

AND, IT AIN'T SO YOUNG NO MORE

His Only Endearing Young Charm

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

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Some leading Democrats are just so silly, it makes you wonder. They are so het up, fretting themselves half to death over all those millions in the re-elect Dubya campaign war-chest, that they overlook the most obvious of all facts about the coming election. The leading political issue of 2004, after the onrushing depression, that is, is the question: are the U.S. voters so silly that they would re-elect a President whose one and only endearing charm, is that he is rightly perceived, more or less world-wide, as the dumbest man in the history of the

Oval Office? That, in fact, his record of performance in office, is the worst accumulation of sheer bungling incompetence in relations with long-standing allies, in military policy, in economic policy, in budget-balancing, and, excepting weight-lifting, about everything else, including diction and elocution, in recent memory?

Take the way in which poor, dumb Dubya & Co. dealt with the publication of the book by former counter-terrorist chief Richard A. Clarke which the Bush Administration itself, first, held back from publication, and then claimed he had timed the publication to embarrass Dubya's re-election campaign. If Dubya's handlers had had any sense, they would have said as little as possible about the issues of Clarke's book. Their foolish frenzy, in their efforts to deny the undeniable, made a major election-issue of a book which an intelligent administration would have let pass with minimum fuss.

Richard Clarke is not the kindest cherub, nor the most brilliant in the U.S. intelligence constellation of recent times, but he has earned a widely acknowledged professional reputation as a hard-grinding fanatic for getting his job done, as he sees it, over quite a period of time. I, personally, would disagree with him about a number of matters in which I have qualified expertise, but I would hire professionals like him in my administration any day, and be thankful I had them around to do battle with.

I should know. I warned the incoming Administration publicly of the danger of something like "9-11" in January 2001. I do not agree with the simplistic way Clarke himself throws the name of "Al-Qaeda" around; but, that is not the issue. The issue is, and was, that under the strategic economic and related conditions which the incoming President had inherited, combined with the new President's fanatical quality



President Bush Has an Idea.

of stubborn incompetence in economic and other matters, something like Goering's setting fire to Germany's Reichstag had to be expected. Clarke has Cheney dead to rights on the security failures of the pre-9-11 Bush Administration.

Clarke's facts sent Dubya's reputation down to the mat. Dubya should have taken a reflective nine-count before trying to stand up to Clarke's blows. Now, Dubya is being pummeled on that front, at the same time his reputation is being hit from seemingly all directions.

Given the monetary-financial crisis rushing to overwhelm the U.S. now, unless the Bush campaign is able to use computerized voting procedures to pull off the most massive ballot-fraud in U.S. history, which seems to be the intention of some Congressional Republicans, Bush is implicitly unelectable. The signs are clear; the big money is shifting its bets, preferring a Democratic administration controlled by them, to a Republican Presidency already up about its waist-line in the quicksand of Dubya's colossal failures. The recent electoral defeat of Spain's Aznar government, and the continuation of the pattern in the opposition electoral victories which have just occurred in France, are signs of the times. With a deep depression coming like an avalanche, incumbent governments must expect to be toppled by the voters time and time again.

All that said about the Republican follies, the Democrats' major challenge is not the White House menu; the cause of their bellyaching is their obsessive attachment to Mother McAuliffe's cooking.

Clarke Makes the Case: Vulcans Run Dumb Bush

by Edward Spannaus

Richard Clarke, the former U.S. counter-terrorism coordinator who served in four administrations, has made the case against George Bush and Dick Cheney: Even though Clarke is too polite, explicitly to say it, it is clear from his book¹ and interviews, that George W. Bush is as dumb a President as you'd ever want to find, and that Vice President Dick Cheney is the figure who controls the President.

In a March 31 interview on MSNBC's "Hardball with Chris Matthews," Clarke gave the most precise first-hand description yet, of the manner in which Dick Cheney took control of the Bush inner circle, and "tipped the balance" between the "Vulcans" and the more moderate elements of the Bush Cabinet around Colin Powell and others. Particularly in the so-called National Security Council "Principals" grouping,

Clarke showed, Cheney took an unprecedentedly active role, shaping policy before it got to the President.

This is not something that *EIR*, and certain others, did not know already, but Clarke—from his insider vantage point—has made the case crystal clear. In so doing, he has performed an enormous public service, by laying out the internal situation within the Bush Administration in a manner which leaves no reasonable doubts, neither as to the manner in which Cheney and Company dragged the country into the Iraq war, nor as to the truth of Lyndon LaRouche's estimation of what is at stake, for the nation and the world, in the ongoing U.S. Presidential election campaign.

O'Neill and Clarke

In mid-January, when former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill described President Bush as being so disengaged during Cabinet meetings that he "was like a blind man in a roomful of deaf people," and charged that Iraq was on the agenda of the new Bush Administration from Day One, O'Neill was attacked and vilified by the White House, and an investigation was opened as to whether he had improperly utilized classified documents.

The immediate impact of the O'Neill revelations was stunning. Yet, had the White House not sat for months on the draft of Clarke's book, it would have preceded O'Neill's memoirs, since Clarke's original intention was to have his book out by Christmas.

Both books present a similar picture of Bush: disengaged from most aspects of policymaking, uninterested in serious analysis of world events, and inclining toward simplistic bravado.

Clarke is measured in what he writes about Bush, saying that it was clear to him "that the critiques of him as a dumb, lazy rich kid were somewhat off the mark." Generously, Clarke continued: "When focussed, he asked the kind of questions that revealed a results-oriented mind, but he looked for the simple solution, the bumper-sticker description of the problem." The problem, Clarke continues, is that the important issues, such as Iraq, "were laced with important subtlety and nuance," and needed analysis, but "Bush and his inner circles had no interest in complicated analysis; on the issues they cared about, they already knew the answers; it was received wisdom."

Clarke contrasts Clinton—the voracious reader and seeker of new information—with Bush, of whom Clarke had been told early on: "The President is not a big reader."

As to how this played out, around the crucial matters of the 9/11 attacks, and the drive for an invasion of Iraq, Clarke had more to say in the March 31 "Hardball" interview, which we will elaborate below.

Cheney Tips the Scales

As we have previously shown (*EIR*, Feb. 6, 2004), the O'Neill book presented a devastating picture of the inner workings of the Administration—and of the sinister role of

1. Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, March 2004).