

Whitewater's Starr runs coverup for Bush

by Edward Spannaus

According to data released by the congressional General Accounting Office, Whitewater special prosecutor Kenneth Starr is spending money at the clip of about \$1 million a month. In the first 14 months of his investigation, running through September 1995, Starr had spent \$13.6 million, and in the six months since then, he has probably run up a tab of over \$20 million. This is on top of nearly \$6 million spent by the first Whitewater special prosecutor, from whom Starr took over in mid-1994.

As we reported two weeks ago (see *EIR*, March 29, p. 65), even some of Starr's strongest supporters are beginning to express their doubts as to whether Starr's inquisition will actually be able to bring down President Clinton. Since then, Starr has come under criticism from conservative circles for his legal conflicts of interests from his moonlighting for other clients.

But, Starr's job is not just to go after Clinton; it is also to protect his former boss, George Bush. Suppressing the real story about the gun- and drug-smuggling operations run by Bush's networks in Arkansas in the 1980s seems to be Starr's highest priority. Despite all the efforts of the get-Clinton crowd to pin the Mena airfield drug-running operation on Clinton, anyone who knows the score knows that this was an operation run from the highest levels of the federal government during the Reagan-Bush administration, directly out of the National Security Council where Oliver North carried out the instructions of his real boss: then-Vice President George Bush.

A Bush appointee

When Bush became President in 1989, he appointed Starr as his Solicitor General in the Justice Department. The firing of the first Whitewater special prosecutor, Robert Fiske, in 1994, was undoubtedly triggered by the need to ensure that someone totally loyal to the Bush machine was in the position to tread the delicate line between trying to frame up Clinton while, at the same time, maintaining the coverup of the Mena operation.

Starr got some additional help in this in the fall of 1994, when another special prosecutor, Donald Smaltz, was appointed to investigate Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy. Espy was accused of having received various trivial gratuities, such as free football tickets, from agricultural interests such as Arkansas chicken magnate Don Tyson. In February 1995,

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Smaltz hired Ted Greenberg, the Justice Department's top money-laundering expert and one of the dirtiest operatives in the Justice Department's permanent bureaucracy—something which was inexplicable from the standpoint of the minor offenses of which Espy was accused.

Already in October 1994, the marching orders for the Smaltz-Greenberg team had been issued by the Hollinger Corp.'s Ambrose Evans-Pritchard in the London *Sunday Telegraph*, in a piece entitled "Bill Clinton and the Chicken Man," in which the British intelligence stringer complained that the American press had been overlooking this aspect of the Whitewater scandal. Evans-Pritchard claimed that Tyson had been under investigation in the 1980s for smuggling cocaine stuffed inside chickens. Before long, Smaltz and Greenberg were leaking stories that tied Clinton to Tyson and to drug-dealing and money-laundering.

Lawyers for Tyson Foods went to court and managed to clip Smaltz's wings in the summer of 1995, but on April 1 of this year, the federal appeals court which appoints special prosecutors expanded Smaltz's authority to broaden his investigation to encompass unidentified "associates" of Espy.

Just ten days earlier, on March 22, the same three-judge panel of appeals court judges had issued an order expanding Starr's mandate as well, allowing him to expand his investigation into the so-called "Travelgate" affair. This panel is

headed by Judge David Sentelle, who had been observed lunching with North Carolina Republican Sens. Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth only days before his panel fired Fiske and replaced him with Starr. Not too long after that, Faircloth hired Sentelle's wife to work in his office. Faircloth has been the most hateful and vociferous of the Republicans on the now-defunct Senate Whitewater investigating committee, at times making even Al D'Amato look like a moderate.

Gross conflicts of interest

While spending all this money, Starr isn't even on the job full-time. It has been known since his appointment that Whitewater has only been a part-time job for him, but in the past week or two, this has become a matter of public attention. The *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Times*, both zealous backers of Starr's operation, ran articles on March 27 drawing attention to Starr's continued involvement in high-profile, outside legal cases. The *Wall Street Journal* piece, whose headline indicated that Starr's legal work "raises eyebrows," focussed particularly on Starr's representation of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Co. in a class-action lawsuit being argued before a federal appeals court in New Orleans; Brown and Williamson is owned by BAT, the British-American Tobacco company.

In fact, Starr has many more clients, which were listed in a *Washington Times* article on the same day, under the headline "Starr's Billings Prompt Unease." The list includes: Philip Morris, the Republican National Committee, Victor and Steven Posner, Hughes Aircraft, Amoco Oil, Chiquita Brands (formerly United Fruit), and the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation.

The Bradley Foundation not only funded Starr to argue the Wisconsin school-voucher case, but it funds most of the British-inspired Conservative Revolution think-tanks in the United States, including the Acton Institute, the American Enterprise Institute, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, Empowerment Network Foundation, First Freedom Coalition Educational Fund (a personal project of former Attorney General William Barr), Free Congress Research and Education Foundation, Heritage Foundation, Hillsdale College (a key Mont Pelerin outpost), Hudson Institute, National Strategy Information Center (created by Prescott Bush, Sr.), Progress and Freedom Foundation (Newt Gingrich's operation), and Reason Foundation (which pushes privatization). Bradley also funds British operations directly, including the Atlas Economic Research Foundation of Sussex, England; Cambridge University; and something called the "Social Affairs Unit, London, England."

Another recipient of Bradley largesse is the American Spectator Educational Foundation, Inc. A Bradley spokesman said the foundation put up the money for the *American Spectator* magazine to "research and write" its first big article against President Clinton—a sensational piece based on lurid tales from Arkansas state troopers.