

# The Eagleburger confirmation: a lovefest for 'New Yalta' faction

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On Thursday afternoon, March 16, following a several-hour-long closed session, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously cleared the nomination of Lawrence Eagleburger as deputy secretary of state. The former president of Kissinger Associates and its subsidiary Kent Associates, is now the second Kissinger employee to step into a top policy making post with the Bush administration.

Although nominally "conservative" Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) had been promising for weeks that he would use the Eagleburger hearings to put Henry Kissinger and his high-roller international consulting business under the microscope and would ultimately block the Eagleburger nomination from ever reaching the floor of the Senate, Helms's words outraced his deeds—once again. After the closed-door session, in which, according to the *New York Times*, Eagleburger reached a *modus vivendi* with Helms over confidential disclosure of Kissinger Associates' full client list, even the North Carolinian voted in favor of the Eagleburger appointment.

Washington insiders familiar with Helms's track record on such matters had predicted to *EIR* that Helms would sell out on the Eagleburger question as soon as the Bush administration offered him a few plum appointees to the diplomatic service, probably in Ibero-America. In an earlier case of another Kissinger clone, Richard Burt, President Reagan's second-term nominee as ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Helms had at least held up the appointment for months and had finally cast a "no" vote. In the Eagleburger case, Helms's sellout was unequivocal and public.

All in all, the confirmation hearings, which lasted slightly less than five hours, were a bipartisan New Yalta lovefest, in which Eagleburger's massive conflict of interest was set aside out of bipartisan respect for the Kissinger clone's "visionary" view of America's foreign policy mission for the 1990s.

So flagrant was the double standard applied by the Senate in the case of Sen. John Tower, whose nomination as defense secretary was killed only a week earlier, that the *Washington Post* was forced to admit March 17 that the entire "ethics" process was now thrown into "uncertainty."

At one point in the early moments of the hearings on March 15, Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), a former committee chairman, urged that the Eagleburger nomination sail through the Senate as fast as possible, calling the confirmation "essential" to the entire Bush administration foreign policy agen-

da. Lugar revealed that as early as the summer of 1988, he was "delighted" to discover, in a private discussion with then-Vice President Bush, that Bush had already co-opted Eagleburger and Gen. Brent Scowcroft, then the director of the Kissinger Associates Washington, D.C. office, as his two chief campaign advisers on foreign and national security policy.

## Conflict of interest covered up

In written testimony opposing the Eagleburger appointment, the National Democratic Policy Committee, an independent political action committee associated with Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., confronted the committee with detailed country-by-country documentation of Eagleburger's conflicts of interest. According to the testimony, which was based only on Eagleburger's own public disclosures of his Kissinger Associates clients, he would have to recuse himself from any foreign policy decisions involving: Italy, the Soviet Union, Sweden, Nicaragua, Israel, South Korea, Japan, Yugoslavia, Great Britain and the entirety of Ibero-America. He would also have to refrain from any involvement in policy formulation on Third World debt, East-West trade, relations with the Pacific Rim, and strategic military issues generally. The testimony highlighted Eagleburger's and Kissinger's involvement in major East-West trade deals that in some cases involved the augmentation of the Warsaw Pact's weapons production.

About the only foreign service post that Eagleburger could legitimately hold, based on the hard evidence presented by the NDPC, might be the ambassadorship to the Galapagos Islands—provided that they did not have to negotiate any debt relief from the Bush administration.

At the outset of the confirmation hearings, the conflict of interest issue was raised, first by chairman Claiborne Pell (R-R.I.) and later by Senators Helms and Paul Sarbanes (D-Md.). Accompanied by Kissinger Associates director William Dill Rogers, who is also the personal attorney of Eagleburger and Kissinger, the nominee adamantly refused to reveal the entire client list of Kissinger and Kent Associates, claiming that Kissinger personally signed confidentiality agreements with all clients which covered every aspect of their relations. Rogers insisted, in response to questioning by Helms and Sarbanes, that Eagleburger was in no way obliged

by law to provide any further disclosures, claiming that the nominee had gone beyond the requirements of the law by “voluntarily” recusing himself for one year from any foreign policy matters involving his own former clients.

One day earlier, Kissinger had told the *New York Times* that he “violently objected to this approach of being dragged through the mud” by being asked to publicly reveal his private business affairs.

