

Behind the Kelly/Wilson/Duggan Affair: Anatomy of a Defamation Campaign

by Jeffrey Steinberg

For the past 18 months, a trans-Atlantic network of “friends of Dick Cheney and Tony Blair” has been waging a defamation campaign against leading Democratic Party figure Lyndon LaRouche. Since the first Bush-Cheney Inauguration in January 2001, LaRouche, one of the world’s most renowned political economists of the American System school, and a 2004 candidate for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination, has been leading the effort to expose the follies of the Bush-Cheney Administration, which promotes perpetual imperial wars abroad, and the “Hooverization” of the American economy at home.

During the same time frame, LaRouche has led a successful campaign, within the Democratic Party, to revive the tradition of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as the basis for rebuilding the party, and taking back control of the Congress and the White House in the upcoming election cycles. LaRouche played a pivotal role, through a series of international webcasts, following the Nov. 2, 2004 elections, in getting House and Senate Democrats to challenge the legitimacy of Bush’s so-called victory. This resulted in the historic Jan. 6, 2005 Joint Session of the U.S. Congress, in which the outcome of the Electoral College vote in Ohio was challenged, and all claims of a Bush “mandate” were wiped out.

With the April 1, 2003 publication of the first edition of the LaRouche in 2004 “Children of Satan” series of reports, exposing the Cheney-led neo-conservative apparatus, a growing number of American and international political circles were provided a bird’s-eye view of what some astute observers have dubbed “the committee to blow up the world.”

Just days before the first copies of “Children of Satan” appeared on the streets of the United States, American and British troops had launched the invasion of Iraq, ostensibly on the grounds that the Saddam Hussein regime had been amassing weapons of mass destruction and abetting terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda. As the world now knows, all the so-called WMD and terror charges against Iraq were fabricated by the U.S. and British neo-cons, to get their “lovely little war” in the Persian Gulf, a war that has subsequently turned into a quagmire, worse than Vietnam.

At the time of the launching of the Iraq war, Lyndon LaRouche emerged as a leading trans-Atlantic voice, in oppo-

sition to the Cheney-Blair imperial faction. On two occasions in the Spring of 2003, LaRouche was a featured guest on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), calling for the impeachment of Vice President Dick Cheney, on the grounds that the Vice President was the key Bush Administration official responsible for the pre-war disinformation.

LaRouche’s BBC comments coincided with a revolt from within the British political and scientific establishment against Tony Blair, for his role in the pre-war intelligence fraud. In late May, BBC aired a series of stories, citing unnamed British intelligence sources, that 10 Downing Street had “sexed up” the September 2002 Iraq dossier in order to win parliamentary and public support for the Anglo-American invasion. The revelations caused a firestorm within Great Britain, forcing House of Commons investigations into the charges of pre-war disinformation. Since 2001, the Bush and Blair administrations had run a joint “Coalition Information Center” to coordinate propaganda for the “War on Terrorism.”

In London, the Coalition Information Center was run out of 10 Downing Street by top Blair aides Aleister Campbell and Phil Bassett. Bassett is the husband of another Blair intimate, Baroness Liz Symons. Baroness Symons held a series of key defense and foreign affairs posts in the Blair sub-cabinet, and had been intimately involved with both Dick and Lynne Cheney in various of those assignments. She had, for example, arranged a number of British Ministry of Defence contracts for Halliburton, while Dick Cheney was CEO.

By early July 2003, with a nascent insurgency brewing inside Iraq, and with anti-war sentiments growing inside the United States and Great Britain, the Blair government launched a counter attack, naming prominent British scientist David Kelly as the source of the leaks to BBC about the “sexed up” dossier, and planting a series of defamations against the widely respected defense specialist. On July 15, 2003, Dr. Kelly was hauled before a House of Commons commission, probing the disinformation charges. Two days later, Dr. Kelly’s body was found in a wooded area near his home in Oxfordshire, after having purportedly taken his own life.

The mystery surrounding the death of Dr. David Kelly remains a point of controversy. In January 2004, a commis-



British Foreign Office figure Baroness Liz Symons, shown here with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, has played a key role in coordinating a trans-Atlantic campaign to counter the growing influence of Lyndon LaRouche.

sion headed by Lord Hutton issued a whitewash report, exonerating the Blair government on the charges of fabricating pre-war intelligence. However, through the course of the Hutton inquiry, damning evidence had surfaced, confirming the scientist's charges. The Blair government had also moved against BBC, forcing the resignation of the head of the news division, and purging others who refused to toe the 10 Downing Street propaganda line.

