

LaRouche Targets Cheney's 'Impeachable Offenses'

by Jeffrey Steinberg

In campaign interviews in Missouri and Delaware, during the first week of February, Democratic Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche accused Vice President Dick Cheney of "impeachable crimes." He identified Cheney's ouster from office as a precondition for restoring America's shattered relations with the rest of the world, and for preventing an otherwise imminent plunge into global wars and chaos under the "Cheney Doctrine" of preventive nuclear war.

LaRouche cited Cheney's now-widely-exposed lies about Iraq's so-called weapons of mass destruction, in the run-up to the March 2003 U.S. invasion, and labelled as a violation of the postwar Nuremberg Charter, the Vice President's long-standing commitment—dating back to his tenure as Secretary of Defense under George Bush the elder—to preventive nuclear war.

In an op-ed published Feb. 1 in the *Delaware News Journal*, LaRouche wrote, "Since Dick Cheney's conclusion of his term as Secretary of Defense under President George H.W. Bush, the current Vice President has been committed to a doctrine of preventive nuclear warfare. Although his policy was rejected by the first Bush Administration at that time, Cheney has nursed that policy during the years since. In the aftermath of the events of Sept. 11, 2001, Vice President Cheney has foisted that policy on the Administration of President George W. Bush, and has employed impeachable acts of fraud to bring about the invasion of Iraq as a step of implementation of his war policy."

LaRouche concluded, "Cheney's overreaching influence over the current Administration has led to a ruin of our republic's relations with Europe and other parts of the world. Cheney's Svengali-like influence over the President is therefore the leading threat to our national security today."

LaRouche has been in the forefront of the drive to oust Vice President Cheney and his entire neo-con war party from the Bush Administration since August 2002, when he first

publicly demanded Cheney's removal from office. But, in the wake of President Bush's disastrous 2004 State of the Union address and the subsequent revelations by chief CIA weapons inspector Dr. David Kay, a chorus of leading Democrats and media analysts have joined in demanding Cheney be brought to account.

Other Voices

By Feb. 1, the impact of David Kay's admission that there were no weapons of mass destruction to be found in Iraq, had forced President Bush to accept the idea that an independent bipartisan commission had to be established to probe the intelligence gap. Rather than allow the U.S. Congress to legislate such a commission and set the ground rules and membership, the President announced that he would issue an Executive Order, creating the body—which is not expected to issue its findings until after the November 2004 elections.

Leading Congressional Democrats, including Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (S.D.), Senate intelligence panel co-chair Jay Rockefeller (W.Va.), and ranking Senate Armed Services Committee Democrat Carl Levin (Mich.), praised Bush's decision, but warned that Congress must play a vital role in setting the ground rules. Senator Rockefeller, in particular, insisted that the mandate must include a thorough probe of White House policymakers' abuse of the pre-war intelligence, citing Cheney's over-the-top statements about the "imminent" threat Saddam Hussein posed to U.S. security; the Vice President's visits to CIA headquarters; and other pressures brought to bear on analysts to deliver intelligence fitting his predetermined war plans.

Cheney's persistent pre-war talk of the "imminent threat" from Saddam received a further blow on Feb. 5, when the Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, delivered a speech at Georgetown University, in which he stated, unequivocally, that the intelligence community had told the

Bush White House that there never was an “imminent threat” from Saddam Hussein.

Referring to the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction program, Tenet told the audience, “This estimate asked if Iraq had chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. We concluded that in some of these categories, Iraq had weapons, and that in others, where it did not have them, it was trying to develop them. . . . Analysts differed on several important aspects of these programs, and those debates were spelled out in the estimate. They never said there was an imminent threat.”

As *EIR* reported on March 28, 2003, under the Nuremberg Charter, the United Nations Charter, and the United Nations General Assembly “Definition of Aggression” of 1974, the U.S. invasion constituted a crime against humanity—a war of aggression—in that there was no “imminent threat” to justify it. *EIR* quoted the American representative to the UN, Warren R. Austin, who declared on Oct. 30, 1946, that the UN Charter, promoted and endorsed by the United States, “makes planning or waging a war of aggression a crime against humanity for which individuals as well as nations can be brought before the bar of international justice, tried, and punished.”

