

# President Clinton says he defended U.S. Constitution against Starr

by Edward Spannaus

In a Nov. 5 interview with ABC News reporter Carole Simpson, President Bill Clinton said that he did the right thing “to stand and fight for my country and the Constitution and its principles,” during the \$50 million assault on his Presidency. It was the first time since the impeachment that the President has come out swinging, and again defining the impeachment as an attack on the Constitution.

When President Clinton was asked if he had regrets about his Presidency, he answered: “No. I have regrets because I made a personal mistake, but I disagree. I think historians will say that I did the right thing to stand against a tide that would have done permanent and terrible damage to the Constitution and the framework.”

Clinton acknowledged that he had made a personal mistake, but he said that Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr had spent \$50 million “trying to ferret it out and root it out,” and that “all the other charges were totally false — bogus, made up; and people were persecuted because they wouldn’t commit perjury against me. People were indicted because they wouldn’t.

“So I think when historians get a little space, they will say, ‘I don’t know how those people stood up to that, but, boy, I’m glad they did because it preserved the Constitution.’ ”

## Starr is confronted

The day before President Clinton’s interview with ABC, Starr was confronted over his undisclosed conflicts of interest when he took the position as independent counsel in 1994. The exchange took place during what was billed as Starr’s first public speech since resigning in October, in an appearance before a 600-person luncheon meeting of the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce in northern Virginia. The event was broadcast nationally that evening on C-SPAN television.

In the first question following his speech, Starr was questioned about his close friend and former law partner Theodore Olson, who coordinated “get Clinton” operations for billionaire Richard Mellon Scaife. Olson was the lawyer for the American Spectator Education Foundation, and he organized the “Arkansas Project” at a meeting in his office in late 1993, which planned out how to dig up dirt on Bill Clinton. The

“Arkansas Project” was financed by \$2.4 million provided by the British- and U.S.-trained intelligence asset Mellon Scaife.

Olson and his wife Barbara also hosted a series of Friday-night meetings at their Great Falls, Virginia home, comprised of journalists, lawyers, judges, and others who planned out the news media and legal attacks on the President. Starr has never before been publicly asked about those meetings.

## Starr’s ‘lessons’

Starr spent the first five minutes of his Fairfax speech talking about how nice it is to be staying at home, playing “Mr. Mom.” Turning to the theme of his speech, “The Lessons of the Recent Past,” Starr made a number of points. Among these were that the independent counsel law is unworkable, and how the Attorney General had blocked his investigation. Starr’s third point was that “communication is key,” and that he should have been providing the American people with much more information about how his investigation was proceeding. And his fifth and final point was, “Be grateful for your friends,” in which he praised his staff and friends who stood with him while he was under attack.

Immediately after Starr’s speech, *EIR* Law Editor Edward Spannaus walked up to the microphone and said he wanted to ask a question “on the fifth point that Mr. Starr raised — about one’s friends.” The following then transpired, in which Starr notably did not deny any of the allegations about the famous “Olson Salon,” but did deny that he had known about a number of the critical events at the time he was appointed.

**Spannaus:** “I wonder if you could communicate with the American people about one of your friends, who is Ted Olson. Before you were first interviewed to be independent counsel, in January 1994, your close friend and former law partner Theodore Olson was involved in the ‘Arkansas Project,’ with money paid for by Richard Mellon Scaife, attempting to dig up derogatory information on the President of the United States.

“Your best friend, Theodore Olson, was at that point *already* representing David Hale, who became your star witness in the McDougal-Tucker trial.

“Did you disclose the fact that your close friend and for-

mer law partner was already engaged in creating the grounds for what you later did?

“It has also been reported that you were in attendance a number of times at get-togethers on Friday evenings at the home of—[chairman interrupts]—at the home of Theodore Olson and Barbara Olson. This included some of the President’s most virulent adversaries, such as the *Wall Street Journal* Editorial Page editor Robert Bartley, *American Spectator* publisher Emmett Tyrrell, Judge [Robert] Bork, Judge [Laurence] Silberman, the British reporter Ambrose Evans-Pritchard. Were you in attendance at those meetings, which were planning out much of the campaign against the President? And wasn’t this a conflict of interest, that meant you never should have taken this job in the first place?”

