

Cheneygate!

by Jeffrey Steinberg

A political hurricane, as devastating as Katrina, has struck the Bush-Cheney Administration. A string of long-simmering criminal probes, targetting top White House officials and key Congressional allies, has hit all at once, and the right-wing Republican juggernaut of dirty money and political corruption is now on the chopping block.

Asked on Sept. 30 to comment on the series of devastating blows delivered to the Bush-Cheney-Tom DeLay apparatus during the last week of September, Lyndon LaRouche said that “beyond the specifics of the individual instances of crime and sleaze that are now apparently being brought to account, we are seeing an overall reaction to the breakdown of the functioning of our government. The reaction is coming from various places within and around the U.S. governing institutions. In each separate instance, the instinct is the same: We cannot go on any longer with this corrupt, incompetent Bush-Cheney regime. This Administration is no damned good. The House of Representatives is not functioning, because the Republican leadership around Tom DeLay is too busy stealing everything that is not nailed down. Crooks were robbing us blind, and people just said, ‘We’ve had enough,’ and took action.”

LaRouche went on to emphasize, “This is not a conspiracy against Bush and Cheney. This is a lawful reaction to the chaos and breakdown of governmental functioning that we’ve seen from the Cheney and DeLay crowd. And now, Mama is standing in the middle of the kitchen, smashing all the dishes. It is not orderly, but it is a long-simmering reaction that has just exploded. And none too soon. With the global financial system in a state of terminal collapse, neither the United States nor the rest of the world can survive much more of this Bush-Cheney fiasco. Plenty of people realize that, in times of crisis, we need leadership from the Executive Branch, from the White House. And Cheney and Bush were leading us straight to Hell.”

Cheney’s Week From Hell

While the Vice President was recovering from surgery for his heart condition, and contemplating his next moves towards war and dictatorship, he was confronted with a series of shocks:

On Sept. 28, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Tex.) was indicted by a Travis County, Texas grand jury on charges that he conspired to illegally launder \$190,000 in corporate money, through the Republican National Committee, to Texas GOP legislative candidates, in violation of state election laws. Under the rules of the Republican House Caucus, he was forced to resign from the Republican House leadership. Immediately upon his resignation, a closed-door brawl erupted among House Republicans over who would be DeLay’s interim successor. This reflected long-developing fault lines within the House Republican Caucus, which the DeLay indictment finally cracked.

DeLay’s own legal difficulties are complicated by criminal indictments and ongoing criminal probes against right-wing lobbyist and key DeLay financier, Jack Abramoff (see accompanying article). The same week that DeLay was indicted, murder conspiracy charges were filed against three Gambino organized crime family hitmen, for the assassination of Gus Boulis, the former owner of SunCruz, a casino cruise ship line that Abramoff and partners took over without ever paying Boulis for the sale. It is that SunCruz scam that led to the Abramoff indictment in Florida several months ago. Abramoff faces a string of other criminal probes into tens of millions of dollars that he siphoned off from Indian tribes, to bankroll DeLay and his other political cronies. As *EIR* has revealed, Abramoff and DeLay were at the center of a right-wing fundraising and lobbying apparatus that implicates other leading GOP operatives, including former Christian Coalition head Ralph Reed and anti-tax lobbyist Grover Norquist.

Next, former Pentagon analyst Lawrence Franklin announced, through his lawyer Plato Cacheris, that he had reached a plea agreement with Federal prosecutors, meaning he will testify as a cooperating witness against the neo-conservative Pentagon apparatus and “Mr. AIPAC,” Steven Rosen. Franklin was indicted earlier this year by a Federal grand jury in Alexandria, Va. for passing classified Pentagon material to American Israel Political Affairs Committee officials Rosen and Keith Weissman, and to officials of the Israeli Embassy in Washington.

The Franklin case goes to the heart of the neo-con apparatus embedded in the office of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld—centered around Paul Wolfowitz and Doug Feith. While both Wolfowitz and Feith have left their Defense Department posts, the legacy of their neo-con “permanent war/permanent regime-change” dogmas lives on in the form of ongoing plans, currently being pushed from Dick Cheney’s White House offices, for military actions against Syria and Iran. Sources close to the FBI say that Feith, who was Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy and Franklin’s boss, is a prime suspect in the ongoing probe of an Israeli espionage triangle, implicating Israeli think-tanks, AIPAC, and American national security officials.

The most devastating personal blow to Cheney, however, came on Sept. 29, when *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller reached an agreement with independent counsel Patrick Fitzgerald, to appear before a Federal grand jury probing the Valerie Plame leak. Miller had been jailed this Summer for contempt of court, after she refused to testify about her ties to I. Lewis “Scooter” Libby, the chief of staff and chief national security aide to Cheney.

EIR was the first publication to report that the leaking of the identity of CIA officer Valerie Plame to syndicated columnist Robert Novak and others had been run out of Cheney’s office, by Libby and other staffers, including John Hannah. Valerie Plame is the wife of Ambassador Joseph Wilson, whose February 2002 mission, on behalf of the CIA, to Niger, discredited reports that Saddam Hussein was attempting to buy uranium from that African state. *EIR* revealed that in mid-March 2003, Cheney aides met to launch a “Get Joe Wilson” campaign, to silence opposition to the Iraq War.

In striking the deal that got her out of jail, Judith Miller named Libby as the person who revealed Valerie Plame’s identity to her.

A Triple Header

Upon learning about Miller’s comments and her scheduled testimony before Fitzgerald’s Federal grand jury, LaRouche said: “This is devastating for Cheney and company for three reasons. First, the issue of the leak per se. Libby is now implicated in the original media leak of the identity of Valerie Plame. That is a crime all by itself. Second, is the issue of the coverup. Here, Libby and others

are implicated in perjury, obstruction of justice, and a whole second category of crimes—all related to the coverup. And is anyone going to believe that Libby did this on his own, without consulting with his boss, Dick Cheney? I don’t think so.”

“And then,” LaRouche continued, “there is the third issue, and that is the role of our current acting United Nations Ambassador John Bolton in all of this. We know that Judith Miller and Bolton were close confidants, both involved as key assets of the White House Iraq Group. And the WHIG has been at the dead center of the Fitzgerald probe from the outset. Are we about to see our UN Ambassador sent packing? Let’s hope so.”

“I suspect,” LaRouche concluded, “that some people within the institutions see the Valerie Plame case as a perfect opportunity to get Bolton out of that UN post.”

The Washington Post’s Threat

Not everyone views the looming demise of the Cheney-Bush White House as good news. Even as the walls were closing in on Dick Cheney, the *Washington Post*, the unofficial voice of the Synarchist financier establishment in the nation’s capital, ran a warning op-ed by chief political commentator Jim Hoagland on Sept. 29, demanding that someone step forward to read Bush the riot act, to avoid the collapse of his Presidency.

Hoagland wrote: “Bush’s floundering since he was caught off base and off guard by Hurricane Katrina strips the veil from a broad pattern of recurrent inattention to the duties of governance, of misplaced loyalty to incompetent subordinates, and a crippling refusal to look back at and learn from mistakes.” In a not-so-veiled reference to Bush and Cheney’s leading critics, including LaRouche, Hoagland continued, “I take no pleasure from that harsh assessment. I have never shared the unreasoning conviction of many of his more partisan opponents that Bush as a national leader is illegitimate, moronic, or both. He isn’t.”

Nice try, Mr. Hoagland, but the Bush-Cheney ship is sinking like the *Titanic*, and a re-shuffling of the deck chairs is a little too late.

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