

The Case for Impeachment Of Vice President Cheney

The argument for the impeachment of Vice President Cheney was first published in EIR on Aug. 1, 2003. The following includes substantial excerpts of that document; a historical section on the impeachments of Presidents Nixon and Clinton has been omitted here for space reasons, but may be found in the original article.

In the face of the gathering storm against the George W. Bush Administration, for engaging in a pattern of lies to justify a pre-determined course of launching illegal war against Iraq, there is a sore temptation on the part of both the uninformed, and the opportunistic, to train their guns on President George W. Bush, and to call for his impeachment. Such an impeachment proceeding against the President would be a strategic and legal error which, if successful, would put the chief culprit, Vice President Dick Cheney, into the Presidency, and effectively consolidate the coup which he and his chicken-hawks' coterie have carried out.

On the contrary, as Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche has set forth in his leaflet now circulating nationally in 1 million copies, the appropriate target of any impeachment proceeding would be the Vice President himself. Unlike those in the Democratic National Committee who are calling for impeachment of Bush—for the sake of their election prospects in 2004—LaRouche is seeking the action that will save the American republic now.

The grounds for the impeachment of Vice President Cheney are not technical legal statutes. They proceed from the reality that the Vice President utilized and exploited the vulnerabilities and susceptibilities of President Bush, in order to induce him to do great damage to the nation. Simply put, Cheney, and his underlings, perpetrated a fraud upon the government, and upon the President as head of government. Thus it is Cheney who is liable for impeachment for “high Crimes and Misdemeanors” against these United States.

Cheney, the Svengali and Puppeteer

Let us speak bluntly: The present crisis requires it. President Bush is known to be, on public performance, patently suggestible, intellectually aberrant, to the point of incompetence, and mean-spirited. These defects and weaknesses were, and are, well-known to the President's associates, especially Vice President Cheney. In effect, this is a President who has to be guided, as if by a Trustee, in order to carry out his Constitutional functions in support of the nation.



"The puppeteer is the responsible agent. . . . Cheney and his gang decided to exploit the President's weaknesses, in the manner of a 'Svengali' controlling his 'Trilby,' or the ventriloquist Edgar Bergen putting words in the mouth of his stupid puppet, Mortimer Snerd."

But, instead, Cheney and his gang decided to exploit the President's weaknesses, in the manner of a "Svengali" controlling his "Trilby," or the ventriloquist Edgar Bergen putting words in the mouth of his stupid puppet, Mortimer Snerd. The result resembles the case of a person being induced, under hypnosis, to commit acts which, while not morally repugnant to that subject when he's not under hypnosis, amount to crimes against the Constitutional order of the republic.

In effect, the relationship between the calculating empire-seeker Cheney, and President Bush, is like that of an adult inducing a child, or another person lacking the mental and moral qualifications for assuming adult responsibility, to act in an irresponsible manner, by utilizing that child's mental and moral defects as if they were puppet strings. Who could find Edgar Bergen's puppet Mortimer Snerd responsible for his acts? The puppeteer is the responsible agent.

There is ample evidence available to support this representation of the relationship between Vice President Cheney and President Bush. Cheney is known to be the individual upon whom the President most strongly relies, and Cheney's intentions to promote a U.S. imperial posture, including through war against Iraq, are documented going back for more than a decade.

On the contrary, the President has vacillated back and forth on policy matters, while seemingly sincere in advocating contrary policies from one moment to the other. Cheney, at the same time, is shown (see Chronology below) to have had both interest and access to the pile of disinformation which was fed into President Bush, for his State of the Union address and other policymaking.

Thus it is Cheney, not Bush, who must be the object of impeachment proceedings, because he was the responsible party in perpetrating a fraud on the President, and on the country. The President, by character, was incompetent to re-

sist the temptations put in front of him. That makes Cheney all the more guilty.

The Standard of Impeachment

Under the U.S. Constitutional system, the purpose of impeachment is the protection of the nation, by removing from high office an official who is causing grave injury to the nation, its people, and its Constitution. Impeachment is not a criminal proceeding; its purpose is not to punish a wrongdoer, but to prevent him or her from doing further harm to the country. The question of prosecution, or imprisonment, comes later—if at all.

From that standpoint, it is noteworthy to look at the discussions which occurred in the Constitutional Convention on the matter of impeachment. Originally, the article read as follows: "The President, the Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors against the United States." For reasons unknown, the phrase "against the United States" was removed from the document by the Committee on Style—which was not supposed to make any substantive changes—but the *intent* is well known and clear.

The distinction between ordinary crimes, and crimes against the state and the Constitution, has been a leading element in all discussions of impeachment, up to and including that of President Clinton. This fact was reflected in the articles of impeachment which were drawn up against President Nixon, each of which was followed by the following statement: "In all of this, Richard M. Nixon has acted in a manner contrary to his trust as President and subversive of constitutional government, in the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States."

Now, there is no question but that the lies which were used by the Bush Administration, to induce the Congress to acquiesce in its drive for war against Iraq, and to build support in the American population, amounted to a *fraud* perpetrated on the state. As no less an “expert” than former Nixon White House counsel John W. Dean wrote recently, “manipulation or deliberate misuse of national security intelligence data, if proven, could be ‘a high crime’ under the Constitution’s impeachment clause. It would also be a violation of Federal criminal law, including the broad Federal anti-conspiracy statute, which renders it a felony ‘to defraud the United States, or any agency thereof in any manner or for any purpose.’ ”

The crucial issue is *who* committed the fraud. In the present case, the President was the victim of a fraud, perpetrated by the Vice President, who lied to him, misled him, and virtually put words in his mouth, in order to get the war which he wanted. In so doing, the Vice President induced the President to do something that was



wrong, against the interests of the nation, and in violation of the laws of war and international law. It is the Vice President who is a candidate for impeachment, not the President. . . .



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The People’s Choice

While Vice President Cheney must be the target of any Constitutional impeachment proceeding, because he manipulated the dupe, President Bush, there is another party whose guilt has to be taken into account. That party is the American voter.

The year 2000 elections were characterized by the fact that neither major party candidate was qualified to become President of the United States. To a large extent, this fact was due to the corruption and virtual takeover by Wall Street synarchist interests of the Democratic and Republican parties. But there is no way of exculpating the American population itself. The voters were the accomplices of Cheney et al., in putting a fool into office, who could be manipulated into doing Cheney’s bidding.

Now, therefore, it is up to the *people* to undo the damage. Some Democratic Party figures, such as Congressmen Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), Edward Markey (D-Mass.), and others have stood up to point the finger at the Vice President, as the key culprit in the fraudulent intelligence caper. These Congressmen, and, most importantly, Presidential candidate LaRouche, deserve deep public support for the only truthful, and efficient, approach toward cleaning out the Bush Administration of those war-mongers who are threatening to go beyond Iraq and bring on new disasters.

Vice President Richard Cheney must resign—or face impeachment.