
Book Review

Gore Vidal Attacks LaRouche Over Sept. 11

by Mark Burdman

Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got To Be So Hated

by Gore Vidal

New York: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, 2002

160 pages, paperbound, \$10

It was inevitable that, as the official “bin Laden did it” cover-up story of what happened on Sept. 11 became increasingly challenged, the Anglo-American financial oligarchy would adopt extreme measures of “damage control” and deflection. And it is not surprising that American essayist and novelist Gore Vidal would take a key role in this damage control. Vidal is a member of the same influential family that spawned former U.S. President Al Gore, and very influential himself as a chief proponent of what might be called the “treason school” of American history—with regard to the assassination of the character and accomplishments of President Abraham Lincoln, for example. Vidal has often been the literary hired gun for those oligarchical interests undermining the American republican tradition.

Given his pedigree, one could also have expected that Vidal might launch a lurid attack, apparently out of the blue, on Lyndon LaRouche—the man who has definitively characterized the events of Sept. 11 as the inside job of powerful rogue elements within the U.S. military-intelligence structure. LaRouche’s view of Sept. 11 has received massive attention and support throughout the Middle East, and is well-known in the United States since LaRouche first expounded that view, in an interview with Salt Lake City radio host Jack Stockwell that was conducted just as the horrific attacks were unfolding.

Truths and Untruths

Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace has become an international bestseller. It has been heralded, particularly, by those left-liberal and related elements, in the United States and abroad, who smell a rat in what has been officially said about

Sept. 11.

In the book, the sly Vidal does, in fact, touch upon certain unpleasant truths, to give his arguments credibility. For example, his characterization of the strategic worldview dominating Washington at this point as that of “perpetual war,” is correct, and one that LaRouche himself has stressed.

However, whereas LaRouche and collaborators have traced the origins of that strategy rigorously, through a school of geopoliticians in Britain and the United States during the past century, ending up with types like former U.S. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and Harvard’s Samuel “Clash of Civilizations” Huntington, Vidal takes a much more dubious tack. Vidal’s source for his book title, is a 1945 quote from the late revisionist historian Charles Beard. Beard held that the American Founding Fathers’ battle against the British monarchy was only carried out in pursuit of crass, narrowly defined class interests. Vidal takes this 1945 quote and derives from it the conclusion, that all conflicts in which the United States has been involved since the 1948-49 Berlin airlift, have been in pursuit of that class interest. He never differentiates between saner impulses in U.S. policy in the post-war period under Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, and those disgraceful times under “Presidents” Kissinger and Brzezinski.

No fewer than 20 pages go simply to listing every conflict the United States has been involved in since Berlin in 1948, to supposedly document this point. This is the kind of cheap-shot anti-Americanism which garners Vidal plaudits from certain circles, but which has nothing to do with the complexities and realities of American history and strategy.

Vidal also describes, with some accuracy, the recent years’ descent of political-judicial life in the United States toward police-state conditions, particularly in the the latter three-quarters of the book, in which he raises a number of questions about what really happened in the April 19, 1995 terror bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. But here too, there are oddities. For one, Vidal’s main culprit in these alleged 1990s moves toward a police-state is Bill Clinton—perhaps not surprising for a relative of the Clinton-hating Al Gore, who escaped any responsibility for anything, although he was a most noxious influence on Clinton, particularly from 1996 onward. And Vidal repeatedly insists that one of the main causes for the police-state trend, is the “war on drugs.” He advocates the full legalization of all drugs, and praises the initiatives of the top funder of drug-legalization projects in the United States and worldwide, mega-speculator George Soros.

Most egregious, but understandable as we will see shortly, Vidal omits mention of the most glaring case of judicial atrocity, the unjust prosecution, conviction, and five-year imprisonment of Lyndon LaRouche.

Clinical Schizophrenia

The smell of dishonesty otherwise comes through in the way “iconoclast” Vidal reaffirms, rather than scoffs at, the

“bin Laden did it” cover story on Sept. 11—even though it is manifest, that he doesn’t really swallow it. He uses phrases like the “awesome physical damage Osama and company did to us,” or “Osama struck at us from abroad in the name of 1 billion Muslims whom we have encouraged, through our own pre-emptive acts of war as well as relentless demonization of them through media.” He builds up Osama bin Laden into an “anti-American freedom fighter,” a modern-day Saladin fighting the American “Crusaders,” and driven by rage at the “imperial disdain for the lesser breeds” that American governments express in foreign policy and military actions. Bin Laden, for Vidal, is a combined hero/anti-hero.

