

LaRouche Turns Up the Heat on Cheney's Iraq Intelligence Hoax

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Disgusted after months of vain efforts to find Iraq's so-called "weapons of mass destruction," and the discovery of Vice President Dick Cheney's role in peddling forged documents allowing him to accuse Saddam Hussein of attempting to purchase uranium oxide from the government of Niger, in order to build nuclear bombs, the House and Senate Intelligence Committees both began hearings on June 18, on the intelligence assessments that led into the Iraq War. The Niger forgeries were instrumental in convincing a number of Congressmen to give President George Bush the authorization, last October, to go to war; and now, several Congressional leaders have voiced their anger at having been personally deceived.

The environment is being further heated by the campaign of Democratic Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, and the latest activities of the growing LaRouche Youth Movement, which has become a "fact on the ground" inside the Washington Beltway. LaRouche issued a call for the Vice President to be forced to say "what he knew, and when," in a campaign release now saturating the District of Columbia, as well all state capitals and every major city throughout the country. To date, 1 million copies of the LaRouche in 2004 campaign leaflet, "LaRouche Says: Charges Against Cheney Constitute Grounds for Impeachment," have been put into the hands of lawmakers and citizens alike.

The release quotes LaRouche: "Let there be no mistake about it. The nature of these charges constitutes hard grounds for impeachment. The question has to be taken head on. It is time for Dick Cheney to come clean. I want to know exactly what Dick Cheney knew and when he knew it. The charges are grave and specific and leave no wiggle room. Determining who knew what and when is, at this time, an urgent matter of national security."

The circulation of the LaRouche in 2004 statement, along

with the continuing distribution of the campaign's 40-page *Children of Satan* exposé of the Cheney-Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz cabal behind the Iraq War, has ignited a growing resistance to the war party schemes from a bipartisan group in Congress and in the larger American political institutions, including the U.S. military. The current Congressional hearings, and the separate probe of the Cheney Niger documents hoax by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), headed by former "Bush 41" National Security Advisor Gen. Brent Scowcroft (ret.), all reflect that cumulative impact. To date, over 600,000 copies of the *Children of Satan* dossier have been distributed in the United States, and well-placed Washington sources have told *EIR* that "everyone is reading it. The impact is extraordinary."

The Financial Oligarchy Responds

One measure of the impact of the LaRouche campaign exposé of the network of neo-conservatives, Leo Strauss protégés, and fellow travellers of Israel's right-wing ruling party Likud in and around the Bush Administration, is the spate of hysterical media admissions that LaRouche was the architect of the "Leo-con" revelations. These acknowledgments have come exclusively from the leading U.S. and European *financial* press. On June 16, the *Economist* British weekly ran a wild tirade against LaRouche and *EIR*, for putting in the limelight Leo Strauss's role as the godfather of the neo-cons. The *Economist* wrote, "In March the *Executive Intelligence Review*, an eccentric website run by Lyndon LaRouche, posted a profile of Strauss entitled 'Fascist Godfather of the Neo-Cons.' You might have thought that the article's overheated language and conspiracy-mongering would have killed the argument. But since then a flotilla of respectable publications, from the *New Yorker* to *Le Monde*, have jumped on the bandwagon. Who on Earth was Leo Strauss?"



The LaRouche Youth Movement demonstrates in Los Angeles around LaRouche's statement calling for Cheney's impeachment, part of the nationwide mobilization which has circulated more than one million copies of the statement. With an equal number of Children of Satan campaign pamphlets, the heat is on Cheney's chicken-hawks.

Three days earlier, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, the daily newspaper of the Swiss financier “gnomes,” published their own rant against LaRouche’s damaging and widely adopted exposé of Strauss and the Straussians at the heart of the Bush Administration war-party faction, under the banner headline, “Traditions of Conspiracy in America—Leo Strauss, LaRouche and the Neo-Conservative Cabal.” Like the *Economist*, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* protected Strauss as a misunderstood defender of democracy, under unjust attack because some of his leading disciples now occupy powerful perches in and around the Bush Administration.

The first of the big financial publications to take up LaRouche’s Straussian exposé was the *Wall Street Journal*, which had published a ringing defense of Strauss and the neo-cons on June 9, against LaRouche’s *Children of Satan* exposés, written by the paper’s editorial page editor emeritus, Robert Bartley. To date, the *Journal* has refused to publish LaRouche’s reply to Bartley’s tirade.

