

A book they tried to burn is back to haunt George 'Dubya' Bush

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Of all of the thug tactics used by George W. Bush and the “Bush family machine” to secure his now-suddenly-doubtful drive to secure the year 2000 Republican Presidential nomination, none yet surpasses the suppression of J.H. Hatfield’s unauthorized biography of the Texas Governor, *Fortunate Son*. When the book was released by St. Martins Press last year, the Bush crowd went berserk over a few brief pages in the book’s Afterword, which charged that a 30ish George W. Bush had been busted for cocaine possession in 1972, but had the charges erased from the records, courtesy of some powerful “Friends of Daddy Bush.”

Author Hatfield found three former “Dubya” intimates who verified the cocaine bust story, after he did a bit of snooping of his own, and came up with a lead on Bush’s community service, that had been missed by the small army of reporters who had been tracking down various rumors that George W. had had a run-in with the law, involving illegal drugs.

While the details of what transpired “behind the curtain,” after the book’s allegations became a minor news sensation, are not known to this reviewer, what is known is that St. Martins Press recalled copies of the book, under the shoddiest of pretexts, and proceeded to transform them immediately into charcoal.

What is delicious about this story, is that the Bush thugery not only failed, but it is now about to backfire on the Governor and the entire Bush clan—at the very moment that “Dubya” and company are reeling from the resounding “no” that was delivered by the voters of New Hampshire to that “Son of a Bush.”

In mid-January, Soft Skull Press, a New York City publishing house, re-issued the banned Hatfield book—with a new introduction by Texas journalist Toby Rogers and Soft Skull editor Nick Mamatas, which will only serve to drive Dubya, his family, and friends further up the wall.

It seems that back in 1998, while he was working as a reporter for Houston Public News, Rogers interviewed Michael C. Dannenhauer, former President George Bush’s Chief of Staff. In a moment of candor, according to Rogers’s account, Dannenhauer admitted that George W. Bush “was out of control since college. There was cocaine use, lots of

women, but the drinking was the worst.” According to Rogers, Dannenhauer stated that Dubya’s cocaine use started “sometime before 1977,” and that the former President had confided to him that his son had experienced some “lost weekends in Mexico.”

Dannenhauer, confronted with the quotes from his 1998 interview with Rogers, practically jumped out of his skin to deny that the encounter had ever taken place—a replica of the George W. Bush response to the original cocaine arrest allegations.

Dannenhauer abruptly changed his tune when he was presented with a photograph of himself with interviewer Rogers. According to the introduction to the Soft Skull edition, Dannenhauer next went into a babble of sentence fragments that made former President Bush, the fabled king of the fractured sentence fragment, appear positively Shakespearean in contrast. “Wait, I’m quoted as saying that George . . . that I said . . . I know no background. We just met for lunch. I’m drawing a blank. I met him when he was not . . . he was working for a local paper. I don’t even remember the name of the . . . it wasn’t even a . . . it is not one of the major . . . I can’t remember the name. . . . I don’t remember the name. I don’t know what you would call it. Or what it was. I would say I’m limited in my knowledge . . . but that is a total lie.”

This author is in no position to verify the 1972 George W. Bush cocaine bust claims, or the existence of the three unnamed sources cited by Hatfield in the Afterword. Soft Skull Press posted a series of “Frequently Asked Questions” about the Hatfield book on its website, which noted that Hatfield “has adequately proven to us that these sources exist.”

What has been verified by this reviewer and by *EIR*’s historians, is that another Bush family skeleton, dragged back out of the closet in the new Introduction by Rogers and Mamatas, is absolutely the real thing.

The Introduction cited granddaddy Prescott Bush’s role in bankrolling Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party into power. Those charges were first given prominence in the 1992 underground bestseller *George Bush: The Unauthorized Biography* (Washington, D.C.: Executive Intelligence Review, 1992),

by Anton Chaitkin and Webster Tarpley. While the Hatfield book Introduction did not cite the original *EIR* exposé, the facts presented were consistent with the earlier Chaitkin-Tarpley revelations

“Prescott Bush,” Rogers and Mamatas reported, “the father of the former President and the grandfather of the current candidate, spent more than a decade helping his father-in-law George Herbert Walker finance Adolf Hitler from the Wall Street bank, Union Banking Corporation. Walker was one of Hitler’s most powerful supporters in the United States, and landed Prescott Bush a job as a director at the firm. . . . In 1934, a congressional investigation believed that Walker’s Hamburg-American Line subsidized a wide range of pro-Nazi efforts in both Germany and the United States. One of Walker’s employees, Dan Harkins, delivered testimony to Congressional leaders regarding Walker’s Nazi sympathies and business transactions.”