### **Starr ducks the question**

Starr gave a rambling and confused answer, that began: “I guess one place is to thank the questioner for his very gracious view that I am imbued with complete knowledge of all those things that, yes, my friends, and I do claim a lot of people, including Ted, as my friends, and in fact, my former law partner.

“But virtually all of—if this will provide any assurances—that you’ve reported—perhaps it won’t—but at least for purposes of responding, briefly, so that perhaps we can have other questions as well.”

Without denying the truth of what Spannaus had said, Starr said that much of this “was completely unknown to me.” But, he went on to say that when allegations were made, especially with respect to David Hale, he had agreed that there should in fact be an independent investigation. “That investigation was done, and it was done under the direction of Michael Shaheen, a resident of Arlington County, and a wonderful career person, who served with great distinction in the Office of Professional Responsibility.” (Of course, what Starr did not mention was that Shaheen had a reputation as “Mr. Cover-Up” during his 27 years as the Justice Department’s internal investigator.)

Shaheen found the allegations regarding David Hale to be “either without foundation in fact, or otherwise not supporting any further action at all,” Starr said, taking advantage of the fact that the details of Shaheen’s investigation have not been made public.

After the question period, Spannaus went up to Starr, and said: “I expected you to cite the Shaheen investigation, but what about the evenings, the Friday night soirés, the Olson Salon—were you there?” Starr demurred, saying that “if this is on the record,” Spannaus should give him a call—which Starr has not yet returned.

### **The ‘rule of law’**

The issue of the impeachment came up again on Nov. 12, when one of the central participants of the “Olson Salon,” former Federal Judge Robert Bork, gave a speech on the “The

Rule of Law” to the annual convention of the Federalist Society in Washington. In contrast to the President’s defense of the Constitution a week earlier, Bork put heavy emphasis on the failed impeachment of President Clinton as a prime example of the breakdown of the “rule of law”—a British-inspired notion which stands in the sharpest opposition to the republican conception of U.S. Constitutional law.

(Bork himself, it is worth noting, had already been a vigorous advocate of the impeachment of President Clinton in late 1997, before the public had ever heard of Monica Lewinsky.)

Bork declared that the rule of law “was born in Europe, and exported to America, and it’s fundamental to Western civilization.” But, he lamented, the rule of law no longer commands much respect, citing the impeachment of the President, in which Bork claimed that “it was indisputable that he had committed high crimes and misdemeanors, but his supporters and I think most of the public said it was ‘just about sex.’”

Bork said that we as a society have grown accustomed to, and have come to expect, nullification of law, at all levels of our legal system. “And now we’ve seen Senate nullification of the law of impeachment.” Bork complimented the House Republicans for displaying “considerable courage” in impeaching the President in the face of hostile polls, but he complained that “the Senate Republicans, though they were sworn to sit as a court, refused even to allow a full and fair trial. In fact, they did great disservice to the rule of law.”

Bork also blamed the failure of the impeachment on “the hate campaign” directed at Ken Starr, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), and the House managers, saying that it was conducted “in order to discredit them and their findings in advance, and it was largely effective.”

Bork was introduced by none other than Theodore Olson, who went into an extended account of how, according to the news media, the Federalist Society had “created Ken Starr,” that it secretly controlled the independent counsel’s investigation, and controlled the court that appointed Starr.

After Bork’s speech, a participant went up to Olson and started joking with him that he had left out the part about his house and “the Friday night parties where everything was planned.”

“That’s the Lyndon LaRouche stuff, that organization,” Olson immediately said. “I read that stuff, and then I hadn’t heard about it for a while.” When his interlocutor mentioned that the *New Yorker* magazine had said the same thing, Olson continued: “They started something, and then the Lyndon LaRouche people have got a thing going. . . . The Lyndon LaRouche people have extrapolated it to this incredible level of, uh, it’s sort of like . . . black helicopters.” Olson did acknowledge that Starr “started his law practice with my law firm, we’ve known one another for a long time.”

Olson’s wife Barbara, by the way, has just published a particularly nasty attack on Hillary Clinton, in a book entitled *Hell to Pay*.