of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). In 1963, he organized the Children’s Marches in Birmingham, Alabama and later in the same year initiated the March on Washington. In 1965 he was the director of Non-Violent Direct Action for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and co-author and director of the Selma Right to Vote Movement. In 1966, he developed and directed the Chicago Open Housing Movement. In 1967, he was the Director of the Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam. In 1968, he was the director

of Non-Violent Education in the Poor People’s Campaign. In 1984, he developed and directed the Students for Education and Economic Development. In 1992, the Rev. Bevel ran for Vice President of the United States on the independent ticket headed by Lyndon LaRouche. This interview was conducted by Marianna Wertz on August 26, 1992.

Fidelio: You refer to Mahatma Gandhi’s principle that a mass movement is based on one man standing alone for the truth. Can you elaborate on what he meant by this and how it has found its place in your life and work?

Bevel: What happened was that when Gandhi was a very young man, he

received a letter from Leo Tolstoy. Either the letter was written specifically to him or it was a generally written letter. What Tolstoy said in the letter was that the Indians should be ashamed of themselves, pretending that a handful of ordinary, not particularly intelligent Englishmen could oppress 400 million freedom-loving Indians. He said that’s scandalous, and the Indians should be honest enough to admit that they were crafty, nasty, and lazy, and that if they had an ounce of dignity and freedom in them they would literally repel such a small, insignificant force.

So, Gandhi was probably the only Indian who took him seriously. And Gandhi started dealing with the question, In what way am I participating in my own oppression? So as he started developing his movement, then people would say, “Well, you won this struggle because the masses were involved.” And he said, “No, it is not the masses. The masses participated from time to time. It’s one man maintaining integrity.” And the whole question of *Satyagraha* was the whole business of holding on to truth.

In other words, if there’s a social disorder and one person comprehends that social disorder, and no one else at that point comprehends it *but* that person, then that person is compelled

by the law of nature to live the truth so consistently and persistently, that that truth is manifested and finally learned by someone else. And so the whole idea is that one person stand up and do so non-violently; in time someone else will stand up. And then once another person stands up, then you get a chain reaction.

What I discovered when I read that in 1959, was that I didn't really believe it. So one of the things that I decided to do—I didn't know how to be popular, or how to win a handsome or beauty contest, or how to make folks vote for me in terms of organization—but one of the things I said I could do, was I could maintain integrity. That is, I *do know* when I'm being honest and dishonest. So it was like, okay, if this is true, then I can test it and prove whether it's true or not.

So in Nashville, Tennessee, I tested it and proved it. That if one person maintains integrity, that person will have the power to bring about change. Although there may be a lot of actors and a lot of dynamics, it will take one person comprehending a problem, being truthful about it, doing the appropriate analysis and interpretation, operating from truth which they either *know* or *believe* to be true.

The reason I say *know* and *believe* is because, when you first start working, there are a lot of beliefs that are not

true, but you don't know it. But once you're honest about the belief, even if it's defective, it will be revealed to you that it is defective. Once your methods are righteous, once your motives are just and your motivation is love, you'll be able to bring about that justice.

Fidelio: I recall reading Mahatma Gandhi on this subject, saying that the first time *Satyagraha* was actually practiced was by Jesus Christ, whom he called the first non-violent soldier for the truth. I also read that Martin Luther King, Jr. founded his movement, of which you are a principal leader, on the combination of the thoughts and preaching of Jesus Christ and Mahatma Gandhi. Do you also take this as the basis of your philosophy?