Ironically, the meeting where the campaign against Dr. David Kelly was launched, took place at the Prime Minister's Office on July 8, 2003. Tony Blair, according to subsequent accounts, personally chaired the meeting, where the decision was made to release Dr. Kelly's name as the source of the leaks to BBC.

The same day, July 8, 2003, the *New York Times* published an op-ed by former Ambassador Joseph Wilson III. Wilson charged that the Bush Administration knew that their claims that Saddam Hussein was seeking uranium from Africa to build a nuclear bomb was a fabrication. Those bogus charges, which even appeared in President Bush's January 2003 State of the Union address, formed the strongest argument for the United States to launch preventive war against Iraq in March 2003.

Ambassador Wilson revealed that he had been sent, in February 2002, on a CIA fact-finding mission to Niger, to probe allegations of an Iraqi illegal purchase of large quantities of yellow-cake uranium precursor. The allegations proved unfounded, and Wilson had reported his findings back to the CIA, which, in turn, informed Vice President Dick Cheney. Cheney had initiated the probe by asking the CIA

to look into the Niger-Iraq yellow-cake allegations. A parallel Pentagon probe of the Niger yellow-cake allegations confirmed Wilson's findings.

Less than a week after the publication of the Wilson *New York Times* op-ed, syndicated columnist Robert Novak published a story, blowing the identity of Wilson's wife, Valerie Plame, as an undercover CIA officer. The Plame leak, which is still the subject of a Federal grand jury probe by independent counsel Patrick Fitzgerald, blew a series of important CIA operations and fronts, which were tracking WMD around the globe. Ms. Plame had been a "non-official cover" officer, working undercover abroad, for the better part of her 20 year career at the Agency.

EIR's own investigation into the Plame leak revealed that the origins of the "Get Joe Wilson" campaign

dated back to March 2003, on the eve of the Iraq invasion. Following the March 7, 2003 testimony at the United Nations Security Council by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) head Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, in which he revealed that the Niger yellow-cake story had come from fraudulent documents, Ambassador Wilson appeared on CNN TV. While he did not yet reveal details of his own Niger mission, Wilson did suggest that Bush Administration officials review their own files. They would, he said, reveal that they knew all along that there was no truth to the Niger yellow-cake story.

EIR sources revealed that, within days of the Wilson TV appearance, a series of meetings took place in the office of Vice President Cheney, and a campaign against Wilson was set in motion. Sources insist that at least two senior staffers in the Veep's office, chief of staff Lewis Libby and deputy John Hannah, both know the full story on the Plame leak to Robert Novak. The same sources reported that the Cheney team used some leading neo-cons on the Defense Policy Board, then chaired by Richard Perle, as another outlet for the smears against Wilson and Plame.

The Kelly/Wilson/Duggan Overlay

The same Washington/London circles that targetted Dr. David Kelly and Ambassador Joseph Wilson had already decided, by July 2003, that Lyndon LaRouche also had to be targetted—before his influence within the Democratic Party reached the point that it jeopardized the Cheney-Blair apparatus. Already, hundreds of thousands of copies of the first "Children of Satan" pamphlet had been distributed in the

United States, an equal number of copies had been downloaded internationally from the LaRouche websites; and major Establishment news outlets, like the *New York Times*, were picking up on the LaRouche exposés of the role of the late University of Chicago professor, Leo Strauss, in shaping the neo-con worldview.

The vehicle that the Cheney-Blair trans-Atlantic team chose for going after LaRouche was the tragic death of a young British student, Jeremiah Duggan, on March 27, 2003. Duggan was killed, in what German investigators ruled a suicide, when he jumped in front of a speeding car in Wiesbaden, Germany.

A student in Paris, the British youth had come to Germany to attend a conference of the Schiller Institute, and a LaRouche Youth Movement cadre school. According to eyewitness accounts, Duggan had met the LaRouche Youth Movement in Paris several weeks before he travelled to Germany, and had been attracted to the LYM's opposition to the Iraq war, and other policies.

