

## Vote Rigging and Vote Fraud

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*The following report is by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., chairman of the U.S. Labor Party and a candidate for the U.S. Presidency in the 1980 elections, and is based on his personal observations of the results of the European parliamentary elections.*

The sad truth of the matter is that citizen's ballot-democracy does not exist today in any part of the world. Illegal forms of "fixing the results" of an election, called ballot fraud, are commonplace, and rose to the level of about 5 percent of the total counted ballots in the 1976 U.S. national elections. Equally important, often more important, are the non-illegal and semi-illegal means used to "rig election results" by means other than direct ballot fraud.

The semi-legal form of vote rigging is essentially a matter of causing one's own candidate to enjoy a larger turnout at the polls, and either discouraging the opposition from going to the polls or splitting the opposition vote among two or more candidates. This is complemented by behind-the-scenes wheeling and dealing, in which blocks of controlled votes are traded off.

Outright vote fraud is on the increase. In the U.S., vote fraud was a notable feature of the 1960 general election, increased throughout the 1960s, and accelerated during the 1970s. The vote fraud in the June 3 national elections in Italy was massive, reaching what is conservatively estimated to be in the order of 10 percent of the total vote.

Any qualified voting analyst can readily detect significant fraud in recent West German elections. Looking at the European Labor Party's results in the 1976 election and in yesterday's election, there are statistical features of the pattern of reported tallies which are a statistical impossibility without large-scale vote fraud. Flattening of the vote distribution patterns, combined with higher votes in areas of campaign nonpenetration than in areas of intensive penetration, cannot occur as patterns of tallies without vote fraud. Such statistical results suffice to prove that opposition forces targeted high-penetration areas for vote fraud activity, while avoiding the risk of extending conduct of massive vote fraud in low-penetration areas.

In the U.S., there are three principal sources of sharp increase in vote fraud during recent years. First, the mechanical voting machines in use are of types which can be set for fraudulent tallies with a quick flip of a finger by a trained mechanic. Although this could be nullified by appropriate security measures, state legislatures, local election officials, as well as the national legislature refuse so far to put such security precautions into law. Second, there is now a massive use of illegal registration and illegal use of other persons' legal registrations. Gangs of youth and others go from polling place to polling place on election day, casting a vote at each through aid of fictitious registrations. Third, the spreading use of computers in balloting and vote administration procedures increases the ease with which fraud can be accomplished and concealed.

In paper balloting, the most common techniques of vote fraud include the following. By means of a bit of crayon under a dirty fingernail, a rehearsed voting official either alters a ballot or alters it so as to disqualify the ballot. There is a ballot box stuffing with prepared batches of ballots either before the opening of polls or at their close. There is switching of ballot boxes, substituting a prepared box for the box into which true ballots were cast. And so forth and so on. In paper ballot elections, or in voting using computer or punch-card terminals, one must cast an eye to the disqualified ballots and the blank ballots to locate the countable aspects of a large part of the direct fraud perpetrated.

Although direct vote fraud is a growing problem, legal to semi-legal forms of vote rigging are still the larger part of the problem in seeking to establish honest elections. The difficulty here is that of drawing a precise line between morally acceptable forms of block-vote trading and those forms of vote rigging in which the intentions of the eligible voter are frustrated by means of intimidation, deception, and corruption. In the United States, intimidation, spread of false information, and significant measures of deception are generally identified as "dirty tricks."

For example, in the case of the June 10 election in West Germany, those who were dedicated to cutting the ELP vote through dirty tricks would begin with a list of districts in which pro-nuclear energy constituencies are concentrated. Working sideways and top-down in trade-union and other constituencies of this sort, the word would be passed around that the general welfare of that constituency would be best defended if there were not a significant vote cast for the ELP in that district. This pressure would be supplemented by a concerted slander campaign, aided especially by distribution of the fraudulent article in *Der Spiegel*. As insurance, actual vote fraud would be selectively applied to those polling places in which a significant ELP vote was suspected to be probable. By such and related methods, the result would be exactly that upside-down pattern of statistically flattened results reported.

The most essential auxiliary means for rigging an election's results is complicity by a corrupt press. This aspect of the problem brings our attention to two points. First, there is the fact of press corruption itself. Second, there is that condition of the electorate which makes the electorate significantly susceptible to corruption by the press.

### ***The Corrupt Press***

I must sadly report that the corruption of leading news media in West Germany is not as evil in overall effect as that which prevails in the United States. Coming back to Europe from each latest return to the United States, I experience an emotion akin to that of the person who during the mid-1930s, left Nazi Germany for a visit to France. Although some regional and local newspapers, radio, and television in the U.S. are not themselves corrupt, most of the dominant news media and wire services either suppress major international developments of the sort reported in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Die Welt*, *Handelsblatt*, and so forth, or they publish lying reports on topics of major international or national importance.