But Vidal likens the Sept. 11 events, and their consequences, to the Nazis’ use, in 1933, of the Reichstag Fire—which is known to have been a staged fraud—to institutionalize police-state measures. In his short opening section dealing with Sept. 11, Vidal emits, in his typical style, other teasers which suggest that he believes that something more insidious, and internal to the United States, was involved in Sept. 11. Yet, he sticks loudly to the bin Laden story.

The sense that Vidal does suspect an “internal conspiracy,” while promoting the opposite, is reinforced, by his devoting the last 120 pages of the book to the Oklahoma City bombing, and to his view that the executed Timothy McVeigh did not act alone, but was probably caught up in the web of some murky Federal government conspiracy. Here is not the location, to get into the details of the McVeigh story, and/or whether the questions Vidal raises are legitimate. The point is that this manner of dealing with McVeigh/Oklahoma City, after dealing with Sept. 11 as identified, gives *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, overall, a dishonest and schizophrenic quality.

Thus Vidal cannot contain himself on the “LaRouche question,” especially as LaRouche has told the truth on Sept. 11 from the top—his immediate recognition that bin Laden could not have pulled off the terrible operation for which LaRouche knew, from the first hour on that national radio interview, bin Laden would be blamed.

Vidal writes: “Conspiracy theories now blossom in the wilderness like nightblooming *dementia praecox*, and those in thrall to them are mocked invariably . . . by the actual conspirators.” There are, indeed, “very real conspiracies out there,” Vidal adds, “but the conspirators are old hands at deflecting attention from themselves.”

Who is their instrument? Lyndon LaRouche! Vidal continues: “Into drugs? Well, didn’t you know Queen Elizabeth II is overall director of the world drug trade (if only poor Lillibet had had the foresight in these republican times!). They tell us that the Trilateral Commission is a world-Communist conspiracy headed by the Rockefellers. Actually, the Commission is excellent shorthand to show how the Rockefellers draw together politicians and academics-on-the-make to serve their business interests in government and out. Whoever it was who got somebody like Lyndon LaRouche to say that this Rockefeller Cosa Nostra is really a Communist front was

truly inspired.” (Punctuation as in original.)

Of course, LaRouche never called the Trilateral Commission a “Communist front,” nor did he say that “Queen Elizabeth II is overall director of the world drug trade.” These are concoctions which various media—those which Vidal claims to disdain, such as the *New York Times*—have repeated thousands of times over the past years. A psychiatrist might say, that Vidal is simply projecting onto LaRouche, his own role as a tool of deflection for “the conspirators.” He has made a crude and rude attempt to neutralize LaRouche’s growing influence concerning “the policies of Sept. 11,” by attributing to him outlandish utterings he never made.

A Tory Defend the American Republic?

This Vidal venture, with its outburst against LaRouche, is fully in line with a career devoted to obfuscating American history. He writes of himself, that for almost six decades, first as an enlisted soldier in World War II and then as “a narrator of our imperial history, I think I’ve always had an up-close view of the death-struggle between the American republic, whose defender I am, and the American Global Empire, our old republic’s enemy.”

Gore Vidal a “defender of the American republic”? Hardly. Vidal has repeatedly expressed views antithetical to those of an American republican: He is a vicious Malthusian, who has gone on record calling for reducing the world population to the 1-2 billion level; he has, just like his relative Al Gore, blamed the 15th-Century Golden Renaissance for causing a “population explosion”; he has expressed an unabashed antagonism toward the great monotheistic religions.

More directly on the United States as such, those familiar with his historical novels will recall, that his main hero is one of the worst imperial sycophants in American history, Aaron Burr. One of his *Narratives of Empire* series of historical novels, written in 1973, is titled *Burr*; one of the novel series is dedicated to his nephew, whose name is Burr. Among the episodes he “fictionally” and sympathetically recounted in that novel was a description of Aaron Burr making a deal with the diplomatic and intelligence-agency minions of His Majesty’s Government in Great Britain—to dismember and destroy the American republic!

In the course of upending all the realities of American history to put Burr on a pedestal, Vidal engaged in unspeakable tirades against George Washington, John Quincy Adams, and other leading lights of the American Intellectual Tradition, of which Lyndon LaRouche is the current embodiment.

Vidal’s 1976 book, *1876*, is a hate-filled diatribe against such Lincoln-allied patriots as James G. Blaine, and an effort to throw sewage on that year’s famous Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. His 1984 novel, *Lincoln*, on the greatest of American Presidents, is filled with base gossip and insinuations. His most recent book, prior to *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, was the historical novel *The Golden Age*, reviewed by this author last year (*EIR*, May 4, 2001). The great

bulk of it is a fantastical attack on President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whom Gore tried to indict for allegedly having conspired to cause the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor, in pursuit of his policy, as the “Emperor Augustus of the American Empire,” to forward American imperial ambitions.