During the day and evening of March 26, Duggan became distressed, and sought help in obtaining medication. He had confided that he had diagnosed psychological problems. Early in the morning of March 27, he left the apartment where he was staying with other conference guests. He died several hours later.

On March 28, Duggan's parents, who had divorced when Jeremiah was a boy, travelled to Germany and met with Schiller Institute officials, as well as law enforcement.

It is here that *EIR*'s direct knowledge of the Duggan case leaves off. *EIR* and Schiller Institute representatives have not seen the full police investigative report. Even more important, they have not seen Jeremiah Duggan's medical records. Subsequent to the one visit to Wiesbaden, Jeremiah's mother, Erica Duggan, was targeted by a trans-Atlantic self-professed, anti-cult apparatus, which in fact was an outgrowth of government mind-control secret-warfare programs, which has been operating for decades against LaRouche. She has subsequently been drawn into that orbit, and is now actively promoted by them, as part of the renewed "Get LaRouche" effort, which is being extensively funded, if her travel activities, and the elaborate Duggan website are any measure.

On July 12, 2003, five days before Dr. David Kelly's purported "suicide," the London *Guardian* published the first slander against Lyndon LaRouche, centered around the death of Jeremiah Duggan. Four days after Dr. Kelly's death, BBC, which had twice earlier interviewed Lyndon LaRouche favorably on the Iraq war and on his campaign for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination, aired a slander against him, also centered around the Duggan affair.

On Nov. 5, 2003, a British Coroners Inquest into the death of Jeremiah Duggan was contaminated by the introduction of scurrilous anti-LaRouche propaganda, provided by the American Family Foundation (AFF), to promote false allegations of a Schiller Institute link to Duggan's tragic death. Four

weeks earlier, the AFF had held an international conference in Hartford, Conn., addressed by Dennis King, a long-time poison-pen deployed against LaRouche, who had at one time worked for the notorious Roy Cohn, the aide to Sen. Joe McCarthy and organized crime-tainted lawyer.

Despite this barrage of media slanders against LaRouche, the *Wiesbadener Kurier* reported, on Nov. 11, 2003, that the Wiesbaden Chief Prosecutor, Dieter Arlet, had complained about the media attacks on the German investigation into the Duggan death. A spokesman told the newspaper that it was "completely inexplicable how such a characterization could get into the media." The spokesman added that there were "no grounds for us to reopen the investigation."

No legitimate grounds, to be sure. However, high-level political circles in London and Washington, according to sources within government, determined to milk the Duggan tragedy and kick-start problems for LaRouche, whose campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination was drawing growing grass-roots support.

Against a backdrop of continuing defamatory British press coverage of the Duggan affair, featuring the same litany of AFF-foisted lies, Erica Duggan met, on April 1, 2004, with British Foreign Office figure Baroness Liz Symons. Also attending the meeting were Mrs. Duggan's local Parliamentary representative Rudy Vis and Labourite Lord Janner.

The involvement of Baroness Symons was of particular note, given her longstanding ties to Prime Minister Tony Blair, and to both Vice President and Mrs. Cheney. Symons, by meeting with Erica Duggan, and her subsequent efforts to boost the Duggan affair by pressing German officials to reopen the investigation into Jeremiah Duggan's death, by assigning a barrister to work with Mrs. Duggan, offer the clearest evidence that the entire effort is being directed, top-down, by political circles with political motives, who are growing more and more desperate to stop LaRouche.

On Oct. 24, 2004, on the eve of the U.S. Presidential elections, in which LaRouche was actively backing Democratic nominee John Kerry, the *Washington Post Magazine* ran its own version of the "Affair Duggan," in an attempt to scare off the growing legions of Democrats who were collaborating with LaRouche and his movement. The *Post* piece, by staff writer April Witt, however, was of such a deranged quality, that its impact backfired. It was widely seen as a shoddy attempt to defame LaRouche *because* of his growing political influence.

In early March 2005, Erica Duggan was in Wiesbaden again, this time accompanied by German attorney Nikolas Becker, the former attorney for East Germany's last Communist leader, Erich Honecker. According to news accounts, Wiesbaden Chief Prosecutor Hannelore Biniok is still refusing to reopen the probe, backing the original investigative findings that Duggan's death was a suicide. That will neither stop the campaign against LaRouche, nor quell the growing desperation of the Cheney-Blair gang.