Bevel: Yes. I would like to add a person: Leo Tolstoy, who wrote *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*. That was the book that gave Gandhi the true interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount. Because in that book, Tolstoy argues that you have to maintain

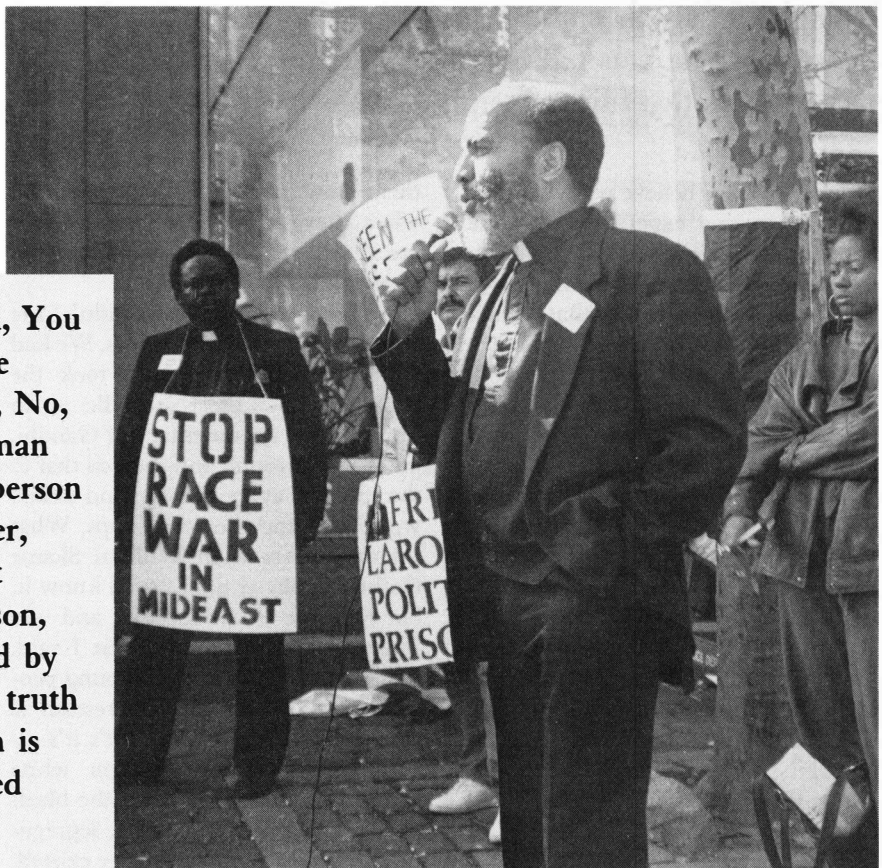
love. Once you don't maintain love, for whatever reason, you are not practicing the religion that Jesus Christ practiced. Then he says that what happens to everybody else is they fall beneath the love, then start trying to falsely interpret Jesus and claim that he didn't know what he was talking about, because they don't want to practice this principle of love.

He said, now there are other religious leaders who make love one of the many principles, but in Jesus' teaching, love is the central core of the religion. I find that to be true, just in terms of my own life.

When I read that, I thought, *that is true*. When I am operating with less than love, and I often do, I know I'm not doing what is right, I'm operating beneath the dignity of my responsibility. So I knew he was telling the truth.

Then the question came up, what do I do to overcome the anger and the fear and the lust that is keeping me from maintaining the state of love, so that my thinking is always reasonable.

'People would say to Gandhi, You won because the masses were involved. And he would say, No, it's not the masses; it's one man maintaining integrity. If one person comprehends a social disorder, and no one else at that point comprehends it *but* that person, then that person is compelled by the law of nature to live the truth so consistently, that the truth is manifested and finally learned by someone else.'



EIRNS/Roger Ham

Fidelio: What do you do?

Bevel: First you have to agree that that's true and that's right. Now if you don't agree that it's true and right, then you can always find justifications, alibis, and rationalizations. But if you agree that it's right, it causes you to start examining your conduct and statements that come from fear, and your conduct and statements that come from lust, and your conduct and statements that come from anger. And once you discuss them and expose them to yourself and others, then it gives you the opportunity to look into them. And then looking into them, you discover that they are built up from a bunch of false assumptions, false premises, and false conclusions. And then you start taking down these false assumptions, false premises, and false conclusions.

terioration and the decline were too great when I got there.