Now in *Perpetual War*, Vidal contrasts what he purports to be the non-plot of Sept. 11, 2001, with the alleged plot of Dec. 7, 1941: “President Roosevelt provoked the Japanese to attack us at Pearl Harbor. I describe the various steps he took in a book, *The Golden Age*. We now know what was on his

mind: coming to England’s aid against Japan’s ally, Hitler, a virtuous plot that ended triumphantly for the human race. But what was—is—on bin Laden’s mind?”

Thus to fill out his attack on LaRouche, Vidal invokes an “FDR plot” that may be widely believed by populists and others, but which never in fact occurred, while attributing to bin Laden, virtually superhuman powers of planning and implementation that he never possessed. The frauds Gore Vidal lends his reputation to, become more dangerous as does the situation of the world.

French Book Slanders LaRouche and Cheminade

Two French “investigative journalists,” Guillaume Dasquie of Intelligence Online and Jean Guisnel of Le Point, have rushed to print with what purports to be a refutation of a jumbled exposé of Sept. 11, *L’Effroyable Imposture* (The Terrible Deception), by Thierry Meyssan, of the French think-tank Réseau Voltaire. The “refutation,” *L’Effroyable Mensonge* (The Terrible Lie), involves an attack on the only competent analysis of Sept. 11, that of Lyndon LaRouche, as well as his leading ally in France, former Presidential candidate Jacques Cheminade.

And, while Meyssan’s book has received coverage in the U.S. and British press, like the purported refutation, the media take aim at LaRouche, by a terrible fallacy of composition: Since LaRouche was, within an hour of the attacks, able to debunk the “bin Laden dunnit” lie, and since Meyssan’s book also departs from the “bin Laden dunnit” story, ergo, the analysis of the two are the same.

Here are excerpts of Cheminade’s June 25 statement.

Guillaume Dasquie and Jean Guisnel have just published the book *L’Effroyable Mensonge*, as an attack on the earlier book, *L’Effroyable Imposture*, written by Thierry Meyssan. In the June 12 issue of *Libération*, Jean-Dominique Merchet says that the collaboration of these two authors “will remain a model investigation.” In fact, it is a hastily thrown together amalgamation which would not deserve comment, if Lyndon LaRouche and myself were not seriously challenged in it. . . .

1. Mr. Dasquie and Mr. Guisnel state that Lyndon LaRouche “inspired” Thierry Meyssan’s “conspiracy theory,” an accusation repeated by Mr. Merchet. One subhead in Chapter 5 of *The Terrible Lie* goes so far as to read, “LaRouche/Cheminade/Meyssan, One and the Same Battle.” Thus, with no intellectual scruples, the authors adopt exactly the “conspiracy theory” they are quick to denounce from anyone else.

The height of their ridiculousness is when they use mere initials (mine—J.C.) to support their point about my collaboration with Thierry Meyssan, although neither Mr. LaRouche nor I has ever met him. Moreover, for reasons unknown to me, Mr. Meyssan came out some years ago with hostile concoctions against me.

2. Of course, Mr. LaRouche and myself do not believe the fable which holds that the Sept. 11 attacks were exclusively organized by bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network, with no domestic American complicity. Thierry Meyssan, for his own reasons, does not believe it either. . . .

However, whereas Mr. Meyssan highlights certain spectacular “facts” in his book—such as his refusal to believe a plane crashed into the Pentagon—Mr. LaRouche and myself have formulated an overall evaluation. . . . We especially made the connection between what is now happening in the United States and the international monetary and financial crisis. As the system collapses, the “financial cancer” manifests its political, military, and ideological metastases. . . .

3. Mr. Dasquie and Mr. Guisnel write that Lyndon LaRouche is “known to everyone in the United States because of his anti-Semitic ravings” and that he is “often accused of neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism.” . . . In fact, the U.S. circles that so accuse Lyndon LaRouche, are the same ones who claim that France has become an anti-Semitic, undesirable country. . . .

5. A recurring theme in *L’Effroyable Mensonge* is the “weaknesses of our democracies.” Would the authors like to see something else? . . . After all, doesn’t the author of *The Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington, whom Mr. Dasquie and Mr. Guisnel have cleared of any involvement, even intellectual, in Sept. 11 and in what is now unfolding, think there “are also limits to be desired . . . in political democracy” (*Trilateral Commission Report on the Governability of Democracies*, 1975)?

(In any case, there is “terrible confusion” in leading French political layers and the media, and the fear of accepting the obvious conclusions . . . has them abundantly spewing out ink in all directions, like a cuttlefish when it feels threatened.)