

9/11 Commission Findings Affirm Key LaRouche Assessments

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On June 16-17, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, otherwise known as the Kean-Hamilton “9/11 Commission,” held its final two days of public hearings, prior to releasing its final report some time late in July. As part of this 12th public hearing, the Commission released three additional staff reports, dealing with the history of al-Qaeda; the details of the 9/11 plot, largely as told by two plotters in U.S. custody, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi Binalshibh; and the U.S. government responses—including the role of Vice President Dick Cheney—as the hijackings and attacks were playing out on Sept. 11, 2001.

While the staff reports, the witness statements, and the hearing proceedings have still left many questions unanswered, and do not represent a conclusive finding, there are certain facts that have been made clear, that correspond precisely to Lyndon LaRouche’s assessments of the roots of the 9/11 plot, from the time of his two hours of running commentaries on the Jack Stockwell radio show in Utah on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, through to the present. It is not likely that these facts will change with new revelations.

On June 19, LaRouche commissioned the publication of a timeline, to put certain fundamentals of the case on the table now. Given that the 9/11 issue will be a major factor in the November Presidential elections, and that LaRouche has been the clearest voice on the issue of modern irregular warfare, from long before the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, it is timely for this information to be put in circulation by *EIR* at this moment.

Highlights

Certain findings can be highlighted, to flesh out the timeline that immediately follows.

First, during the early months of the Bush Administration, there were numerous public warnings that the United States homeland was highly vulnerable to a sophisticated terrorist attack, and that such a catastrophic attack was virtually inevitable unless effective measures were taken. Two blue ribbon commissions, the Bremer Commission and the Hart-Rudman Commission, delivered detailed reports, itemizing America’s deep vulnerability to mass-casualty terrorist attack, and made

specific recommendations for emergency remedial action. The Hart-Rudman Commission called for the incoming Bush Administration to create a Department of Homeland Security immediately, to address threats to the American population, and to the country’s vital infrastructure.

Second, Vice President Dick Cheney and the Bush Administration not only ignored the Hart-Rudman recommendations, and growing warnings from the FBI and the CIA of a looming al-Qaeda terrorist attack inside the U.S.A.; Cheney was also pivotal in the actual sabotage of any response to the growing threat level.

Third, prior to the attacks of 9/11, the evidence of a major terrorist destabilization was clear. On Aug. 24, 2001, Lyndon LaRouche issued a mass-circulation leaflet, warning of a major terrorist attack on Washington, D.C. during September 2001. When the 9/11 attacks occurred, LaRouche was being interviewed by radio host Jack Stockwell in Salt Lake City, Utah.

LaRouche’s running commentary as the events of 9/11 were unfolding still stands the test of time. LaRouche stated that the sophisticated attacks of that morning could not have occurred without one of two contributing factors: Either there was high-level “covert black operations” involvement from contaminated elements inside the U.S. national security command, or the entire system of U.S. internal security, aimed at preventing such attacks, had been taken down, to such a degree that the system was, in effect, ripe for such an irregular warfare attack.

LaRouche told Stockwell’s audience: “This is a very systematic operation. If they’re snatching planes . . . if all three of these planes—the two we have from New York and this thing on the Pentagon—to get that kind of thing, to snatch planes like that, that’s a pretty sophisticated operation. The question is, where were the relevant intelligence agencies which are in charge of monitoring this problem? Now, I’ve been putting this out for some time—not this, I didn’t know this airplane thing, but I assumed almost anything could happen . . . but on the Washington, D.C. targetting. So obviously, the Pentagon means that this is obviously, clearly a Washington, D.C. targetting. This is obviously intended to imply

something coming out of the Middle East. This means that there's been some kind of either incompetence or fix on the whole security operation, because you *can't* get this kind of thing without a real goof-up, on the security side. So somebody in charge of security was really not very effectively in charge."

