

The Clintons Part Company with Gore over 'New Violence'

by Jeffrey Steinberg

A dramatic and public rift has erupted between the Clintons and Vice President Al Gore over the issue of what Lyndon LaRouche has called the "new violence." This rift could have dramatic implications for the ongoing Presidential contest, as well as for how President Clinton handles the final four months of his Presidency.

It also places the issue of the "new violence" squarely in the middle of the national political debate, just as LaRouche demanded, on June 11, 1999, when he wrote, in an *EIR Feature* entitled "Star Wars and Littleton": "If what is known popularly as 'Hollywood' continues with the genre of so-called popular entertainment typified by the *Star Wars* series, there will be an increasing frequency of similar incidents of lunatic outbreaks, as bad as, or worse than Littleton. Unless the U.S. government, and many relevant other influentials, change their view of this problem, abandoning the useless approach they have publicized thus far, the horror will continue, gun laws or no gun laws. Unless relevant institutions get down to the serious business of addressing the actual causes for this pattern of incidents, this murderous rampage will persist, whether or not guns were legally sold to adolescents, or whether or not the producers and distributors of cult-films and Nintendo-style video games intend that specific effect."

LaRouche concluded his warning: "To grasp the horror posed by such cases, restate the same problem as a national-security topic. For that purpose, the leading subject for discussion, as posed by the Littleton and kindred cases, is *terrorism by children*. Stating the problem in that way, brings the sheer, satanic horror of the matter into focus."

It appears that a good deal of LaRouche's warning got through to the President and the First Lady, and this could spell trouble for Gore, whose political opportunism and hy-

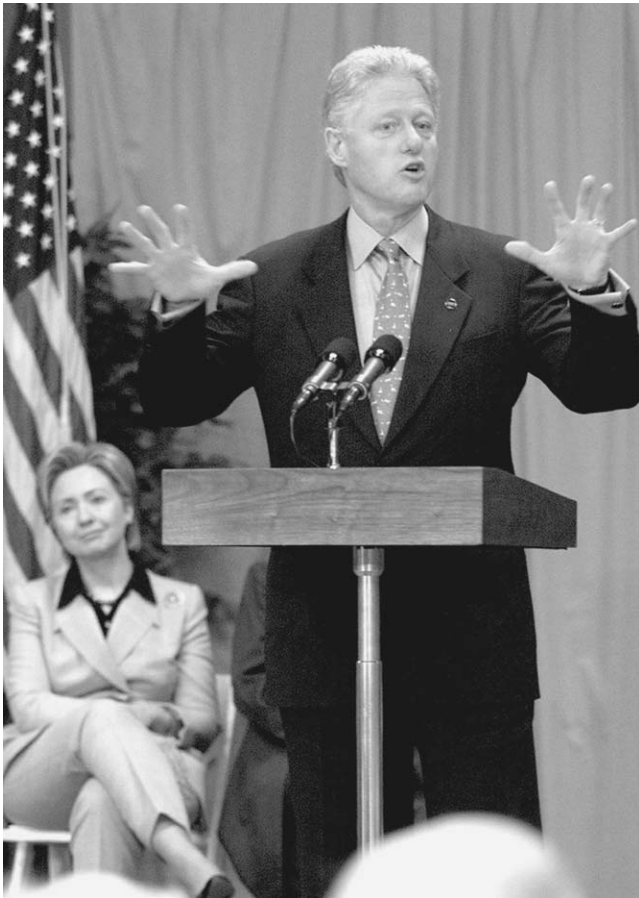
pocrisy on this life-and-death issue has now grabbed national headlines.

Violence Marketed to Children

The rift between the President and Gore first emerged publicly within hours of the release of a Federal Trade Commission report on the role of the motion picture, video-game, and music industries in fostering youth violence. The report, issued on Sept. 11, harshly censured the entertainment industry for flagrantly using aggressive illegal marketing practices, to peddle violent and pornographic "entertainment" products to minors, while, hypocritically, claiming to enforce voluntary rating standards.

Within hours of the release of the FTC report, which President Clinton had personally commissioned on June 1, 1999, following the school massacre in Littleton, Colorado six weeks earlier, the President and the First Lady appeared together at an event in Scarsdale, New York, and delivered powerful endorsements of the FTC findings, going beyond the issues raised by the Trade Commission study, and echoing many of the statements made by LaRouche, and by a handful of serious analysts of the media-induced violence, such as noted author Lt. Col. David Grossman (ret.).