The Senate committee members, apparently sensitive to Dr. Kissinger’s violent outburst, swept the conflict and disclosure issues under the rug in a secret deal which the *Times* described as follows: Eagleburger would submit the full client lists of Kissinger Associates and Kent Associates to the State Department general counsel, who would retain the lists under attorney-client privilege. A sealed envelope containing the same information would also be filed with Pell and Helms, the majority and minority chairs of the committee. Neither the State Department nor the Senate would receive any information on the substance of Kissinger Associates’ dealings with any of its clients.

The Bush White House’s commitment to plow over the disclosure flap was first signaled two weeks before the hearings began, in an exchange between Helms and the White House Counsel and ethics “guru” C. Boyden Gray, according to opening remarks by Helms. Helms sent Gray a letter in early March asking for the full list of Kissinger clients. Gray only responded to the Helms letter two days before the hearings began, at which point he merely informed Helms that his letter had been forwarded by the White House to Eagleburger himself—with no request for disclosure attached.

Gray’s brusque treatment of the former co-chairman of the Bush-Quayle campaign committee in North Carolina may have had considerable impact on Helms’s more docile than usual sellout. Gray, a fellow North Carolinian, is, after all, the grandson of the founder of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the heir to the Reynolds fortune. Reynolds has been a financial mainstay of the Helms political organization back home for years.

### **The Kissinger agenda embraced**

The willingness of the Foreign Relations Committee to unanimously ignore the Eagleburger conflict of interest was made all the more horrifying by the contents of Eagleburger’s foreign policy “vision”—which the senators wholeheartedly embraced.

In a 20-minute opening statement, Eagleburger proclaimed the world a safer, “friendlier,” more prosperous place than it was in 1957 when he first joined the foreign service at the height of the Cold War. Heralding the Third World’s near-unanimous embracing of democracy and the free market system, and the “endemic collapse of the Soviet system,” Eagleburger proclaimed that the key challenge to the United States lies in “West-West relations.” Echoing Kissinger’s own balance of power mumbo-jumbo, Eagleburger told the

senators that the world is no longer governed from Washington and Moscow alone. New power centers have emerged within the Western alliance, which require new adjustments. These changes pose the principal challenge to the Western leadership going into the final decade of the century, he pontificated.

Europe’s united market by the end of 1992 must be based on principles of free trade, he said. If Europe becomes a united, closed market competing with the United States and Japan, then the Western alliance could crumble. Furthermore, Eagleburger said, Japan must abandon its nationalistic and regional development priorities and instead enter into new trilateral arrangements with the United States and Western Europe. Japan, he asserted, must be “harnessed to common Western goals” by being brought into some kind of international structure, similar to the NATO arrangement between the United States and Western Europe—through which its entire approach to world affairs is moderated.

The reference to NATO was, however, not a call for a revitalized and broadened military bloc against Soviet aggression. On the contrary, Eagleburger painted a picture of a crumbling Russian Empire and a precariously weak Gorbachov caught between anti-*glasnost* forces in East Germany and Czechoslovakia and overzealous reformers in Hungary running far ahead of the pace of Gorbachov’s *perestroika*. “The Soviet system had already peaked and is in a downward fall, while we in the West are still growing,” Eagleburger told the committee.

This wishful drivel was greeted with propitiatory words of praise from nearly every member of the committee, from Nancy Kassebaum to Christopher Dodd, known in some circles as the “Senator from Managua.” Ironically, Dodd praised Eagleburger “despite” their widely divergent policies towards Central America—ironically because Eagleburger’s attorney, William D. Rogers, seated at his side during this exchange, was up through 1981 a registered foreign agent of the Sandinista government.

### **Kissinger in the spotlight**

In the wake of the ethics chaos engendered by the conflicting treatments given to Tower and Eagleburger, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Ethics in Government, chaired by “Boy” Gray’s former law partner Lloyd Cutler, is expected to press some recommendations for uniform disclosure laws which will be formally adopted within the next two months. Those new guidelines, according to reports in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, would force all government advisers who receive presidential exemptions from conflict of interest recusal to itemize all their clients. This new law would apply to Henry Kissinger, who received such an exemption from President Reagan when he was placed on the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

So, we may not have yet heard the last word on Fat Henry’s clientele.