

Assault on the Presidency will go on and on

by Edward Spannaus

Whether or not the Senate impeachment trial of President Clinton comes to a quick conclusion, it is evident that the ongoing assault on the Presidency will not end any time soon. Kenneth Starr and the President's enemies have made it crystal clear that the efforts to keep the President distracted and paralyzed will not abate for the foreseeable future.

Kenneth Starr's open threat to indict the President before he leaves office, and the build-up around the spurious China technology-transfer issue, are two indications that the forces behind the impeachment—the British-American-Canadian financial oligarchy—will do everything in their power to keep Clinton in a weakened condition. The objective is to continue to increase Vice President Gore's unprecedented power as a "co-President"—or "Prime Minister," as the treacherous Dick Morris describes his ally Al Gore (see *Feature*, in this issue).

With the Brazil crisis inaugurating Phase III of the global financial crisis that emerged 18 months ago, with the threat of an outbreak of potential nuclear war in the Middle East, and with the "new Cold War" factions trying to roll back President Clinton's strategic achievements in respect to Russia and China, the U.S. and the world cannot afford to have the President of the United States disabled, and Al Gore moving into the driver's seat.

Dick Morris's plea

Former Presidential adviser Dick Morris has been a key grand jury witness for Starr, serving as the "insider" who can give the independent counsel a road map of who's who and what's what in the White House. Morris was also in line to be the fourth witness (in addition to Monica Lewinsky, Vernon Jordan, and Sidney Blumenthal) deposed by the House Managers, but for a 6-6 tie vote among the Managers.

While the Managers were debating whether or not to call him as a witness, Morris was sending his own message to House and Senate Republicans. In a Jan. 27 column in Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post*, Morris outlined how Starr intends to bring Clinton down, "one step at a time"—and he begged the Senate to give Starr more time.

Morris wrote that what the Senate Republicans and the House Managers have to do is to hold out, while Starr proceeds to attempt to "crack" Webster Hubbell, or Hubbell's wife Suzy, or Susan McDougal. Starr might also try and go after White House secretary Betty Currie, threatening her with conflicting testimony from Monica Lewinsky, Morris suggested. Starr may be able to come up with more evidence against Clinton, Morris writes, if the Republicans in the Senate can just hold out for a few more weeks. "As they buy time, Starr can increase the pressure," Al Gore's buddy Morris concluded. "That's the only way Clinton will leave office early."

During the debate over witnesses in the Senate on Feb. 4, White House counsel Greg Craig indicated the White House's awareness that the tactic demanded by Morris was in fact being used by the House Managers. "Those of us who have made a career out of being lawyers and trying cases probably understand better than anyone else, why the House Managers are so adamant in their desire to call witnesses; it keeps the door open, if only for a few more days," said Craig. "As Mr. Kendall [the President's personal attorney] observed last week, like Mr. Micawber from *David Copperfield*, they hope against hope that something may turn up."

Starr's threat

Meanwhile, Starr sent his own message to the Senate via the front page of the Sunday *New York Times* on Jan. 31, in

the form of a public threat to indict the President on criminal charges before he leaves office; the implicit blackmail against the Senate was that if they let the President off the hook, Starr is prepared to create a constitutional crisis by indicting a sitting President.

The article reported that “several associates of Mr. Starr” told the *Times* that Starr has concluded he has the constitutional authority to seek a grand jury indictment of Clinton before the President leaves office.

Starr’s leak to the *New York Times*—and according to knowledgeable Washington sources, there is no doubt that the leak did come directly from Starr—was a reflection of the fears of Starr and those in the “Get Clinton” cabal around him, that the Senate was paying too much attention to the polls, and rushing for the exits before throwing Clinton out of office.

At week’s end, as the Senate rejected hearing live witnesses and appeared headed for a Feb. 12 final vote, Morris struck again, petulantly demanding that Starr go after two of the Senate’s witnesses, Lewinsky and Jordan, by threatening to indict them for perjury. In a *New York Post* column entitled, “Starr Is Hidden Reason Behind Debacle,” Morris asked, “Why is he [Starr] so silent when key witness are committing such blatant perjury? . . . Why is he letting the impeachment case go up in flames rather than open his mouth?”