So he asked me to come to Birmingham, and when I got there they couldn't get but eight or nine people to demonstrate a day, and the little group was dueling and fomenting and they couldn't get people to go to jail. At that time I was running the Greenwood, Mississippi group. So I came over and my suggestion was that the movement as they were running it was a scam, because you are putting people in jail and getting them out the same evening and letting them demonstrate tomorrow; so that it could look like you've got eight people moving, but you don't in reality.

In Birmingham you've got two colleges, you've got twelve high schools in the city. I said, you ought to go out and take the young people and teach

But the people wouldn't stand up for what was right and refuse to accept something less. And I said, now if you guys stand up now—and we did it in Nashville, we did it in the theaters, we did it on the freedom rides—and if you do it, you will have the opportunity to change history, because once you stand up and don't sit back down, you write a new chapter in history, because you're going to have to negotiate a new social contract.

So I said you've got to test it. And they said, "Suppose Dr. King sells us out?" I said, It has nothing to do with that. If you and I maintain integrity, we can change anything. As long as any two people maintain integrity, and whatever is wrong you *say* is wrong, just like you go against Bull Conner and *he's* wrong, then if Dr. King is wrong you go against him, and you just keep standing up for truth, and don't you settle for less than what you know is right. And then right will be the outcome.

So, of course, the rest of it is history. Now, there was a lot of flak about that demonstration, because I did organize the students, and at one point King was put under a lot of pressure from John Kennedy, not to let the students demonstrate. I had to break rank with King on that and veto his vote. At one point the police were trying to create riots by putting dogs and stuff on people, and I had to quell the violence.

In, fact the decision to march on Washington was the result of a strategic move to get Kennedy to back up off King. It meant, if you come down here bothering people about what we're doing, and we're doing what we're doing the right way, then we'll do the same thing to you. So the march on Washington came out of that kind of interaction.

Fidelio: I'd like, since you've met both Martin Luther King and Lyndon LaRouche, if you could, to make a comparison between the two men: qualities they share or are different, as you see it.

Bevel: Let me say that coming out of the wilderness is a growth process. There are two issues that Jesus

'Tolstoy argues that once you don't maintain love, you are not practicing the religion that Jesus Christ practiced. If you fall beneath the love, then you start trying to falsely interpret Jesus and claim that he didn't know what he was talking about, because you don't want to practice this principle of love.'

Fidelio: What I believe was your first mass organizing experience, was the children's participation in the non-violent demonstrations in Birmingham. Can you describe how that transformed the Civil Rights movement?

Bevel: If you recall, in 1962, SNCC and Dr. King and SCLC had been working in Albany, Georgia. They'd had a real bad setback. The chief of police was Pritchard, and King and SNCC were in conflict between the two organizations and the local people, and that movement was effectively crushed.

So in 1963, I was working pretty much with SCLC. I had started working with them just about the time they went to Albany. I had preached with the SNCC organization. In fact Dr. King asked me to come to Albany because there was such strife going on between the organizations. But the de-

them how non-violence works, and when they're taught what the issues are, they'll get involved and stick with it just like you will.

So I took a projector, we didn't have videos and tapes in those days. We had 16-millimeter projectors. I took the projector and the Nashville sit-in movie and a documentary of Gandhi, and I went around and showed that to the students every evening and talked with them and ran workshops. What I taught them is in William Sloane Coffin's book—I didn't even know it, but he came to the meeting and was listening, and he wrote what I said. What I essentially told the young people is, you think that oppression is caused by white people. But's it's always a cooperation between white people and black people. If the black people had been responsible, segregation and slavery wouldn't have existed.



EIRNS/Suzanne Klebe

‘Once the American people recognize that there is someone who is right, and the method he is using is right, the American people are a marvelous revolutionary people. It is imperative that we put a constitutional administration in the American White House. In eight years, I can get that done.’

preached, that are so radically different, and yet they both have to be mastered before one can really become a functional Christian. One of them concerns not loving the enemy; the other one is looking at women and lusting. Jesus said both of these are a violation of the law.