The First Lady opened the event at the Jewish Community Center in Scarsdale, by telling the audience: "Today the Federal Trade Commission released a report showing that 80% of the movies, half of the video games, and one-quarter of the CDs are being marketed intentionally to the very children who are prohibited from buying them. This is outrageous, and it must stop, because it is one thing to have freedom of expression . . . but it is something entirely different when we say we're going to protect our children, and then there's a deliberate effort to bypass parents, to go directly to children,



President Clinton addresses the Scarsdale, New York, audience on Sept. 11, emphasizing the Federal Trade Commission's finding that media violence causes child and youth violence. First Lady and Senate candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton also denounced media violence to the meeting at Scarsdale's Jewish Community Center.

to persuade and influence them to buy these materials.”

She cited scores of reports of children, as young as nine and ten years old, being targetted with advertisements for violent and pornographic movies, video games, and music CDs, citing one advertisement that a nine-year-old brought home to his mother, that promised that playing a particular video game was “more fun than killing your neighbor’s cat.” “A psychologist once told me,” she continued, “that children are like little video cassettes; they repeat what they see, for good or bad. And it’s very important that we understand we’re programming them, for good or bad, by what we let them see and hear.”

President Clinton raised the issue to a more profound level. “First of all,” he told the audience, “this is in some ways the newest of issues and in some ways the oldest of issues. Plato said thousands of years ago: ‘Those who tell the stories rule society.’ . . . Now, that’s really what this is about. All this — we live in a culture, and a lot of the stories our children

have, the stories of their lives, come direct from the accumulated experiences and memories that they absorb from their parents, their grandparents, their extended family, the people of their faith, the people of their schools, the people of their community. And then there’s all the stuff they get from a further reach. And more and more and more now, over the last 40 to 50 years, with the advent of television and then the computers and the video games and music video, and, frankly, the 24-hour news cycle, and then the explosion of cable channels, you can get more and more and more of your story by indirection from third-party sources, at all hours of the day and night, from all kinds of sources that parents have less and less direct control of.

“But what this is really about,” the President continued, “is: What will be the story that shapes these children, and how will they relate to it? Now what specifically does this FTC report mean? It’s already been mentioned that we’ve known now for 30 years — through some 300 studies. . . . This is not something that’s subject to debate — that regular, persistent exposure of children at young ages to indiscriminate violence tends to make them less sensitive to the real human impact of violence in their own lives. It changes their story.”

Later in his remarks, the President returned to the same theme, first taken up by Plato. Noting the efforts of the Administration to revive educational television, and to impose TV rating systems, and mandatory V chips — which block pornography and violence on television — the President explained, “The whole idea was to try to give parents more control over the stories of their children’s lives at their earliest and most vulnerable point so that later on, the kids would be happier and more full and less anxiety-ridden, and the society would be more stable and less violent. What Plato said a long time ago is still true today.”

He then re-emphasized, “We know that extreme, consistent, persistent exposure to violence of children at young ages desensitizes them to the impacts of their own behavior and others’, and disables them from having full feelings about violent conduct. We know this. This is not subject to debate.”

Gore’s Latest Lie

The same day that the President and the First Lady were taking up this crisis of the “new violence,” Vice President Gore, in a one-hour live appearance on the Oprah Winfrey television show, attempted to wrap himself around the issue, endorsing the FTC findings, and citing his wife’s long-standing efforts against the use of violent and pornographic language in rock music lyrics.

Unfortunately for Gore, both the Bush campaign and several national news outlets had a better memory than the Vice President. On Sept. 12, the *Washington Post* reported that “Gore has not always appeared consistent on this issue. In 1987, as he was gearing up for his first Presidential campaign, Gore and his wife held a meeting with rock music executives in which Gore apologized for his role in a 1985 Senate Com-

merce Committee hearing on rock music lyrics. A tape of the meeting was obtained by *Daily Variety*. Tipper Gore, who had testified at the hearing on behalf of Parents Music Resource Center, called the hearings ‘a mistake . . . that sent the wrong message.’

“Last year,” the *Post* continued, “the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Gore met privately with potential donors from the entertainment industry in July 1999 and told them the idea for the FTC study was Clinton’s and not his, and that he was not consulted.”

The next day, Sept. 13, the *Post* further pilloried Gore over his transparently two-faced handling of this vital issue, in a lead editorial which praised the Federal Trade Commission’s report, but cited the 1987 and 1999 incidents as evidence of Gore’s “blustering” hypocrisy.

