

'Porn-again' Starr on prowl for scandals vs. President

by Edward Spannaus

With the news media filled daily with leaks from Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr's office, each one more salacious than the last, a mighty backlash is now building against the independent counsel. Because what started as an investigation of a failed 1980s real estate deal in Arkansas, has now become a frenzied search for more and more dirt concerning the President's personal life and alleged sexual affairs.

This didn't just begin last month. Back in November 1996, Starr's agents were already interrogating Arkansas state troopers about Clinton's sex life—supposedly under the pretext that this would help them prove "Whitewater" crimes! Last summer, after the reports came out about Starr's efforts to dig up dirt on Clinton, a local columnist in Arkansas wrote that "the real game here is extortion." Max Brantley, writing in the *Arkansas Times*, said that "Starr's jackboots hope that people with potentially embarrassing private pasts might offer up something, anything on Clinton, to protect themselves from public humiliation."

And now, Starr has become a veritable "peeping Tom," hauling witness after witness before his Washington grand jury, to tell him who can see what, in and around the Oval Office. According to various press accounts, beginning in late January, Starr's prosecutors have been asking witness after witness about the layout of offices in the West Wing of the White House, about who worked where, what access they had, and what could be seen in the Oval Office and adjoining study. George Stephanopoulos was reportedly asked to describe "sight lines" in the area around the Oval Office and, according to the *Washington Post*, "whether other people could observe activities in Clinton's private space."

At the same time, Starr's office has been leaking to the news media, lurid details of grand jury testimony and other statements of people claiming to have some knowledge of alleged sexual trysts involving the President.

In light of this fixation by Starr and the news media on "oral sex," accounts of which are often run side-by-side with news reports of how Starr is supposed to be such a pious church-goer, *EIR* Contributing Editor Lyndon LaRouche recently labelled Starr a "porn-again Christian."

"Kenneth is one of these so-called Elmer Gantry types of so-called Christians," LaRouche said in a radio interview with "EIR Talks" on Feb. 4. LaRouche compared Starr to the preacher who, "when he starts talking about sex from the pulpit, his eyes begin to gleam, and he begins to look among the female parishioners in the church? Ha! And he just delights to get to this sex part: 'Oh, sex is terrible, it's sinful, what people do with sex,' and so forth. 'Oh, it's terrible!'"

LaRouche said that Starr, "this moral degenerate," has now come up with another sex scandal, because what he is doing is "appealing to those Americans who are also pornographic . . . sexually pornographic."

Starr is displaying a decidedly sadistic streak. He has kept Susan McDougal, a friend of the President's who has already been convicted and sentenced to a two-year prison term, in various jails for almost 18 months on a separate, civil contempt charge, often under horrendous conditions. McDougal has repeatedly charged that Starr has offered to release her if she would lie about Bill Clinton, and now, she says, Starr's office is threatening to indict her for criminal contempt of court after she is released, as she must be under the law, around March 6.

Susan McDougal expressed sympathy for Monica Lewinsky, because of the similar pressure Starr has put on her. It has been reported that Starr threatened Lewinsky and her family, and tried to get Lewinsky to wear a body wire to record conversations and entrap President Clinton and/or Clinton's friend and adviser Vernon Jordan. During an ABC-TV interview on Feb. 4, McDougal said: "I was surprised at how much

it bothered me when I saw this happen to this young woman [Lewinsky]. In fact, it was almost a déjà vu. I felt like I was living through it with her, as I saw her problems.”

McDougal said that Starr had threatened her family with indictment, just as he did Lewinsky, during the afternoon that Starr’s agents detained Lewinsky for eight hours. “I don’t believe there’s any pressures that he would not bring to bear to get this President,” McDougal said. “I will tell you that from my first day with them, they were offering me the world for a proffer against Bill Clinton.”

The ‘rocket docket’

Starr already has two grand juries sitting, one in Little Rock, Arkansas, and another in Washington, D.C. There are now rumors, that Starr has opened a third grand jury in the Eastern District of Virginia, in Alexandria. There have been reports that Monica Lewinsky’s first lawyer, Francis Carter, had received a subpoena to deliver his records concerning Lewinsky to a Federal grand jury in Virginia. It is also said that Starr is planning to drag Vernon Jordan before a grand jury in Virginia. Since both Carter and Jordan are black, the reasoning is that Starr would find it much easier to obtain indictments and convictions from a predominately white grand jury and trial jury in Virginia, than from a heavily black jury in the District of Columbia.