Up to the King period we accepted the first issue, but we did not spend the time and energy working through the dynamic of the second one. Because King did not work through the dynamic of the second principle, he was not able to institutionalize the movement. That is, he was not able to comprehend the real principle of economics. If a man does not overcome looking at a female and lusting for her, his lust makes him read into the female a false definition of what and who she is, which makes him lose his own identity. So he falls into a romantic relationship, but he then cannot maintain a conscious, reasoning relationship with the female, because in his mind, either overtly or covertly, he’s manipulating to get her into a sexual experience, and he never will understand the principles by which institutions emerge and develop.

Lyndon LaRouche has worked out both of those problems. One, the question of loving the enemy; and the other, not lusting after sisters. Which means that he extends the principle of love to male and female and blacks and whites without exception. King had not arrived at that consciousness, because he had not addressed that second principle.

So, in that sense, you would have King coming out of Egypt across the Red Sea into the wilderness; and you have the principles that LaRouche has discovered. His definition of economics is a definition of a man who has resolved the contradiction of using females for sexual pleasure and not for the purpose for which God created males and females and human sexuality.

Fidelio: That also goes to the question of using human being as slaves.

Bevel: Absolutely. Slave labor comes from that. That’s the core of it. If a man does not clean up his lustful thinking and activity, he never will be totally against slavery. He will settle for the rearrangement of slavery in another form, but he wouldn’t work to get it resolved.

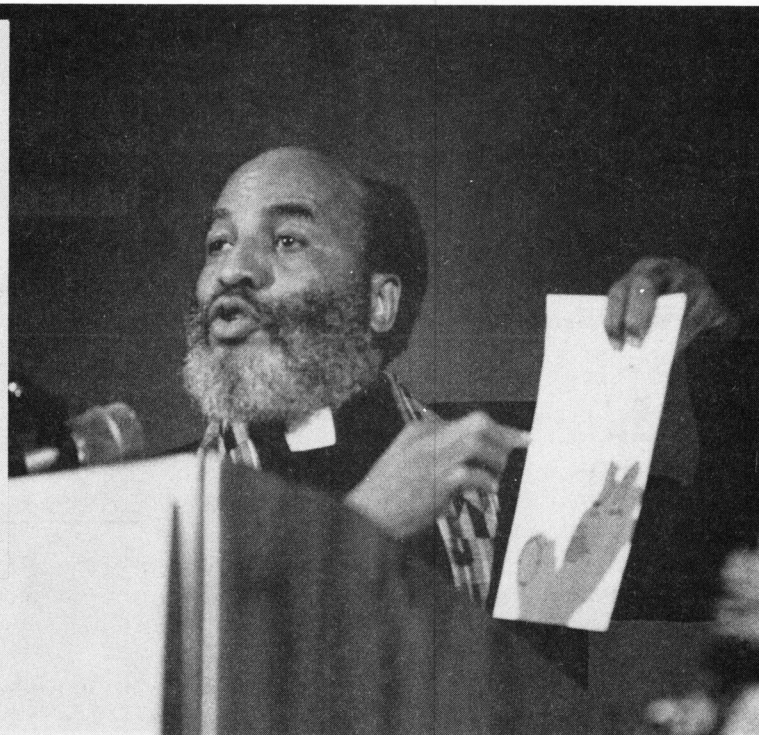
Fidelio: You’ve said that the movement associated with LaRouche and yourself is in a “ground war” that will take approximately eight years to succeed. Can you elaborate on what you mean by that, and what that requires?

Bevel: Normally, if the news media in this country were just, and would give us—they don’t have to agree with us—but just give us honest coverage on issues (we are candidates, after all); and if we were interviewed and asked questions about the different and various things; then just in the normal course of events, fifty-one percent of the people would vote for Lyndon LaRouche and James Bevel. This is just based on the American people being reasonably intelligent. There’s nothing wrong with the American people. The American people know that something’s wrong. Understand that.