The difference in Europe is that even newspapers and magazines which are predominantly corrupt frequently carry honest, if biased, reporting on major issues as news items, or certain columnists writing in those publications often provide a reporting that is both truthful and sometimes politically sound. Such honesty very rarely appears in the dominant news media of the United States.

It is for related reasons that even high levels of European governments, finance, and industry, as well as the ordinary European citizen, are pathetically ignorant of the internal situation in the United States. These Europeans make use of the leading U.S. press—the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Business Week*, or the three TV networks news divisions, all of which either lie or come close to outright lying on most important developments. These Europeans have correspondence, telephone conversations, and meetings with contacts in the U.S., chiefly at Harvard, around New York City, and Washington—contacts which provide more or less the same lies circulated through fraudulent news media.

Generally, the Western continental press, while largely corrupt, does appear relatively as a fresh breath of democracy to one freshly arrived from the U.S.A. Even so, most of the European leading news media are hideously corrupted.

The night of the first nationwide TV broadcast of the ELP's spots featuring my wife, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who led the ELP's slate, Helga and I departed for urgent meetings in Paris and in the United States. It is an established U.S. custom that people do not endorse a candidate for President of the United States without also meeting with the candidate's wife. Our meetings with key industrialists, trade unionists, and other key figures could not be

postponed, despite the European elections. However, we kept in daily telephone contact with Wiesbaden from Paris, Detroit, and New York City, and Helga wrote and prepared campaign materials as well as deliberated policy matters during those important few days we were out of Germany.

The effect of the first two TV spots was to make Helga an established public figure in terms of popular recognition. The reactions on the streets of the Federal Republic were echoed by an explosion of scheduled press interviews for Helga. The subsequent broadcast of the second pair of TV spots increased the recognition.

Then, the scheduled press interviews began to be cancelled. The reference point for this new pattern in press reactions was *Der Spiegel* and Rudolf Augstein. Although there was some significant local press reporting on the ELP campaign, Augstein's ordering of the slander coincided with a concerted blackout policy by most of the press, and an increased circulation of lies, some directly attributed to *Der Spiegel*, among editors.

This conspiracy to black out extended to omitting the ELP from the list of announced parties by both regional press and other news media.

This matter has been discussed with legal experts. I am informed that *Der Spiegel* also has a record of successfully defending itself in courts for such violations in the past. Illegal or not, it is immoral, and represents the same immoral spirit otherwise reflected in "dirty tricks" forms of vote rigging and outright vote fraud.

According to highly respected experts on Federal Republic elections, consulted again today, the most obvious controlling factor in holding down the ELP vote is the kind of containment typified by *Der Spiegel's* lies and press blackout conspiracies. The expert was interested in the statistically improbable "flattening" of the distribution of ELP tallies among areas of both high-penetration campaigning and low penetration. This expert also offered other useful observations. It is the role of the *Der Spiegel*-led faction of the news media and the statistical "flattening" which are most significant. Vote fraud did occur in selected locations, vote rigging was perhaps more significant than vote fraud. Corrupt news media practices were unquestionably the most significant factor.

### ***Susceptibility of the Electorate***

The possibility of vote rigging depends upon the unhappy fact that voters vote emotionally, not intellectually. They select candidates in the same manner as they select dishwashing solutions. The possibility of computer projections of voting patterns depends upon the predominance of such irrationality among the overwhelming majority of voters. Once voters

in significant numbers begin to vote on the basis of independent intellectual judgment, the present computer techniques would break down, would fail to function.

This is complicated in West Germany by the fact that, among the best-known political figures, only the Christian Socialist Union's Franz Josef Strauss is a true politician. Like Strauss or not, he goes directly to his constituency, and speaks directly to them. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who has personally a potential constituency reaching 80 percent of the voters, does not. Schmidt, for all his faults, has become a relatively superior statesman, but not yet a politician. President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France, for example, is both a leading statesman and also a much better politician than Schmidt.

Comparing Helga's TV spots with those of the CDU, SPD and FDP, Helga directly addressed the people on policy matters as a true politician should. Strauss showed his keen political sense: immediately after Helga's broadcasts, he came out unequivocally for nuclear energy, capitalizing on the effect of Helga's broadcasts to his own advantage, and capitalizing on the vacillations of Chancellor Schmidt on this crucial issue. The CDU, FDP, and SPD spots followed the precedent of commercial advertisements for soap and washing machines.

As various election analysis experts noted during the period before the June 10 election, it was the qualitative effects of Helga's ELP TV spot rather than the quantitative results which those experts regarded as having importance in affecting the population as a whole.

