

LAROCHE TO CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Don't Blow It— Oust Cheney Now

by Jeffrey Steinberg and Edward Spannaus

When Senate Republicans fell in lock-step behind a desperate White House, and stalled debate on the Bush-Cheney escalation of pointless military operations in Iraq, people like Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) were reportedly inundated with furious protests over the capitulation from their constituents.

That little act of cowardice, and other recent instances of bipartisan foolishness in the upper House, prompted Lyndon LaRouche last week to warn that the growing crop of Senators who have joined the 2008 Presidential sweepstakes has so weakened the institution, at least temporarily, that he is looking to the House of Representatives to lead the charge on the life-and-death issue of the immediate ouster of Vice President Dick Cheney from office.

While the immediate reasons for ousting Cheney center on the imminent threat of a U.S. attack on Iran, an attack that would certainly trigger a new Hundred Years War, the fact is that LaRouche has been leading the effort to remove the Vice President for cause since August 2002, when Cheney emerged as the propagandist-in-chief for the illegal invasion of Iraq.

But the underlying reason that Cheney must go *now* is that he represents the modern-day incarnation of the Vice Presidency of Aaron Burr, a traitor to the core, who shared with Cheney an undying commitment to a world governed by private imperial interests. For Burr, it was the British East India Company. For Cheney, it is Halliburton and the new nexus of trans-national cartels which have been the ultimate beneficiaries of his Iraq war, and his pending Iran adventure.

Fitzgerald Won't Do Congress's Work

Lyndon LaRouche also warned the U.S. Congress that they would be making a fatal mistake, were they to sit back and count on Independent Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald to single-handedly finish off the Veep through the ongoing Scooter Libby trial.

The Libby trial, which has in reality been a trial of Dick Cheney, offers nothing more than an opportunity for the Republicans and President Bush to remove Cheney from office, for the good of the party, the country, and the world. Now is the time for Congress to fulfill its oversight responsibilities by spotlighting the crimes of Cheney at every opportunity, LaRouche insisted. Only such a concert of effort is likely to succeed in forcing the ouster of the most treacherous and powerful Vice President in the nation's history. To sit back and wait for Fitzgerald to do the job would be a recipe for failure.

LaRouche based this assessment on a wide range of strategic factors, as well as detailed accounts of the events at the Libby trial, which *EIR* has closely monitored. For reasons that may never be fully known, Independent Counsel Fitzgerald decided not to indict Cheney, but instead used the Libby trial to present his case against Cheney, as the following eyewitness report from the Libby courtroom makes clear.

Cheney on Trial

Three weeks into the criminal trial of Cheney's former chief of staff and national security advisor, Lewis Libby, the biggest question hanging over the courtroom—and all

of Washington, D.C.—is: Where is Dick Cheney?

The question is obvious, because two things are abundantly clear from the evidence presented by the prosecutor, both in this trial, and in eight hours of grand jury questioning of Libby in 2004, the full tapes of which were played for the jury over three days Feb. 6-8.

First, Libby did nothing on his own. Every step he took in the campaign to smear and discredit former Amb. Joseph Wilson, was directed and controlled by his boss, Dick Cheney. More on this below.

Second, it is clear that Fitzgerald has far more evidence than he has presented in court, much of which bears on the issue of the guilt of Dick Cheney and his responsibility for this whole sordid affair, centering on a serious and willful breach of national security. Even before Fitzgerald came on the case, the Justice Department had demanded every scrap of paper in the Office of the Vice President, including in Cheney's own files, that had any bearing on the Wilson matter. We also know that Fitzgerald obtained phone and e-mail records, and that he interviewed or subpoenaed anyone with any knowledge bearing on the case. This included interviews with Cheney and Bush themselves, the contents of which have not been made public.

For some reason, Fitzgerald decided not to indict the perpetrators of the underlying crime—the unauthorized disclosure of classified information, i.e., the leaking to reporters of Valerie Plame Wilson's identity and her affiliation with the CIA, where she was a covert operative. Instead, Fitzgerald indicted only one of the perpetrators, Libby, for the offenses of perjury, false statements, and obstruction of justice.

Cheney Was the Boss

Libby's testimony to the grand jury in April 2004 demonstrates that it was Cheney who told him to contact various reporters, and even told him what to say. It was Cheney who dictated "talking points"—a script—of what to say to certain reporters. And it was from Dick Cheney that Libby says he first learned, in June 2003, that Valerie Plame Wilson worked in the Counter-Proliferation Division of the CIA. Libby stated that the purpose of this discussion was for Cheney to tell him what to say in response to inquiries from *Washington Post* reporter Walter Pincus. Of course, Libby denies that Cheney told him to disclose Plame's status, but he did write down other things to tell Pincus.

Likewise, it was Cheney who "instructed" Libby to call *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller, and to disclose portions of the then-classified November 2002 National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq to her. (Cheney claimed, dubiously, that he had gotten the President to selectively "declassify" the document so Libby could disclose it to certain reporters.)

A day or two later, Deputy National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley said in a meeting that he wanted to get the NIE declassified so that it could be gotten out to reporters. Libby and Cheney sat there in the meeting, and never told

Hadley or other officials that they had secretly already disclosed the "declassified" NIE to the *New York Times*.

When Cheney told Libby to get the NIE out to the *Wall Street Journal*, Libby then had Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz call the *Journal* and plant the story. Libby also testified that Cheney had held a luncheon with "conservative columnists" around July 17-18, 2003, to tell them about the NIE and to get the story around, in a further attempt to discredit Joe Wilson's account.

On July 12, 2003, while on a flight on Air Force Two, said Libby, Cheney "dictated to me what he wanted me to say to the press." Cheney said that Libby, and not his press secretary, should make the calls. "I want you to make the calls," Libby testified that Cheney told him.

During Libby's second grand jury appearance, on March 24, 2004, Libby told the grand jury investigating the Valerie Plame leak, that he had gone to Cheney "and offered to tell him everything I knew, and he didn't want to hear it." Libby said that when he offered to tell Cheney about his conversations with various reporters prior to the Robert Novak column outing Plame, Cheney said to him, "You don't have to. I know you didn't do it. I know you weren't the source of the leak"—which sounds for all the world as if Cheney is building the stone wall, and declaring what the party line is going to be: "You didn't do it."

At another point, Libby said he had tried talking to Cheney just before an FBI interview, and Cheney said "fine" according to Libby, "and held up his hand . . . and either said or I took from it, you know, we shouldn't talk about the details of this."

By the end of Libby's second session with the grand jury, on appearance, it was obvious that "the jig was up," and that Fitzgerald knew full well what Libby was doing to protect himself and Cheney. It was also clear that Libby knew that Fitzgerald knew, what he was up to. The prosecutor asked Libby a series of pointed questions, suggesting that if he could claim he learned of Valerie Plame's CIA role from reporters (i.e., Tim Russert), rather than from CIA officials or Cheney, then it might not be illegal to disclose it to others; whereas, if he learned it from an official source such as Cheney, it would be illegal. By the end of this rather deadly round of questioning, the once-confident Libby was speaking in such a soft, hesitant voice that he could scarcely be heard.

The prosecution rested its case on Friday, Feb. 9, and Libby's team is scheduled to start putting on witnesses for the defense on Feb. 12. Defense witnesses will include a number of reporters, and possibly—though not certainly—Vice President Cheney himself.

If Cheney appears on the stand, he will likely commit the kind of perjury that would sink him. However, for Congress and the Republican Party, and the American people to sit on the sidelines waiting for such a suicidal act by Cheney, would be to put the nation in jeopardy. Hopefully, the 110th Congress is better than that.