The Introduction continued, “According to U.S. Government Vesting Order No. 248, many of Union Banking’s assets had been operated on behalf of Nazi Germany and had been used to support the German war effort. The U.S. Alien Property Custodian vested the Union Banking Corp.’s stock shares and also issued two other Vesting Orders (nos. 259 and 261) to seize two other Nazi-influenced organizations managed by Bush’s bank: Holland American Trading Corporation and Seamless Equipment Corporation. Many major firms had dealings with Nazis in the years leading up to World War II, but relatively few engaged in such extended cooperation with Hitler’s Germany after Pearl Harbor.” The authors noted, in a footnote, that “Union Banking Corp. was eventually seized under the Trading With the Enemy Act.”

Dubya loves those Confederate ladies

Rogers and Mamatas noted that daddy Bush and “Dubya,” in their own modest fashion, carried on the family tradition of associating with and boosting some rather alien characters. Former President Bush, as *EIR* has also reported, has become one of the biggest promoters of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, travelling to the far corners of Asia and South America to appear with the Reverend and his wife, and to boost “the man with the vision,” as Bush calls him, as America’s moral savior. In return, Moon has funnelled millions of dollars into Bush family pockets. He has given a million dollars to the Bush Presidential Library, and each overseas junket by the ex-President has produced honoraria well into the six figures. How much of that now constitutes “soft money” in Dubya’s Presidential campaign coffers is anyone’s guess.

The authors had this to say about Texas Gov. George W. Bush and his love of all things Confederate: “Let’s examine his association with the neo-Confederate group, the United Daughters of the Confederacy,” Rogers and Mametas said. “The UDC operates as a cultural heritage organization and erects monuments to honor Confederate soldiers across the South. The UDC proudly displays Confederate flags on the

cover of its magazine and is closely tied to the far right. One of the darlings of the neo-Confederate movement is Michael Andrew Grissom. Grissom is a member of the national advisory board of the white supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens, a group which claims that Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Communist and that whites are superior to blacks in such traits as ‘intelligence, law abidingness, sexual restraint, academic performance and resistance to disease.’ ” An avid defender of the Ku Klux Klan as a “legitimate” expression of Southernness, Grissom has been a close collaborator of the UDC in a variety of battlefield monument projects. Despite all of this, Rogers and Mametas pointed out that, in December 1996, the UDC published a letter from Gov. George W. Bush, praising them for their “dedication to others” and their “high standards.”

With the reissuing of the Hatfield book, all of these sparkling revelations about “those incredible Bush boys” can be expected to gain a wide airing. As of this writing, Soft Skull Press has reported that 28,000 copies have been pre-ordered, of an initial run of 45,000. Furthermore, Hatfield is scheduled to be interviewed on CBS’s TV news magazine show “Sixty Minutes,” on Feb. 13, at which point the whole “Bush family values” issue could be catapulted back into the national news headlines.

The Hatfield book

As for the Hatfield unauthorized biography, the best thing that can be said by this reviewer is: Read it. Despite the efforts of the Bush machine to trash the book, and the author, the fact is, J.H. Hatfield did a commendable job of assembling a detailed biography of a would-be American President, based on scores of interviews and a thorough review of the public record. In fact, while Hatfield comes down as a critic of the Bush record on a wide range of policy issues — from his fanatical support for the death penalty, to his wrecking of the Texas welfare system — on balance, Hatfield presents a fair, and not-always-unsympathetic portrait of the fortunate son of a powerful American dynasty-in-the-making.

Indeed, subsequent reviews of the fast-and-loose business practices of Dubya and his daddy have turned up far more evidence of outright criminality than Hatfield unearthed in time to meet his publication deadline.

It is for this reason that the single most damning revelation to spring from the Hatfield project was not the allegation of the early 1970s cocaine arrest. Rather, it was the Bush reaction to the original publication of *Fortunate Son* by St. Martins Press. The idea that Dubya and family would pitch a collective fit and force a mid-size publishing house to revive the ancient tradition of book-burning, is scary, and should give Americans good reason to send Dubya packing. Such behavior has no place in the White House.

Fortunate Son has been republished by Soft Skull Press, Inc., New York City.