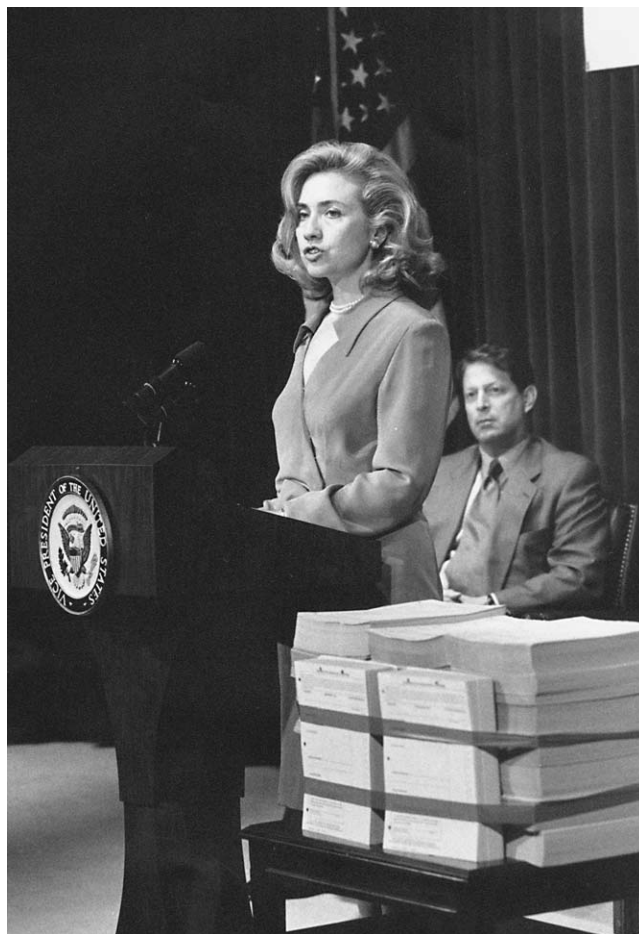
The theme was also addressed in a longer, mocking commentary by Michael Kelly in the Sept. 13 *Washington Post*. Kelly, alluding to George Orwell’s *1984*, dubbed Gore “the memory hole candidate,” who has a “breathtaking” ability to abandon past positions when it suits his current political aspirations. Kelly also detailed Gore’s latest incarnation as “scourge of Hollywood,” which, he wrote, “is not entirely a new identity for Gore. It is an old identity that he rejected when that became advantageous, and which is now advantageous to assume again.”

Kelly reviewed the 1985 hearings, and the October 1987 meeting, when the Gores “humbled themselves before the almighty of the industry.” He then took up the FTC report: “Oh, no! Right in the middle of an election too! And with polls showing swing-vote moms really care about this! What to do? Quick, get the hole! Goodbye to Al the pal; hello to William Bennett Gore.”

Despite Gore’s harsh words to Oprah and to the *New York Times*, about the evils of Hollywood, as Kelly observed, “Oddly, Hollywood didn’t seem too terribly concerned. . . . Out in 90210, they know their Al. The man who dragged his wife to bow and scrape before them is not going to sock them with anything that really hurts. This is just for the benefit of the moms and it is just for this silly season. And then it’s for the hole.”

And Lieberman, too

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), Gore’s Vice Presidential running-mate (who has curiously refused to abandon his separate campaign for re-election to the U.S. Senate), tried to do a bit of damage control during Senate Commerce Committee hearings on the FTC report on Sept. 13, where he voiced strong support for the findings and the rather tepid recommendations in the Commission’s report. Lieberman has, for years, touted himself as the darling of the social conservatives, preaching for a return to morality in America’s civic culture. However, a review of his campaign records shows that he is one of the biggest Senate recipients of contributions from top executives of the leading manufacturers of the most violent



Gore rushed to claim, on Sept. 12, that he and his wife had “invented” opposition to media violence. But the truth immediately surfaced: to get Hollywood campaign support, he hung Tipper out to dry on the issue in 1987, and the Clintons in 1999.

“point-and-shoot” video-games. Among the Lieberman campaign donors are top executives from Nintendo of America, Inc., Midway Games, and Viacom. And he is also high on the list of favorite pols at Steven Spielberg’s DreamWorks Studios, producers of some of the more vile movies coming out of Hollywood.

The FBI to the Rescue

On April 26, LaRouche issued a brief memorandum to his Presidential campaign staff and supporters, providing a definition of the term “New Violence.” At a subsequent meeting of the National Commission Against the New Violence, which LaRouche convened, that definition was endorsed by all of the Commission’s founders.

“The term ‘New Violence’ signifies,” LaRouche wrote, “chiefly, the introduction of new methods, those of Nintendo games and related means, to transform young children and adolescents, as well as law-enforcement personnel, into

‘Samurai-style’ programmed killers.”

