

staged a diplomatic incident, by publicly attacking the conference host, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad, and virtually calling for an insurrection against his government by so-called “democracy” forces, a cruel misnomer for the gaggle of non-governmental organizations, Soros-bankrolled “human rights” activists, and secessionists who had been violently attacking the Malaysian government since the outset of the Asia financial crisis in mid-1997.

Prime Minister Mahathir had repeatedly infuriated the international speculators for 14 months. First, he had singled out Soros as a murderous pirate, during a speech at the IMF meeting in Hong Kong, in September 1997. The *Asia Wall Street Journal* had identified, in a front-page article at the time, that Mahathir had gotten his dossier on Soros and the other hedge-fund looters from Lyndon LaRouche and *EIR*.

More recently, Mahathir had imposed capital and exchange controls, to protect the Malaysian economy from further attacks by the international speculators. His efforts had received active backing from both China and Japan, and scores of government officials from Asia had praised Mahathir’s courage and foresight at the October 1998 IMF meeting in Washington.

Whereas President Clinton and Treasury Secretary Rubin had avoided any direct confrontation with Mahathir, Gore’s thuggish antics in Kuala Lumpur provoked a worldwide outcry against the United States.

Again, President Clinton, according to several highly placed sources, was furious at Gore’s usurpation of Presidential authority. But, once again, President Clinton was confronted with a new escalation on the Kenneth Starr front, as the House of Representatives pressed ahead with the impeachment travesty.

The bombings

Vice President Gore’s “mentor” and publicist Marty Peretz knew what was coming well before the President did. On Dec. 7, 1998, *National Review* published a glowing profile of Leon Fuerth, Vice President Gore’s longtime aide, under the headline “Fuerth in Line—Gore’s Foreign Policy Guru.” The article reported, “For a vice-presidential aide, the former foreign service officer has an unusually prominent position as a member of the top national security policymaking group known as the Principals Committee, whose members include Albright, Cohen, and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger. ‘No one would make a decision without including him,’ says Ashton Carter, a former Pentagon official.”

National Review then spilled the beans on the forthcoming war on Iraq: “Though the tough stance he [Fuerth] advocates against Iraq has yet to be fully adopted by the administration, as this weekend’s near air strike illustrates, his position seems to be gaining support. Even some Republican critics of the Clinton administration think highly of Fuerth, perhaps because he’s that rare bird, a non-Southern Democratic hawk.”

Fuerth knew when to act. In mid-December 1998, President Clinton was scheduled to travel to the Gaza Strip, to

address the Palestinian National Congress, where the Palestine Liberation Organization Charter was to be revised, and to Israel, to confer with Prime Minister Netanyahu, in a last-ditch effort to revive the collapsed Wye Plantation accords. Some top Clinton aides shared LaRouche’s view that the President should cancel his Mideast trip, which posed a security nightmare, and which stood little chance of success, given Netanyahu’s unshakeable opposition to the Wye accords.

The President ignored the advice, and left for the Mideast on Dec. 13.

Behind his back, Gore, Fuerth and their allies among the Principals Committee members schemed to win the President’s okay for the bombings that had been called off in November.

It had been pre-arranged that UNSCOM boss Richard Butler, a British Commonwealth operative with years of experience in the manipulative world of arms control, would issue his status report on the inspection missions in Iraq while President Clinton was in the Middle East. His blatantly phony report, claiming a pattern of Iraqi violations of the inspection agreement, was all that Gore et al. needed. While the President was still in Israel, he was informed that the Principals Committee had reached a “unanimous agreement”: It was time to bomb Saddam. They pressed the President for an immediate decision, arguing that, with the Islamic holy month of Ramadan scheduled to begin on Dec. 19, there was only a narrow window of opportunity to strike against Saddam’s intransigence. On Dec. 15, 1998, while aboard Air Force One on his return to Washington, and relying solely on the Principals Committee demands, the President approved the bombings. The attack began the next day.

Three days later, the House of Representatives voted up two articles of impeachment against Bill Clinton.

