

# White House report exposes media cabal

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On Jan. 6, the White House Office of Legal Affairs released a 331-page document, titled "Communication Stream of Conspiracy Commerce," which profiled the operations of a "Get Clinton" apparatus of British press organizations, and American right-wing think-tanks, tax-exempt foundations, newsletters, and daily newspapers, that have funneled a steady stream of slanders and disinformation about Bill Clinton into the newspapers of America, since the 1992 Presidential campaign.

The White House document fully backs the charges in this *EIR* report, that the Hollinger Corporation and other British news organizations have been conducting a foreign intelligence "dirty-tricks" campaign to destroy the Clinton Presidency. The White House report, a version of which, according to news accounts, was prepared in July 1995, but was first made public in January 1997, highlights the role of the Hollinger Corporation's *Sunday Telegraph* dirty-trickster Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, the *London Times*'s Lord William Rees-Mogg, Reverend Moon's *Washington Times*, the *American Spectator*, Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post*, the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, Pat Robertson's 700 Club, and the National Taxpayers Union/*Strategic Investment* newsletter, as the chief culprits.

Richard Mellon Scaife, the heir to the Pittsburgh Mellon fortune and the publisher of the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, was also cited as the Daddy Warbucks of the effort, particularly for his financing of Newt Gingrich's GOPAC political action committee. The report charges that, after Mellon Scaife poured over half a million dollars into GOPAC, and the Landmark Legal Foundation, a favorite Gingrich "charity," Speaker Gingrich began peddling this apparatus's disinformation about the death of White House deputy counsel Vincent Foster. Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.) was also identified as one of the leading Congressional Clinton-bashers, who has regularly launched probes, based on the products of the disinformation sewer, thereby abetting the conduiting of phony allegations into the media. The White House report labeled this method "blow-back."

## 'The media food chain'

What follows are some excerpts from the White House document.

"The media food chain is the system by which right-wing activists feed conspiracy theories and innuendo from the

fringes into the mainstream media. The 'food chain' starts with activists such as Willie Horton creator Floyd Brown, Sheffield Nelson and Larry Nichols. These activists feed the partisan conservative press, publications such as the *American Spectator*, the *Washington Times* and the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*. The mainstream press then picks up on these reports. . . .

"One specific 'food chain' strategy is the 'blow-back.' The blow-back starts with conservative groups feeding material to the British tabloids, such as the *Sunday Telegraph*. Conservative American tabloids and mainstream American media then report on the British reports.

"For example, recently the *Washington Times* reprinted Ambrose Evans-Pritchard's *Sunday Telegraph* response to a *Washington Post* article on Vince Foster conspiracy theorists. Pritchard, who took offense to being lumped in with conspiracy theorists, has been a leading reporter of various conspiracies—most recently accusing Vince Foster of secretly being a spy. (*Washington Times*, 7/10/95 and *Washington Post*, 7/4/95)

"In addition to use of the media food chain and blow-back strategies, conservatives have another tie—their source of funds. A number of groups that have been peddling conspiracy theories (mainly questioning the suicide of Deputy White House Counsel Vince Foster) are funded by Richard M. Scaife.

"Richard Scaife is an heir to the Mellon fortune with an estimated net worth of \$750 million. In addition to his financial support of purveyors of Vince Foster conspiracy theories, Scaife also is a Newt Gingrich insider—backing many of the groups that support and defend Newt Gingrich, including contributing \$60,000 to GOPAC and \$450,000 to the Landmark Legal Foundation."

## Case studies

The White House dossier highlights six instances, in which such unsavory types as Floyd Brown and Larry Nichols floated phony "revelations" about the First Family, which were then given front-page attention in the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail*, and other British propaganda organs, only to then be laundered through U.S. newspapers, as stories covered by "mainstream" British newspapers. Often, from there, the allegations would become grist for the Congressional Whitewater probes, or for Whitewater special prosecutor Kenneth Starr. Once there was a color of "government probe," the rest of the media would then run with the stories—as if they were proven fact.

Within hours of the White House release of its report, the *Washington Times*, the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, and the *Wall Street Journal* were already on the counter-offensive, branding the Clinton White House "more paranoid than Nixon." Stephen Hess, of the Brookings Institution, joined the ranks of protesters, but warned that the American people will probably believe that, in this instance, President Clinton is right.