Of course, Starr is *not* sitting quietly in the background. He has a number of active criminal prosecutions, and likely more to come.

First, he has pending criminal trials of both Webster Hubbell and Susan McDougal. His repeated indictments of both of those friends of Bill Clinton guarantee that Starr will be in business for at least another two years.

Secondly, on Jan. 7, Starr issued his first indictment growing out of his takeover of the Paula Jones case a year ago. Julie Hiatt Steele was charged with obstruction of justice for refusing to corroborate the highly suspect tale told by Steele’s former friend Kathleen Willey, who suddenly started claiming in early 1997, that President Clinton had sexually assaulted her in 1993. Indicating that there is more to come, Starr recently sought a highly unusual protective order in the Steele case, to prevent Steele from disclosing materials obtained from Starr’s office in the course of preparing for her trial. In asking for the order, Starr told the court that his office “still has pending investigations” related to the Lewinsky matter, and that disclosure of information could jeopardize those investigations.

And reports persist that Starr has already obtained sealed indictments against the President and/or the First Lady. Interestingly, at an American Bar Association meeting in Los Angeles on Feb. 4, Starr’s associate independent counsel Mike Emmick, and two former Starr prosecutors, were strangely silent when asked if there is a sealed indictment against the President—although they apparently freely answered all other questions thrown at them while participating in a panel discussion.

‘Media food chain’ strikes again

Indicating the desperation of the “Get Clinton” gang, an orchestrated campaign has been under way to promote the story that Bill Clinton raped a woman in Arkansas in the 1970s. The *Washington Times* ran this piece of fakery as its top-of-the-front-page story on Feb. 4, just as the U.S. Senate was preparing to vote on whether or not to hear witnesses. The allegations are part of the “secret evidence” which has been widely touted by House Managers. The alleged victim, Juanita Broaddrick, was interviewed by NBC a couple of weeks ago, but there has been a major fight within NBC as to whether to run the story. Reportedly, Rupert Murdoch’s Fox TV has also recently interviewed Broaddrick.

This story was first surfaced during 1992 Presidential campaign by political enemies of Bill Clinton in Arkansas. It was revived when one of Paula Jones’s lawyers, T. Wesley Holmes, filed a public affidavit in the Jones case in March 1998; Broaddrick herself filed an affidavit denying the allegations. Within weeks, Broaddrick was interviewed by Starr’s investigators, and she was again interviewed in November by House Judiciary Committee investigators.

The story has been swirling around with increasing intensity, running in the *Sunday Times* of London on Jan. 10, and in the *Daily Telegraph* of London on Jan. 29.

Around Jan. 27, cyber-gossip Matt Drudge (who is also a commentator for Murdoch’s Fox News), reported that NBC was sitting on the interview, which led to a frenzy of activity by right-wing “Get Clinton” networks. It was raised at White House press briefings on Jan. 29 and Feb. 3, the latter being the same day the story was featured on the *New York Post* gossip page; the contrived Feb. 3 exchange at the White House briefing, led by a *Washington Times* reporter, provided the pretext for the Feb. 4 *Washington Times* story.

‘Chinagate’ waiting in the wings

A growing clamor is also being raised around the so-called “Cox Report,” a classified report issued in December by a “bipartisan” committee investigating alleged technology transfers to China. This is the fallback issue for many of the die-hard Clinton haters, and it can be expected to hit the President full force within weeks after any dismissal of the impeachment charges against him.

Both Rep. Chris Cox (R-Calif.), who chaired the committee, and Judiciary Committee chairman Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.) are members of the advisory board of the Center for Security Studies, run by Frank Gaffney, a former Defense Department analyst and part of the circle suspected of being behind convicted Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard. Gaffney and the CSP believe that the sex-and-lies case against Clinton is a sideshow: that the real charges on which Clinton should be impeached are bribery and treason around the China issue. That both Cox and Hyde sit on the advisory board of an organization leveling such wild charges, suggests that the six-year assault on the Presidency is far from over.