A profile of the Principals Committee

by Edward Spannaus

Already in 1994, author Elizabeth Drew noted that one sign of Vice President Al Gore’s “extraordinary and unprecedented” foreign policy role was that his National Security Adviser, Leon Fuerth, was sitting in on “Principals Committee” meetings.¹ In March 1998, the *Washington Post* observed that Gore and Fuerth enjoyed a “foreign policy influence rarely seen at the vice presidential level,” and in June 1998 the *Post* described Fuerth, in his “obscurity,” as “the virtual day-to-day manager of relations with Russia,” as well as being “at the

1. C-SPAN “Booknotes” interview with Elizabeth Drew, author of *On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency*, Dec. 11, 1994.

center of policymaking on a wide range of international issues.”²

How did Gore, Fuerth, and the Principals Committee get themselves into a position where they could make administration policy on Iraq and other areas, and even plan out air strikes and military actions behind the President’s back?

This is a fascinating story, and it demonstrates how President Clinton has been cut out of many areas of national security decision-making. It is also a story that, to our knowledge, is being published for the first time here.

The National Security Council, along with the CIA, was established by the National Security Act of 1947. The primary purpose of the NSC is to “advise the President on all matters relating to national security.” There are four statutory members of the NSC: the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the statutory military adviser to the NSC, and the Director of Central Intelligence is the intelligence adviser.

During the past 50 years, the NSC has undergone many transmogrifications. Under President Eisenhower, the NSC staff was first given a role independent of the Council itself. Under President Kennedy’s National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, and President Nixon’s National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, the NSC staff became operational, and often supplanted the Defense and State Departments. This grew into a Frankenstein’s monster under the Reagan-Bush administration, when Vice President George Bush deployed the NSC staff (i.e., Ollie North et al.) for covert operations—despite the objections of, and without the knowledge of, the Secretary of State and other NSC members. This was done under the cover of Executive Order 12333, signed in 1981, which designated the NSC as “the highest Executive Branch entity” for review, guidance, and direction of all foreign intelligence, counter-intelligence, and “special activities” (covert operations). This is what blew up in 1986, becoming known as the “Iran-Contra affair.”

The Clinton administration NSC

When the Clinton administration came into office in January 1993, its National Security Transition Team was determined to redefine the NSC, to put more emphasis on economic issues. This reflected a broader definition of national security as encompassing the nation’s economic strength and the well-being of its citizens, according to Nancy Soderberg, a former NSC official.

Thus, one of President Clinton’s first acts, on Jan. 21, 1993, was to issue Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 2,

2. *Washington Post*, March 14, 1998, and June 16, 1998. In the latter article, a lengthy profile of Fuerth, it is noted that some State Department officials suspect Fuerth of being “the conduit by which inside information is passed to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu,” an allegation Fuerth himself denies.

which enlarged the membership of the NSC and put greater emphasis on economic issues. In addition to the four statutory members (President, Vice President, and the Secretaries of State and Defense), the Secretary of the Treasury, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, and the White House Chief of Staff were added. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) remained as advisers to the NSC.

The new administration carried over two innovations from the George Bush administration—the Principals Committee and the Deputies Committee.

There are four levels of national security decision-making under the Clinton administration’s NSC structure, which are:

1. The **National Security Council** itself, as defined by statute and PDD 2.

2. The **Principals Committee**. This is the functioning level. Its core group is, currently, National Security Adviser Berger, Vice President Gore’s National Security Adviser Leon Fuerth, the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Chairman of the JCS, the DCI, the White House Chief of Staff, and the UN Ambassador. Additionally, Vice President Gore frequently participates in meetings of the Principals Committee. In other words, this is the National Security Council—*minus the President*. It meets two to three times a month, but in crisis periods it can meet two to three times a week. Those who meet as the Principals Committee can vary from issue to issue. If the issue were counter narcotics, for example, it would include White House drug policy adviser Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.) and Attorney General Janet Reno.

3. The **Deputies Committee**. This is chaired by the Deputy National Security Adviser, and also includes Gore’s adviser Fuerth and the deputies and undersecretaries of the various agencies. It meets once or twice a week. It has two formal functions: 1) crisis management, on the hot issue of the day, and 2) oversight of the Interagency Working Groups (IWGs).

4. The **Interagency Working Groups**. These operate generally at the Assistant Secretary level; they are in charge of day-to-day implementation of policy, and of review and development of policy.

Who runs foreign policy?