Our first press conference was obviously boycotted, based on an in-house clique agreement among the slaves who call themselves journalists. There are no journalists in the media in America. All of them are Mississippi Negro day hands. That’s what they are.

So you don’t have a media. You don’t have journalists. You have slaves and soup hounds, people who are working to get money to buy cocaine, cars, and clothes. You don’t have journalists who are committed to the American Revolution and advocating

'You have to acknowledge that there is no education at this point. Education is designed scientifically to help a human being be the living soul that God made him to be; in the image and likeness of God, as God made him to be; to exercise dominion over other creatures, that's what God made him to do. If the education doesn't help him or her to achieve that objective, then it's not education.'



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

and defending the constitutional interests and rights of the American people. You don't have that.

If you did have an honest media, then our message would get out, as being the most relevant. But in that they have agreed with the criminals in the White House, and the criminals in the state houses, and the criminals on the bench, and the criminal drug-dealers, to destroy the American people and not allow the authentic constitutional interests to be advocated and spoken through their media, it means that we're going to have to go directly to the people.

So my position is, first of all, I'm not going to take that kind of insult. I'm not going to say that's bad, tuck my tail and run, and fall over and play dead. I say, okay, you guys are playing dirty, fine, then I will do what I do best: fight ground wars. That's what I can do.

So I will organize the American people, and I will have an election. Whether that means developing a national newspaper that goes into every home, or eventually getting so many people involved that what we write is duplicated by our friends across the nation. But in eight years, I can organize the country.

We might win this year. I don't know. It depends on whether we have enough decay, and we hit the right medium in terms of the people to com-

municate. But what I know is this: once the American people recognize that there is someone who is right, and the method they are using is right—the American people are a *marvelous* revolutionary people.

I am going to be working on this until November. And then, we are going to put a constitutional administration in the American White House. It is imperative that we have a constitutionally conscious person in that White House. In eight years, I can get that done.

Fidelio: *Fidelio* is committed to bringing about a renaissance in Classical culture in the U.S. American children—most particularly black American children—have almost no contact with the Classics except perhaps in church. What is your view of how education can be improved to create literate, thinking, creative human beings again among the youth in our country.

Bevel: The first thing you have to acknowledge and admit is that, there is no education at this point. Jesus made the statement, that man must always pray, and not faint. So, he said that in order to *think*, one has to be in prayer.

If you teach people not to pray, then you're teaching people not to think. Since prayer has been taken out of schools, there has not been any education in the schools.

So, the first thing you have to agree, is that there is no education. And the reason you have to agree to this is because, if you don't agree, they can get you to participate in mis-education for the next ten thousand years. If you agree that that is not education, then you can organize a movement to put education in. But in social science you have to deal in reality.

Education is that learning, discipline, administrative process, which brings a human being to economic independence and institutional sovereignty. If the administration of the learning process is not applied to that sufficiently, we cannot scientifically call it education. Just as H₂O is water: more or less, and it's something else. In order for it to be water, it *has* to be H₂O. Education operates the same way. If *X* exists, then education exists. If *X*-1 or *X*+2 exist, that is not education.

Education is designed scientifically to help a human being be the living soul that God made him to be; in the

image and likeness of God, as God made him to be; to exercise dominion over other creatures, that's what God made him to do. If the education doesn't help him or her to achieve that objective, then it's not education.

Now, what will we do? We will pass legislation, and make available aid and support, to schools that establish a prayer curriculum. That is, the history and science of *church*, the history and science of *government*, the history and science of *business*, the history and science of *clinic*, the history and science of *home*, the history and science of *education*. Then the child will have to be in theory, lab, and apprenticeship in those six institutional processes. They will be taught the prayer, but within the context of the prayer curriculum:

- *Our Father*—theology, *church*;
- *Thy kingdom come*—sociology, *government*;
- *Give us this day our daily bread*—ecology, industry, and *business*;
- *Forgive us as we forgive*—psychology, *clinic*;
- *Lead us not into temptation*—biology, *home*;
- *Deliver us from evil*—anthropology, *school*.