Among the issues raised in the national media, in the wake of the Kay testimony, was the role of Cheney and his chief of staff Lewis Libby in the drafting of Secretary of State Colin Powell’s United Nations Security Council testimony of Feb. 5, 2003, making the case for war. According to accounts published Feb. 1 in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, and Feb. 3 in a Knight Ridder wire story, Libby oversaw the preparation of draft testimony that was so full of false and exaggerated charges about Iraq’s WMD and Saddam’s ties to al-Qaeda, that Powell trashed almost the entire document, in consultation with analysts at the CIA.

Despite this vetting, Powell’s UN Security Council address still contained dozens of “facts” that have now proven to be wrong.

Cheney Damage Control

Sources close to the Bush Administration report that Cheney moved to cover up the David Kay revelations by promoting the “independent commission” with key Congressional Republicans, even before the President’s decision to issue an Executive Order. The sources say that Cheney is growing more and more desperate over the ongoing grand jury probe of the Valerie Plame leak, which is in the hands of hard-nosed Federal prosecutors who will not, he fears, bend to White House pressure. Cheney fears these prosecutors won’t be party to a cover-up of his own role, and those of Libby and John Hannah, another key aide to the Vice President who is widely suspected of involvement in the identification, to columnist Robert Novak, of Plame, the wife of ex-Ambassador Joseph Wilson, as an undercover CIA officer. These sources say Cheney is scrambling to keep his spot on the re-

election ticket, and sought to blunt the momentum of the WMD intelligence scandal through the independent commission.

But on Feb. 5, Cheney took another hit, when the normally neo-con-friendly *Insight* magazine of the *Washington Times* prominently ran a UPI wire by senior correspondent Richard Sale, naming Libby and Hannah as the prime suspects in the Valerie Plame leak. Sale wrote, “Federal law-enforcement officials said that they have developed hard evidence of possible criminal misconduct of two employees of Vice President Dick Cheney’s office related to the unlawful exposure of a CIA officer’s identity last year. The investigation, which is continuing, could lead to indictments, a Justice Department official said. According to these sources, John Hannah and [Libby] were the two Cheney employees.”

Sale quoted a Federal law-enforcement official, who stated, “We believe that Hannah was the major player in this.” Sale added, “The strategy of the FBI is to make clear to Hannah ‘that he faces a real possibility of doing jail time’ as a way to pressure him to name superiors, one Federal law-enforcement official said.”

Hannah is actually Libby’s chief deputy. He came to the Vice President’s office from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), the think-tank spawn of the official Israeli lobby in the United States, AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee). He was WINEP’s Vice President. Libby, a protégé of Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, served under Cheney at the Defense Department in the Bush “41” Administration. While out of government, Libby was the attorney for Israeli/Russian Mafiya figure Marc Rich, and protégé of Washington lawyer Leonard Garment.

Cheney’s damage-control scheme suffered another setback when British Prime Minister Tony Blair, facing massive backlash after the Hutton Commission covered up similar intelligence fakery in Britain, agreed to create his own, parallel independent commission, to probe British pre-war intelligence (see *International*). The British report will be issued during the U.S. Presidential election campaign and could trigger a trans-Atlantic “whipsaw” of damning revelations.

With Democratic Presidential candidates LaRouche and John Kerry both hammering away at Cheney, the Vice President’s status as an albatross could prove too much for Karl Rove, Bush’s re-election strategist, to stomach. To make matters worse for the Vice President, the Feb. 6 issue of *EIR*, now widely circulating in Washington and in world capitals, featured a 22-page cover story on the growing bill of impeachment against Cheney. The story included an inventory of a dozen different probes of Cheney—from the Plame leak, to the WMD hoax, to his secret energy taskforce, to the corruption of Halliburton.

On Feb. 5, AP reported that the Department of Justice has opened yet another criminal probe of Halliburton, centered on \$180 million in bribes paid to Nigerian officials, to secure a natural gas concession. The bribes occurred while Cheney was Halliburton’s CEO.