LaRouche’s rigorous identification of the use of violent pornographic movies, point-and-shoot video-games, and other behavioral conditioning techniques, to produce “programmed killers” among the ranks of professional soldiers and law enforcement officers, as well as among America’s children, is being directly challenged by the FBI, which, on Sept. 6, issued a preposterous public report, claiming to be “A Threat Assessment” of “The School Shooter.”

The report, part of a continuing FBI cover-up of what LaRouche had already identified in 1990 as a “Satanic crime wave,” whitewashed the role of the violent movies and video-games, presenting, instead, a laundry list of 27 psychological characteristics that could signal a potential “student shooter.” The FBI’s list placed great emphasis on “inappropriate humor,” “low self-esteem,” and “anger-management problems.” Buried at the very end of the list were: “unusual interest in sensational violence,” “fascination with violence-filled entertainment,” and “negative role models.”

Drug abuse in general, and the specific problem of school-fostered use of mind-altering and addictive drugs like Ritalin and Prozac, which figured prominently in most of the major incidents of “killer kids,” were not even mentioned in the FBI document!

Furthermore, this latest piece of drivel from the FBI’s National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime is thoroughly in line with the Bureau’s earlier, persistent efforts to *disprove* the links between Satanic cult activities by teenagers and others, and the emerging “new violence.” Kenneth Lanning, an FBI Special Agent attached to the Bureau’s Behavioral Sciences unit at Quantico, Virginia, was notorious in the early 1990s as a public defender of the Wicca cult and other pagan and Satanic groups, as “Christianity-spawned” new religions, that had no relationship to criminal behavior.

Media Caught Gore in Yet Another Lie

Below are excerpts from Daily Variety, the Los Angeles Times, and the Washington Post, revealing Al Gore doing what he does best: lying and opportunistically flip-flopping on issues of great concern for the nation and the world—in this case, Hollywood’s fostering of the “new violence.”

Daily Variety, Nov. 3, 1987: “Gores Polishing Showbiz Apple—Presidential Candidate and Wife Try To Ease Concerns over Perceived Censorship,” by Henry Schipper.

Gore, in L.A. last week for a three-day campaign swing, clearly hoped to mend some fences and defuse “the censorship

issue,” a potential albatross that could drag him down in his quest for the Democratic crown.

To that end, the Senator and his wife repeatedly voiced regret at the Hollywood huddle over the headline-grabbing 1985 Senate rock hearings, with Mrs. Gore calling the sesh [session] “a mistake . . . that sent the wrong message” to the entertainment biz.

“We sent the message that there’s going to be censorship, and that’s clearly not the case,” she told the group. “In my testimony I said ‘I am not for government intervention, I am not for legislation.’”

“I understand that the hearings frightened the artistic community; if I could rewrite the script, I certainly would,” she said.

Sen. Gore echoed his wife’s feeling that the hearing “was not a good idea,” and attempted to exculpate himself from the proceedings by virtue of the fact that he was “a freshman minority member of the committee” in no position to veto the affair.

Indeed, the Gores laid blame for the hearing at the door of two other Senators—John Danforth (R-Mo.) and Paula Hawkins (R-Fla.)—both of whom Senator Gore said were eager to hold the heavily publicized forum, with Commerce Committee chairman Danforth hastening to convene when he learned that Hawkins was trying to steer the event her way.

“I did not ask for the hearings,” Gore told the Hollywood group. “I was not in favor of the hearing.”

Los Angeles Times, Aug. 10, 1999, “Gore Takes Lead Role in Race for Hollywood Donors,” by Marc Lacey.

Al Gore was quick to join the chorus of politicians who, after the Colorado school shootings, decried Hollywood’s role in desensitizing young people to violence. But when he huddled with industry executives last month at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles, the Vice President was gushing with film friendliness.

At the private meeting with potential donors, Gore distanced himself from the Federal inquiry into Hollywood’s marketing of violent movies launched recently by President Clinton. Participants said Gore made clear that the government study—disparaged by some in Hollywood as a witch-hunt—was the President’s idea, not his, and was initiated without his input. . . .

Gore’s camp, when asked about his comments in his private meetings with Hollywood insiders, acknowledged only that he has had numerous discussions with them on issues facing the country. A spokesman said the campaign does not comment on such conversations.

But those private conversations appear to be relieving some in Hollywood.

“At first there were doubts” about Gore’s stance on Hollywood and violence, said Andy Span, a spokesman for Dream-Works SKG. “As the Vice President has begun to address this issue, I think many in the industry who had concerns have