

Editorial

The Senate's Next Step

On May 23, the controlling majority of the United States Senate struck a blow for the Constitution, by defeating Vice President Dick Cheney's threat to carry out a coup d'état through the so-called "nuclear option" to block the filibuster of judicial nominees. Republicans and Democrats, led by the more senior members of the Senate, decided that the Senate's Constitutionally defined powers of "advice and consent" had to be preserved, and they acted, in the words of Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.V.), to "keep the Republic."

So far, this action has held. But there is no question but that Cheney, Karl Rove, and the synarchist bankers who give them their orders, are already chomping at the bit, just looking for a new opportunity when they can impose their imperial Presidential will, and turn the entire U.S. Congress, as well as the judiciary, into a rubberstamp. Until the Cheney-Bush crew is removed, there is a constant danger of another coup attempt.

Lyndon LaRouche has argued vigorously for the Senate to follow up its crucial May 23 victory, by taking the urgently needed steps in the area of economic policy. The Senate is going to have to take the lead, LaRouche has said, in putting forward the policies of strategic bankruptcy, and state credit-funded reindustrialization, that are required in order to save the U.S. and world economy from impending disaster. The leading Democrat and world-renowned economist has devoted considerable energy to discussions with Senators on the crucial conceptions they need to carry out this task.

So far, the Senators have not taken up the positive proposals which LaRouche has put on the table. But, they have continued to assert their Constitutional prerogatives.

The first instance was that of the Bush-Cheney behavior on the matter of John Bolton, the nominee for UN Ambassador. Democrats first, and then some Republican Senators, drew the line on Bolton according to Constitutional principle, by demanding that the White House provide them with the documents they need in order to evaluate his record. The issue, said Senators like Democratic Leader Harry Reid (Nev.), is the right of the Senate to exercise its independent judgment of

advice and consent, as defined in the Constitution.

The second such instance occurred on June 28, when, according to *The Hill* newspaper of June 30, the three Republican Senators with the strongest military credentials held a meeting, and directed their staffs to draw up legislation on guidelines for detention, trials, and interrogation of military detainees in the so-called "war on terrorism." According to John Warner (R-Va.), chairman of the Senate Armed Service Committee, who was joined by John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Lindsey Graham (R-N.C.), the objective would be to establish "a set of provisions to try and make sure we don't see a repetition of what occurred these last several years," in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo.

According to the White House and Pentagon, of course, Congress should have nothing to do with these issues, which Cheney has declared to be non-issues. But the Senators, who all have a military background and understand how damaging the U.S. mistreatment of prisoners has been to the U.S. reputation, are, in fact, acting in accord with the powers that have been specifically delegated to Congress under the U.S. Constitution: Article 1, Section 8, the power to "declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water," and "to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces."

Once again, the issue between Congress and the Administration, should it arise, will be one of the form of government provided by the Constitution. And it will be up to the Senate to reassert the principles to which our republic must adhere.

As of this writing, it appears there will be a third test of the Constitutional powers of the Senate as well, that of confirming a Supreme Court nominee to replace the retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Will the Senate again muster the courage to defeat the would-be dictators in the White House, until we have taken our country back for the Constitutional principle of the general welfare? That's a question that you, dear reader, must not only pay attention to, but act to determine the answer to, in the immediate days ahead.