The Niger Forgeries

It is in the context of this international furor over the LaRouche-sparked exposés of the Straussian “Ignoble Liars” behind the Iraq War orchestration, that the battle in Washington over the Cheney-led disinformation campaign must be situated and assessed. At the heart of the Cheney piece of the larger scandal over “cooked intelligence” to justify the unjustifiable Iraq War, is the Bush Administration’s repeated use of Niger government documents—which were determined by the CIA to be forgeries—as a core feature of the argument for a preventive war against Iraq. The documents in question were passed on to U.S. intelligence in late 2001,

and by no later than February 2002, *at the request of Vice President Cheney*, the CIA had conducted a thorough probe, and had determined that the documents are shoddy forgeries.

Despite the knowledge that the documents are fake, sources have told EIRNS that the Vice President’s office insisted that the documents be passed on to the UN’s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to buttress the argument that Saddam Hussein was aggressively pursuing nuclear weapons development. IAEA director Dr. Mohammed ElBaradei testified before the United Nations Security Council on March 7, 2003, that the Niger documents had been easily shown to be forgeries, and more broadly, that there was no evidence that Iraq was pursuing nuclear weapons at all in recent years.

Yet, nine days later, Cheney appeared on the Sunday TV talk show “Meet the Press,” to deliver a personal attack against Dr. ElBaradei, and to make the patently false accusation that Saddam Hussein was “in possession” of nuclear arms. Cheney’s March 16 interview on “Meet the Press” was tantamount to an announcement that there was nothing that Saddam Hussein could do to stop the United States from launching the “preventive” war, which, in any case, began three days later.

The Waxman Letters

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) wrote three letters to President Bush and to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, the first on March 17, demanding an explanation for the Administration’s repeated use of the forged documents to stampede Congress, the American people, and the international community, into supporting a preventive war on Iraq.



Vice President Dick Cheney and wife Lynne, at the Air Force Academy graduation ceremonies for the class of 2001. Cheney is at the center of the scandal, in which Administration officials knowingly used cooked intelligence about Iraq's alleged nuclear weapons capabilities to send U.S. troops into war. Now, the members of Congress who were snookered into voting to authorize war, above and against the United Nations, are investigating—as Lyndon LaRouche put it—what did Cheney know and when.

Waxman pointed out that he had voted to grant President Bush authority to go to war against Iraq, largely because he was deeply concerned about the danger of Saddam gaining nuclear weapons.

While Waxman's letter focussed on the President's own reference to the alleged Iraq bomb in his Jan. 28, 2003 State of the Union Address, the Californian highlighted the role of Vice President Cheney in pushing the probe into the Niger documents.

On June 12, the *Washington Post* published a front-page story by Walter Pincus that attempted to control the damage done to Vice President Cheney's plans. The *Post* rescue attempt—which was denounced within 24 hours in news stories ranging from Knight-Ridder and Associated Press, to *Newsday*—claimed that, while the Vice President had requested the CIA probe in early 2002 that ultimately disclosed that fakery behind the Niger documents, he was never informed of the outcome of the CIA investigation. This bogus and cheap effort to deflect the heat away from Cheney fell apart the next day, when Jonathan Landay wrote a Knight-Ridder syndicated story that broke in newspapers all across the United States, citing senior CIA officials who affirmed that the White House had been fully informed by the Central Intelligence Agency of the findings of the Niger document probe, but had gone ahead with the disinformation anyway, to buttress the otherwise-weak argument for war.

After noting that Secretary of State Colin Powell refused to include the Niger material in his Feb. 5, 2003 report to the UN Security Council, Landay reported, "Among the most

vocal proponents of publicizing the alleged Niger connection, two senior officials said, were Cheney and officials in the office of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld." Landay added, "Cheney alleged in an Aug. 26, 2002 speech that Saddam 'has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons,' and this March 16, he went much further, saying, 'We believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons.'" Landay concluded that Cheney knew of the CIA's reservations about the authenticity of the Niger documents, but argued for the promotion of the line that "Saddam has nukes" anyway.