The shocker in all this is that the National Security Council itself has met only *once* during the entire Clinton administration! In December 1996, Nancy Soderberg, then the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, described the structure and functioning of the NSC under the Clinton administration.³ Soderberg said that the one meeting of the NSC took place on March 2, 1993, but it was quickly

3. Remarks by Nancy Soderberg, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and NSC Staff Director, to a conference of the American Bar Association’s Standing Committee on Law and National Security, Dec. 9, 1996, Washington, D.C.

determined that the expanded NSC was too large an entity to work things through. It was better to work through smaller groups with the relevant agencies involved. By contrast, Soderberg noted, in other administrations, there have been 60-70 NSC meetings per year.

Soderberg said that the Principals Committee is where “the broad policy is hammered out, such as our China and Russia policies,” as well as key decisions, such as imposing sanctions on Serbia. Sometimes the Principals Committee can resolve the issues, and sometimes not, Soderberg said; if not, the National Security Adviser will take the matter to the President with a split recommendation, so the President can decide. Some issues are so important, i.e., military deployment, that they must go to the President even if there is agreement.

Soderberg described the Deputies Committee as “the workhorse” of the national security process. Here the tough issues are hashed out.

When *EIR* recently inquired about this, NSC spokesman P.J. Crowley confirmed much of what Soderberg had described in 1996. Crowley repeatedly emphasized to this reporter that this should be looked at as “a process, not as a structure.”

Crowley confirmed that “the NSC, as the NSC, in a formal

way, has met only once” — which involves certain legal requirements, such as the keeping of minutes. But, Crowley took pains to point out that this could be “misleading,” since its members meet in a number of different ways, and often with the President. Crowley also pointed to the “Foreign Policy Team” which meets with the President and the Vice President. Or, he said, the President and the Vice President can drop in on meetings of the Foreign Policy Team or the Principals Committee. For example, Crowley said, this is how the go-ahead was given for Operation Desert Fox (the December air strikes on Iraq).

Crowley also confirmed that Leon Fuerth plays a prominent role on both the Principals Committee and the Deputies Committee.

The unmistakable conclusion is that the President of the United States has been cut out of significant areas of national security decision-making. While the NSC structure (oops, “process”) may have been created as a reflection of the Baby Boomer’s love of endless discussions and consensus decision-making, it has now evolved into an insurrectionary mechanism for by-passing the President altogether, under certain circumstances, e.g., when he is distracted and besieged by contrived scandals and the impeachment assault.

Impeachment trial launched, but Starr is pulling the strings

by Edward Spannaus

As the House Managers commenced their fraudulent and unconstitutional impeachment trial against President Clinton in the U.S. Senate, they immediately began to beat the drums for calling witnesses to bolster their case. But the witnesses they want are not the ones they claim to want: Monica Lewinsky, Vernon Jordan, Betty Currie, and so on. What the House Managers want to do, is to introduce evidence concerning the so-called “Jane Does” — women who surfaced in the Paula Jones civil lawsuit, who were alleged to have had sexual encounters with Bill Clinton at some point over the past 20 years.

Jones’s lawyers conducted a nationwide dragnet looking for such women, as did Kenneth Starr’s prosecutors. And this is what they believe to be their trump card, in what otherwise has begun as a predictable, repetitive, and boring presentation of the “evidence” already paraded in front of the public by independent counsel Starr.

And make no mistake: Despite the fact that the Constitution assigns the responsibility for the impeachment and re-

moval of a President solely to the Congress, Starr is the real prosecutor in the Senate trial.

Who are the ‘Jane Does’?

With the help of the spooky literary agent Lucianne Goldberg and a circle of lawyers associated with Starr, Linda Tripp made her way to Starr’s office with the Monica Lewinsky tapes in early January 1998 — although there are strong indications that Starr’s office was aware of the Tripp tapes long before the date Starr acknowledges. The Tripp tapes provided Starr with his long-sought pretext to take over the Paula Jones “sexual harassment” case, under the guise of investigating possible obstruction of justice by the President and others.

After the Jones suit was filed, at the instigation of British intelligence stringer Ambrose Evans-Pritchard (a correspondent for the London *Sunday Telegraph*), investigators working for Jones’s lawyers had launched a dragnet to find other women who could corroborate Jones’s bogus claim of sexual