Subsequent reports by the 9/11 Commission document other statements that further corroborated LaRouche's warnings of a major attack inside the U.S.A. During the Spring and early Summer of 2001, both the CIA and the FBI had repeatedly informed President Bush and Vice President Cheney of evidence that a major terrorist attack inside the continental U.S.A. was being planned. This led, ultimately, to an Aug. 6, 2001 President's Daily Briefing lead item, summarizing the evidence of an imminent threat of attack by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization, an organization that LaRouche had already identified as a controlled entity, an outgrowth of Zbigniew Brzezinski's, Bernard Lewis's, and George H.W. Bush's 1980s Afghanistan mujahideen project, which was intended to drive the Soviet Army out of Afghanistan through the buildup of a U.S., British, French, and Israeli-sponsored "Jihad" operation, partly financed by the proceeds of the Golden Crescent opium and heroin trade, run through Pakistani intelligence cut-outs, working under Anglo-American supervision.

According to the testimony of former National Security Council counter-terrorism czar Richard Clarke, despite all of these warnings, Vice President Cheney and Attorney General John Ashcroft, in particular, sabotaged every effort by senior national security personnel to take the necessary measures to prevent the attack.

Timeline of Key Events

The following timeline is based on LaRouche in 2004 campaign and *EIR* research, as well as the staff findings and public hearing transcripts and written testimony before the 9/11 Commission, and other official sources.

June 7, 2000: The National Commission on Terrorism, chaired by Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III (now viceroy in Iraq), issued its final report, warning that the United States homeland is vulnerable to a major terrorist attack. The report outlined measures to be taken to deal with the vulnerability.

Jan. 31, 2001: Just weeks after President Bush took office, the Hart-Rudman Commission report, "Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change," was delivered personally to the President. The report makes several recommendations, including the immediate creation of a National Homeland Security Agency, with a Cabinet-level director, to consolidate and upgrade the preparedness for a major attack on the American homeland, which, the Commission insisted, was inevitable, given the threats to the United States, and the level of vulnerability.

April 2001: The Hart-Rudman Report had been delivered to every member of the U.S. Congress, and bipartisan legisla-

tion to create such a National Homeland Security Agency is introduced.

May 5, 2001: In an April 2, 2004 article in *Salon* magazine, former Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo.), co-chair of the Commission, described what happened next: "Then as Congress started to move on this, and the heat was turned up, George Bush—and this is often overlooked—held a press conference or made a public statement on May 5, 2001, calling on Congress *not* to act and saying he was turning over the whole matter to Dick Cheney. So this wasn't just neglect. It was an active position by the Administration. He said, 'I don't want Congress to do anything until the Vice President advises me.' We now know from Dick Clarke that Cheney never held a meeting on terrorism, there was never any kind of discussion on the Department of Homeland Security that we had proposed. There was no Vice Presidential action on this matter."

Aug. 6, 2001: A leading item in President Bush's President's Daily Briefing (PDB), titled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S.," summarized evidence, accumulated over the previous several months, of an imminent al-Qaeda terrorist attack inside the United States. The report cited over 70 ongoing FBI investigations into possible al-Qaeda operations, including reports of surveillance of the Federal Building in lower Manhattan. Later news coverage revealed that the CIA and FBI put the report together, out of concern that the Bush Administration was ignoring warnings of a terrorist attack. At the time he received the PDB, citing the al-Qaeda attack warnings, President Bush was beginning a month-long vacation at his Texas ranch.

In his book-length account of his years as a top National Security Council counter-terrorism official, Richard Clarke reported on his own experience with Bush-Cheney Administration disinterest in dealing with the terrorist threats. In April 2004 testimony before the 9/11 Commission, Clarke further identified Cheney and Attorney General Ashcroft as two of the leading obstructionists.

Aug. 24, 2001: Lyndon LaRouche issued a campaign statement, "Jacobin Terror Aims at D.C.," forecasting major terrorist attacks on the nation's capital in September, to coincide with planned "anti-globalization" demonstrations at the annual International Monetary Fund-World Bank meeting. Over a million copies of the statement were in circulation around the United States by Sept. 11.

Sept. 11, 2001: Hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon. A fourth hijacked plane crashes in western Pennsylvania.

LaRouche appeared, live, on the Jack Stockwell radio show in Salt Lake City, Utah, between 9:00-11:00 a.m. (EDT), as the events were unfolding. He warned that the Administration would rush to blame the attacks on Osama bin Laden, called on President Bush to remain calm, and seek the assistance of Russia's President Putin and other world leaders, rather than rushing into frantic unilateral action.