

The ‘Dump Cheney’ Countdown Is On

by Jeffrey Steinberg

In the immediate aftermath of Lyndon LaRouche’s July 25 webcast from Washington, D.C. (see *Feature*), momentum has grown for the removal of Vice President Dick Cheney from office—before the Guns of August are fired. In his remarks, LaRouche directly addressed members of the U.S. Congress:

“This is the month of August; it’s the anniversary of August 1914. It’s the anniversary of August 1939. The condition now is worse, objectively, than either of those two occasions. Either we can make a fundamental change in the policies of the United States government now, or you may be kissing civilization good-bye for some time to come. That’s the reality. Anyone who thinks differently is either just an incompetent, or an idiot, or a raving lunatic: *That’s reality*. Are you prepared to act now? If you’re not prepared to act, please leave the House of Representatives. If you’re not prepared to act, please leave the Senate; and above all, leave the Federal government, in terms of the key officials, because you’ll only make a mess of things. It’ll be worse with you there, than if you simply got out, and left it to a minority to solve the problem.”

LaRouche then got to the heart of the issue: “There are two things that must be done. Let’s start with the simplest thing, which is on the table now: Remember, impeachment is in the background, but impeachment is not the issue. The issue is *getting Cheney out*. You get Cheney out, now, and the situation can be manageable. If you do not get Cheney out, you’re kissing civilization good-bye. If it survives, it’s not to your credit. And any Congressman who says he’s not going to get Cheney out now, should leave the premises now, as a final act of decency. If Nancy Pelosi and others—if they can’t get Cheney out now, if they’re not determined to do it now, *this month, before they leave Washington, they should quit now!* Submit their resignations, and let some-

body who’s more competent come in, because it has to happen. *Cheney has to go.*”

Cheney’s War

Extremely well-placed U.S. military and intelligence sources have re-emphasized to *EIR* that all of the preconditions for a U.S. preventive attack on Iran have been met. Over half of the U.S. Navy’s combat force is now in the immediate vicinity of Iran, with two U.S. aircraft carrier groups in the Persian Gulf, and two more in the Indian Ocean, ostensibly as part of five-nation maneuvers scheduled for September in the Bay of Bengal. U.S. and Arab military sources report on a massive buildup of U.S. Air Force bombers in Iraq and Afghanistan. The buildup of naval and air power, contrary to some news accounts, is not directed at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area, where Taliban and al-Qaeda forces have established a serious base once again. Pentagon sources confirm that the target of these awesome military assets is Iran.

The reason for the buildup in Iraq and Afghanistan is that no Arab state is willing to allow U.S. basing or overflight rights, for an attack on Iran, thus rendering U.S. air bases and naval ports in such countries as Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar useless. Turkey, likewise, is not about to allow the U.S. to launch attacks on Iranian targets from air bases in Turkey. In fact, Turkey and Iran are working together, behind the scenes, against the PKK, the Kurdish insurgent group promoting an independent “Kurdistan” to be carved out of the territories of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

As one retired flag officer reported, no such costly buildup of military force is undertaken unless there is a clear plan to go to war—soon. And Cheney’s unmistakable target is Iran.

Since the June 2007 deployment of Gen. Kevin Bergner to Baghdad, as the designated Cheney/Elliott Abrams “stove-

pipe” for a steady stream of anti-Iran propaganda into the White House and the press, the Administration has shifted its focus away from the scare stories about Iran being “months away” from having a nuclear bomb, to inflated allegations that Iran is behind the insurgency in Iraq that is killing American soldiers, and preventing the “surge” from succeeding. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and other top military brass are reportedly seething over the Bergner-Abrams-Cheney agitprop efforts.

And it now appears that there are even counter-moves coming out of the Executive branch. According to U.S. intelligence community sources, White House officials have recently leaked a series of news stories, revealing that the biggest “foreign” factor in the Iraqi insurgency is not Iran, or Syria, but Saudi Arabia, which accounts for 40% of the foreign fighters now in jail in Iraq, and an even higher percentage of the suicide bombers. In comparison, according to several recent news accounts, originated at the White House, only 1% of the insurgents captured in Iraq are Iranians, and under 10% are Syrians. These stories certainly angered the Vice President and Abrams, the National Security Council Middle East chief and a rabid neo-con.