Also on June 13, Nicholas Kristof reported in the *New York Times* that CIA officials had briefed Vice President Cheney's staff on the CIA findings by no later than March 2002—long before Cheney trumpeted his charges about Iraq's possession of nuclear bombs.

Citing the Pincus article of the previous day, Kristof wrote, "Officials now claim that the CIA inexplicably did not report back to the White House with this envoy's findings and reasoning, or with an assessment of its own that the information was false. I hear something different. My understanding is that while Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet may not have told Mr. Bush that the Niger documents were forged, lower CIA officials did tell both the Vice President's office and the National Security Council staff members. Moreover, I hear from another source that the CIA's operations side and its counterterrorism center undertook their own investigations of the documents, poking around in Italy and Africa, and also concluded that they were false—a judgment that filtered to the top of the CIA. Meanwhile, the State De-

partment's intelligence arm, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, independently came to the exact same conclusion about those documents, according to Greg Thielmann, a former official there."

Kristof's conclusion matched observations by candidate LaRouche: "I don't believe that the President deliberately lied to the public in an attempt to scare Americans into supporting his war. But it does look as if ideologues in the Administration deceived themselves about Iraq's nuclear program—and then deceived the American public as well."

The same day, the *New York Times* editors, also mirroring Lyndon LaRouche's earlier call, editorialized about "The Vanishing Uranium," noting, "President Bush cannot be pleased to know that his State of the Union address last January included an ominous report about Iraq that turns out to have been based on forged documents. The incident is an embarrassment for Mr. Bush and the nation, and he should now be leaning on his aides to explain how they let fabricated information about Iraq's nuclear weapons program slip into his speech. The answer might help explain whether Washington deliberately distorted intelligence to rally the nation for the war against Iraq."

The next day, Knut Royce wrote in *Newsday* that the CIA had produced a "National Intelligence Estimate" in October 2002, repudiating the charges that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons. He also reported, based on his own discussions with high-level intelligence sources, that "months before President George W. Bush asserted in his Jan. 28 State of the Union speech that Iraq had been shopping in Africa for uranium to build nuclear bombs, the CIA told the White House it had 'serious questions' about key intelligence behind the claim." He added, "The CIA repeated its reservations—about purported deals by Iraq to buy uranium oxide from Niger—in a classified National Intelligence Estimate distributed to the White House and other agencies in October, the official said. He said the State Department, in the report, asserted 'even more firmly' than the CIA that there were serious questions about the intelligence claims."

What Role Did Bolton Play?

The fact that the State Department's intelligence arm shared the CIA's skepticism about the Niger documents in the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate, raises another question about the forgery scandal. On Dec. 19, 2002, the State Department issued a fact sheet, in response to the Iraqi government's 25,000-page submission to the UN Security Council, accounting for their entire weapons program. The State Department fact sheet directly cited the Niger "yellow cake" deals as proof that Saddam Hussein was lying to the UN. How did the State Department fact sheet get the facts so wrong? According to one well-placed career foreign service officer at Foggy Bottom, the inclusion of the Niger allegation was likely the work of John Bolton, who is the State Depart-



The late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) on the re-election stump (against a LaRouche Democrat) in 1982. Moynihan's legacy in the Democratic Party—the Democratic Leadership Council—is today a "protection racket" for Cheney's Republican chicken-hawks, who include some of his protegés.

ment's chief arms control official. Bolton's deputy is David Wurmser, and both men are among the leading neo-con moles inside State.

Bolton and Wurmser came to the State Department from the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), the "war-party" hotbed, which currently houses Michael Ledeen, Richard Perle, and William Kristol. In July 1996, Wurmser, along with Perle and Assistant Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith, co-authored "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," a report prepared for then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which spelled out a strategy for abrogating the Oslo Accords, overthrowing every pro-Western Arab government, and expelling *en masse* the 3 million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, prior to annexing them. The trigger for the "Clean Break" scheme was the U.S. invasion and overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Clearly, Bolton and Wurmser are two more Bush Admin-

istration officials—like Vice President Cheney—who need to be hauled before the relevant Congressional bodies, as well as the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, to say—under oath—what they knew, and when.

And Back In the Pentagon Basement . . .