When politicians do not speak directly and programmatically to voters on vital issues, the voters are alienated from the policy-making aspects of government and political parties. They are as alienated from policy making as they are from the manufacturing firm's design of its product. A "commercial" sort of alienation separates voters from parties and candidates at the national level. Under those conditions of cultivated alienation, the logic of the soap seller's commercial advertisements spills over into the electoral process.

Let us restate this point. When leading political parties and politicians fail to argue the internal features of policy making directly with the average citizen, the mind of that average citizen is blocked out of participation in the policy-making process. The citizen can "interfere" with the parties' and government's policy-making processes little more than the citizen can walk into the boardroom of Siemens, Krupp, and so forth.

The citizen then tends to say, "What have the big political issues to do with me? I am a little man who must worry about my pension and keeping my little garden. My father voted SPD, so do I ..." or something along the same lines. His or her voting decisions are emotional, not intellectual.

Buried within some of the SPD spots I saw, there were mere hints of real policy issues. In the case of the CDU, there were none. The slogans and campaigning of these parties, combined with the mythologies generally offered as election coverage by the news media, had the effect of dulling the attention of the voter. Neither the parties nor the press solicited the voter to use his or her mind on important issues. It was chiefly “vote for us because you like us.” The mind of the voter was told to go back to sleep.

This is not a problem peculiar to the Federal Republic. It has been a hideous problem within the United States.

Fortunately, as the growing number of notable endorsements of my candidacy illustrates, the problem is not insoluble. The majority of American citizens know that the “oil shortage” is an oil hoax rigged by the Carter administration and the “Seven Sisters.”

Inflation infuriates increasing numbers of the voters. The spread of drugs to young children in large ratios is creating a growing, angry revolt against the Naderite varieties of liberalism. It is when a population is put into the foxholes in such ways that old patterns of tolerating “politics as usual” break up, whether or not the politicians choose to encourage such a popular reawakening to the reality of major national issues. Kennedy is currently wrecking both the Democratic Party and Carter’s ability to even pretend to govern the United States. The Republican Party will split if the Democratic Party continues to split over the Kennedy-wrecking campaign. Under those conditions, my methods and the growth of my candidacy have tended to prosper.

Until politicians either bring policy making to the people, or a crisis causes an eruption among the people against “politics as usual,” the majority of voters tends to be predictably subject to the kind of swindles practiced by the *Der Spiegel*-led sections of the West German press during the past two weeks.

Under “normal conditions,” without vote fraud and without the press conspiracy, the ELP would probably have shown 5 percent or more of the vote on the evening reports of June 10. The statistical flattening of the vote distribution is proof that a significant fraud against the ELP did occur. How many votes were stolen, how many prevented through pre-balloting vote-rigging techniques perhaps no one knows, including those who conducted such practices. The vote fraud and vote rigging are important, but most important is the press fraud and the sleep-inducing quality of the wretched campaigns conducted by the SPD, FDP, and CDU.

For yet one more election, most of the voters remained politically asleep. During a period of the gravest world crisis, cabinet politics remains for another moment the most significant force in national policy making.

The lies and other means used by Augstein and others to attempt to wreck the ELP candidacies were the means used to aid in putting most of the voters back to sleep, a large number too bored with the SPD, FDP and CDU campaigns even to imagine there was anything worth going to the polls to vote for or against. When such nasty practices are tolerated, it is not only the victim party which suffers. It is the vital interest of the nation which is injured.

### ***Why the Fraud?***

In the recent election in Italy, we caught the U.S. embassy in Rome red-handed, threatening an individual with damage to his personal interests should he not abstain from support for the European Labor Party. We have masses of official documents, as well as other affidavits and private reports of massive intervention by the Kissinger and Vance State Department against the ELP in the Federal Republic since late 1975. We also have proof that the section of British secret intelligence associated with Margaret Thatcher's faction of the British Conservative Party is the official coordinator of slanders and harassments against this writer and his collaborators worldwide.

For the June 3 national elections in Italy, the Italian Labor Party (POE) had no less than two and possibly as many as five seats in the Italian parliament successfully prearranged, through block-vote endorsements and support by constituency organizations in certain locales. But for the dirty tricks of the past fortnight, the ELP had a potential, recognized separately by several expert agencies, for securing between 4–7 percent of the vote, a result depending upon a normal press response to the impact of the four TV broadcasts.

Why, then, should the forces behind the Carter and Thatcher governments fear the Italian Labor Party's securing perhaps a mere two seats in the Italian parliament, or perhaps at least one seat in the European parliament? Why put pressure on agencies in Italy and West Germany on such a trivial issue?

The answer, generally speaking, is found in a pre-election observation of several election analysis experts. It is the qualitative, not the quantitative, effect of the ELP campaign which has excited attention. The British and their accomplices are not concerned to keep the ELP out of the European parliament, or the POE out of the Italian parliament. They are desperately concerned, as is Augstein, to go to any lengths to attempt to discredit the qualitative influence of the ELP.