So the child will be taught to initiate, develop, maintain, and administer those six institutions.

The science that the child would have to learn to do that is obvious. But what the child will learn as you start working to develop these, is that throughout history there have been various evolutions of all of these institutions. So when the child starts trying to do this, he starts asking questions. He starts trying to build something. "Where can I get a transformer?" Go to the yellow pages. Start going to the library. So, the research will drive them into the Classical thinkers.

My searching to free myself *without killing people*, drove me into Gandhi and Tolstoy. I never would have gone into these men, if I had not been looking for a tool by which to free myself while maintaining the principles of Christ.

That's true in everything. I got off into agriculture, in terms of how to grow food without destroying earth-

worms. Because I was interested in knowing how, if I'm going to be non-violent, how would I fail in being non-violent? How would I have non-violence as a way of life in every sphere of my existence? Once you start making something happen, you've got to study history and science.

So, by being an apprentice in *church*, *government*, *business*, *clinic*, *home*, and *school*, this will automatically drive the students' minds to hook up with all rational minds in all of history. And then they will stop identifying with racists, and start identifying with intelligent thought. Then they will figure for their ancestors, those who committed themselves to integrity throughout history. Then, everybody will just normally know Tolstoy, Schiller, and all the other thinkers and scientists.

Anybody who's in mechanical arts, would just automatically have to know Fulton, who created the four-stroke engine, and so on and so forth. Once you start into the sciences, you hook up with the Classical education. And what I'm talking about is practical.

What else we would do, is to introduce legislation called constitutional development legislation. We would make resources and federal grants available to people, to study in the evenings and on the weekends how to build precinct councils, with *church* committees, *government* committees, *business* committees, *clinic* committees, *home* committees, *school* committees. So that, when problems, issues, and needs come up, you have town meetings at the precinct level going on in a continuum. Under the law, they would have to keep records, minutes, accounts, and receipts, and report to the Secretary of State in each state. Which means that you would have a functional, constitutional, democratic republic at the precinct level, with town meetings that hold themselves accountable and hold their elected officials accountable; which would give them, for the first time, the scientific mechanism by which the legitimate will and needs of the people are fed into the city, county, state, and Federal legislative bodies.

Fidelio: *Fidelio* takes its name from the Beethoven opera about the fight for freedom of a just man. You announced as one of your chief qualifications for the Vice Presidency, that you are experienced at getting good men out of prison. How do you think LaRouche will be released from prison?

Bevel: I think that when a sufficient number of people recognize that Bush is a criminal and that he has locked up LaRouche to hide his criminality. The American people are generally just; so, once they know the facts, it doesn't take long for people to organize. People will start to ask, How can I get to know LaRouche?

Well, just stop telling lies for forty days! Anyone who won't tell lies for forty days, will readily run into Lyndon LaRouche. Because once you don't know lies, you can know the truth. Once you're a liar, you don't have a mechanism or a tool by which to know the truth.

Once we set off among young people a movement of practicing not lying for forty days, which is going to make people start being very articulate, very inquisitive—that's what not lying does!—and once there's a massive movement among young people not to lie, they will readily come to see the crookedness in Bush and the straightness in LaRouche. Then they'll just turn Bush out, they'll tell the man, Go to the hospital and get yourself well.

It's just that simple. The American system is run by the American people. But the people have to be conscious enough to express a true position—I don't even use the word opinion, I mean a true position: "You cannot stay in the White House and keep the files hidden on those you have assassinated and incarcerated. Because you're not trying to protect the national interest and the Constitution of the people, you are protecting your hideous, homosexual, murderous friends. So we're not interested in that. If you guys want to go somewhere and confess and repent, fine, we're not *after* you, but you're not going to be holding us hostage under our government to hide your perversity."