Even as attention is properly focussed on the Vice President, other officials have some serious explaining to do. The center of the Pentagon’s “Big Lie” program, to get Congressional and public support for the Iraq War, was the little-known Office of Special Plans, a civilian Pentagon unit headed by William Luti. OSP, according to news accounts and Pentagon admissions, hired Abram Shulsky, a protégé of both Leo Strauss and Iran-Contra criminal Roy Godson, shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, to assemble a small team of intelligence analysts, to conduct an “independent” review of the masses of intelligence data coming into the Pentagon, the CIA, the State Department, and the National Security Agency (NSA), on Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program and his links to the al-Qaeda terrorists, who purportedly carried out the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center.

Among the other individuals who reportedly worked with Shulsky on the intelligence analysis were: Kenneth de Graffenreid, another Iran-Contra player, who served on the Reagan-Bush Administration National Security Council; Harold Rhode, a longtime collaborator of British intelligence Arab Bureau spook and “Clash of Civilizations” inventor Bernard Lewis, who has been described as the chief advisor to Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz on “the Islamic world”; and Roy Godson, who is a consultant to the super-secret unit.

The Shulsky-Luti team did not just pore over CIA, DIA and NSA “raw” data. They actually functioned as a pipeline—between Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmed Chalabi, pro-Ariel Sharon Israeli intelligence circles, and other sources of outright disinformation and uncorroborated gossip—and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. According to sources in and around the Bush Administration, Rumsfeld, in turn, used the bogus data to challenge the collective assessments of the mainstream U.S. intelligence agencies. Rumsfeld’s personal access to President Bush, and his own willingness to buy the cooked intelligence, and to wage a campaign to discredit the entire U.S. intelligence and military establishment, who were challenging the reliability of the data suggesting the Iraqi WMD schemes and the al-Qaeda links, eventually convinced the President that the grounds existed to go to war—without UN approval.

The Democratic ‘Trojan Horse’

According to one senior U.S. intelligence source, the main reason that the Shulsky-Luti gang at the Pentagon have not been hauled before Congressional committees, to give their own accounting of what they knew, and when, about the falsi-

fication of intelligence, is that they are being protected by a grouping within the Democratic Party: the Democratic Leadership Council. According to the source, a number of leaders of the DLC have personal ties to the Pentagon “spinmeisters,” and have pressed members of the Democratic House and Senate committees to back off from pushing a probe into the Office of Special Plans.

These reports are credible, given that Shulsky started his career on Capitol Hill as a top aide to Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), who, along with Sen. Henry “Scoop” Jackson (D-Wash.), was the promoter of the neo-conservative apparatus, and the inspiration for launching the DLC. Moynihan, a Democrat in Richard Nixon’s Administration, was convinced to run—as a Democrat—for the U.S. Senate by two top Republican moneybags: Max Fisher, the former Purple Gang bootlegger from Detroit, and Washington fixer and former Nixon attorney Leonard Garment. Garment’s law firm protégé, Irving Lewis Libby, is now Dick Cheney’s chief of staff and chief national security deputy.

Once in office, Moynihan not only hired Shulsky, he also brought in Elliott Abrams, now the director of Middle East policy at the Bush National Security Council, and Gary Schmitt, the head of the William Kristol-founded Project for the New American Century, one of the most rabid of the war-party groups. Shulsky and Schmitt were both University of Chicago students of Leo Strauss. Abrams, Shulsky, and Schmitt migrated, along with the majority of neo-conservatives, into the Republican Party, following Ronald Reagan’s 1980 election. The neo-cons who stayed behind inside the Democratic Party formed the core of the DLC in the mid-1980s.

Lyndon LaRouche has damned the DLC as a “right-wing Trojan Horse” dedicated to the destruction of the Democratic Party, and to securing the 2004 re-election of Republican George W. Bush. The DLC’s role in sabotaging a serious Democratic intervention to force Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Shulsky, Wolfowitz, Feith, et al., to answer the tough questions that a patriotic bipartisan grouping within the Congress must ask, is treachery, plain and simple.

With the momentum now building for a serious probe into the entire sordid intelligence faking, the DLC’s effectiveness, in sabotaging a bipartisan effort to clean out the garbage from inside the Bush national security team, is rapidly coming to an end.

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