

Feith, and State Department arms control adviser David Wurmser.

Libby was part of a troika of wanna-be Pentagon imperialists, back in the Bush “41” Administration, who urged then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to adopt the doctrine of pre-emptive warfare—in response not to Saddam Hussein or Osama bin Laden, but to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opportunity for the United States to emerge as the only global military power. Along with Wolfowitz and Zalmay Khalilzad, Libby promoted the insane notion of pre-emptive war against any nation or bloc of nations that might at some point, challenge American military hegemony. The scheme was enthusiastically embraced by Cheney, but rejected by (the elder) President Bush, his National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and Secretary of State James Baker III—only to resurface nine years later, after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Libby also served as staff director for the Cox Commission, a Clinton-era Congressionally mandated study group which promoted the idea of a future conflict with China.

But Lewis Libby’s real claim to fame is his 18-year collaboration with Russian Mafiya “godfather” Marc Rich. As an understudy to Washington power lawyer Leonard Garment, Libby was the personal attorney for Rich from 1985, shortly after Rich fled the United States to avoid criminal prosecution for tax evasion and “trading with the enemy”—for illegal oil dealings with the Khomeini regime in Iran, while they were holding American hostages. Rich set up in Zug, Switzerland, and became one of the most important figures in busting the oil embargoes against apartheid South Africa, Iran, and, later,

Iraq. All the while, Libby toiled as Rich’s legal flack in America, presenting the swindler and Mossad bankroller as a victim of overzealous prosecutors. Libby was the Svengali orchestrating the setup of President Bill Clinton to grant Rich a pardon in early 2001, just as Clinton left office. Libby, in Congressional testimony, admitted to working with ex-Al Gore attorney Jack Quinn, and two “former” Mossad agents in Rich’s employ, to secure the pardon.

Now, Rich may be running into problems. He is a target of “Operation Spiderweb,” a crackdown by Italian, Swiss, British, and American law enforcement agencies on a \$9 billion Russian Mafiya money-laundering scheme (see box). “Spiderweb” aims at Grigory Loutchansky, head of the Nordex conglomerate of companies and a top figure implicated in the flow of illegal campaign funds into Ariel Sharon’s recent re-election campaign—and at Rich.

In addition, French ministers at the end of January launched into a flurry of attacks on Rich around two other big scandals, involving the asset stripping and bankrupting of a French metal firm by Rich, and a large tanker oil spill off the coast of Portugal, also involving a Rich-owned firm.

Meanwhile, earlier in the month, at Libby’s behest, Rich and fellow gangster Michael Steinhardt went to Israel to run the operation against Labor Party chairman Mitzna which undermined Labor’s election campaign and helped cover up, for a while, corruption scandals that were damaging Sharon’s re-election bid. Steinhardt confessed to a Washington journalist that he met Sharon secretly, and then joined Marc Rich to orchestrate a Labor revolt against Mitzna, for his refusal to enter a national unity government with Sharon.

Rich and ‘Operation Spiderweb’

Lewis Libby’s client, fugitive swindler Marc Rich, is now the target of an international law enforcement crackdown on money laundering. “Operation Spiderweb,” a European and American joint effort to shut down a Russian Mafiya money-laundering operation in a half-dozen European countries, arrested 50 top Russian Mafiyosi in June 2002, in a probe that was an outgrowth of the Bank of New York case of the late 1990s. The chief prosecutor of Bologna, Italy told reporters that 150 other targets are soon expected to be arrested. A warrant is out for Grigory Loutchansky, the founder of Nordex, a Vienna-based company that was at the center of KGB and Communist Party dirty flight capital out of the Soviet Union as it crumbled. Prosecutors have evidence that Rich was the silent partner of Loutchansky in launching Nordex, and Rich, too, is a likely target of arrest and prosecution.

At the heart of “Spiderweb” are two Russian brothers, Igor and Oleg Berezovsky, accused of heading the money-laundering operation that the *Guardian/Observer*, on June 16, 2002, said had laundered \$9 billion in Mafiya funds, between Europe and the United States, following the crackdown on the Bank of New York. Beginning in 1996, money was laundered from Russian Mafiya-controlled banks in Moscow to the Bank of New York account of Benex Worldwide. Both Loutchansky and Rich have been linked to Benex, and another Loutchansky front company, Kama Trade, has been directly tied to the Berezovsky laundering operations in Europe. Some of the dirty Mafiya money went to Chechen rebels, according to several of the news accounts, through a Berezovsky collaborator, Andreas Marissov.

Another Russian Mafiya name that came up in the “Spiderweb” probe is Yossif Kobzon, a Moscow-based Mafiya boss, who was twice elected to the Duma and is called “the Russian Sinatra” (he is a top Russian pop singer). Whenever Marc Rich is in Moscow, according to an *EIR* source, he stays at Kobzon’s luxury apartment.