While various accounts attribute this to a racial motivation, this is only part of the story. The Alexandria Federal court is known as the “rocket docket,” and it is notorious for its almost 100% denial of pre-trial defense motions, its quick trials, and its rapid and almost certain convictions of defendants. This was the district in which the Justice Department railroaded Lyndon LaRouche and a number of associates to prison in a matter of months in 1988, after Federal prosecutors had spent four years trying to prosecute and convict LaRouche in Boston, and had failed miserably and embarrassingly.

This news service had received a report from a knowledgeable source over a year ago, that Starr was maneuvering to find some jurisdictional “handle” to get into the Alexandria court, where he would be much more likely to get convictions, than in the District of Columbia. *EIR* has also confirmed that, about one month ago, Starr brought one of the principal criminal prosecutors from the Alexandria U.S. Attorney’s Office, onto his own staff.

Starr’s conflicts of interest

Starr is also now facing two active complaints over his gross prosecutorial misconduct and his myriad conflicts of interest.

On Feb. 5, Rep. John Conyers (Mich.), the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, announced that he was preparing a letter to Attorney General Janet Reno, asking Reno to investigate repeated abuses of power by Starr. A statement issued by Conyers said that his letter “will detail the allegations regarding improper leaking of grand jury material,

intimidation of witnesses, unauthorized investigations, and conflicts of interest.”

“Just today we learned that Starr’s office may have leaked confidential information from Ms. Lewinsky’s supposed grand jury proffer and may have been engaged in a course of improper pressure and intimidation against Ms. Lewinsky,” Conyers’s statement continued. “Although these latest disclosures shock the conscience, I believe they may be just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to potential misconduct by this Independent Counsel.”

Second, the 8th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals has announced that it will hear the appeal of the dismissal of a conflict-of-interest complaint first filed in 1996 against Starr. The complaint, filed by Francis Mandanici, a Bridgeport, Connecticut public defender, cited two principal areas of conflict—that between Starr’s law firm Kirkland & Ellis and the Resolution Trust Corp., and that involving the right-wing multimillionaire “philanthropist” Richard Mellon Scaife, particularly Starr’s acceptance of a position at Pepperdine University, which is funded by Scaife’s foundations. Mandanici’s complaint also cited Starr’s leaks to the news media.

Mandanici first filed his complaint with the Federal district court in Little Rock in 1996; the court forwarded it to the Justice Department’s Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), which rejected it in February 1997, saying that the Attorney General should only use her removal power in “extreme” cases. Mandanici then renewed his complaint with the district court, asking it to appoint a counsel to investigate Starr’s conduct and conflicts of interests. In August, the complaint was effectively killed, after four judges recused themselves because of their ties to President Clinton, and the remaining four judges, mostly Republicans, did not recuse. A majority of the eight judges would be needed to act on the complaint. One of the four who did not recuse himself, Judge Thomas Eisele, a Republican, wrote a powerful memorandum, declaring that Starr should be investigated and removed. (See *EIR*, Sept. 5, 1997, p. 52.)

After Federal Judge Susan Webber Wright then dismissed Mandanici’s complaint altogether in October 1997, Mandanici filed an appeal with the 8th Circuit. Two weeks ago, as Mandanici advised this news service, Starr filed his opposition to the appeal, declaring it “frivolous.” But now, the Appeals Court has decided to hear the appeal, and has scheduled oral argument for March 5 in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Mandanici said that he believes that Starr is only doing what he is doing today, in the Monica Lewinsky matter, because he was emboldened by the action of the three judges who “gave him a pass” last August; Starr took this as a “green light,” Mandanici said.

In light of Starr’s rampage in recent weeks, and the torrent of illegal leaks coming out of his office, there is no doubt that Starr deserves to be fired—and then investigated and prosecuted himself, for flagrant misconduct and abuse of his office.