On July 26, Helene Cooper penned a story for the *New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*, that reported on “U.S. frustration with Saudis over Iraq.” “Bush administration officials,” Cooper wrote, “are voicing increasing anger at what they say has been Saudi Arabia’s counterproductive role in the Iraq war.” The unnamed officials charged that the Saudis are providing arms and money to Sunni insurgents, many of whom are Salafi fundamentalists, to wage war against the al-Maliki government in Baghdad, which the Saudis view as an Iranian puppet regime. Edward W. Gnehm, a former U.S. ambassador to Kuwait and Jordan, reported to Cooper that the Saudis have been soliciting funds from other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, to arm Sunni rebels in Iraq’s Anbar province, and other Sunni-controlled areas of the country.

What the *Times* story neglected to report is that the “Sunni versus Shi’ite” scheme which the Saudis have been pursuing with great passion, was promoted by top Bush Administration officials—beginning with Cheney—since late 2006, undoubtedly under the advice of British Arab Bureau spook, and top Cheney advisor Dr. Bernard Lewis. In October 2006, White House counterterrorism and homeland security advisor Frances Townsend traveled to Riyadh to meet with King Abdullah and his Cabinet, to discuss the growing threat from Iran. A month later, Cheney made his now infamous trip to Saudi Arabia, to promote the idea of a Sunni security alliance to combat Iran. According to U.S. intelligence sources, the Cheney trip unleashed a process that has now veered out of Washington’s control, and is causing significant ruptures between the U.S.A. and the Saudis over the future of Iraq.

As the result of the Saudi promotion of the Salafi tribal insurgency inside parts of Iraq, there is growing concern among

some senior U.S. military and Administration officials that a major eruption of Sunni versus Shi’ite violence in Iraq could spill over into a larger regional confrontation. It is here where the consequences of allowing Dick Cheney to stay on the job take on catastrophic proportions.

Does Congress Have the Guts To Impeach?

At a recent speaking engagement in California, Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, announced that if three more members of Congress signed on to Rep. Dennis Kucinich’s (D-Ohio) H.R. 333 bill to impeach Cheney, he would begin committee proceedings—despite opposition from Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.). On July 25, Rep. Robert Brady (D-Pa.) added his name to H.R. 333, bringing the number down to two.

At the close of the LaRouche webcast that day, LaRouche spokesperson Debra Freeman vowed that the remaining two signators would be added before the Congressional recess—through a non-stop mobilization of the LaRouche Youth Movement, and other LaRouche activists. At least six other members of Congress indicated that they were about to sign on to the Kucinich bill in the days following the webcast.

As LaRouche emphasized on July 25, impeachment is but one means of forcing Cheney’s immediate ouster—which is the only serious war-avoidance option. Other Congressional actions, already underway, could also accelerate Cheney’s departure, according to well-placed Washington sources. One crucial initiative was announced on July 26 by four Democratic Senators, who wrote to U.S. Solicitor General Paul Clement, demanding the appointment of an independent counsel to probe whether Attorney General Alberto Gonzales lied to Congress about the firing of U.S. Attorneys and the government’s warrantless domestic spying programs.

The sources emphasize that Gonzales is the last remaining “firewall” between the President, the Vice President, and impeachment. The letter to the Solicitor General was sent by Democratic Senators Charles Schumer (N.Y.), Dianne Feinstein (Calif.), Russell Feingold (Wisc.) and Sheldon Whitehouse (R.I.). Were Gonzales to go, the sources insisted, Bush might be far more inclined to throw Cheney overboard, rather than face his own then-imminent impeachment.

In the aftermath of the July 25 webcast, LaRouche emphasized that, given the current countdown for war, Congress cannot leave town for the month of August—without running the risk that Cheney will prevail on Bush to order a preventive attack on Iran. At minimum, a group of key House and Senate leaders must remain on the job, and should maintain close liaison with the top military brass, who could call on Congress, at any moment, to step in under the Constitution and the War Powers Act, to prevent an out-of-control White House from launching another preventive war in the Persian Gulf—one that historians would write about in decades to come as the opening shots of the next world war.