

Obama Faces Senate Impeachment Showdown

by Jeffrey Steinberg

March 30—Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), who chairs the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, has announced that she will be holding a committee vote on April 3, to approve the draft of a declassified 400-page summary of the committee’s investigation into torture and other prisoner abuses in the CIA’s Bush-Cheney era “renditions” program. The committee is still in the process of completing a comprehensive 6,300-page report to the Congress and the President on the subject.

The vote, along with a full Senate vote endorsing the declassified report, is expected to pass, thereby creating a dilemma for President Obama. He is both siding with Dick Cheney in moving to block the investigation by invoking Executive privilege to prevent the release of 9,000 Bush-Cheney-era White House documents on the torture-rendition program, and claiming that he fully supports its release. Now, he is faced with the decision to allow the public version of the report to be released, untouched, or to follow in the Bush-Cheney footsteps, and redact damaging sections of the document.

Obama, along with President George W. Bush, is in hot water over the suppression of a vital 28-page chapter from the Joint Congressional Inquiry into the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center, to cover up the Saudi monarchy’s direct hand in funding and logistically supporting the terror attack.

Last month, three Members of Congress—Walter Jones (R-N.C.), Stephen Lynch (D-Mass.), and Thomas Massie (R-Ky.)—held a press conference with repre-

sentatives of the 9/11 Families to demand that President Obama end the coverup of the 28 pages, by releasing them in full to the public. Jones and Lynch have introduced House Resolution 428 demanding the declassification and urging all Members of Congress to read the classified 28-page chapter.

Feinstein Throws Down the Gauntlet

Senator Feinstein’s confrontation with President Obama and his trusted CIA Director John Brennan erupted into a public brawl earlier this month, when Feinstein took to the Senate floor to denounce the Executive branch coverup of the torture program, including CIA intimidation of committee staff, and a cyber attack on the committee’s classified website to steal documents that the CIA itself had passed to the committee in response to the torture probe.¹ The key document, referred to as the “Panetta Report,” was written before Brennan was named CIA Director, and substantiated many of the committee’s findings about unconstitutional and illegal activities by the Bush-Cheney Administration and the intelligence community.

Two issues were underlying the revolt by these Senate Democrats against Obama. First, there is growing fear that Obama’s provocations against Russia can lead to general war, even to thermonuclear war. While

1. See “Senate-CIA Fight: A Prelude to Impeachment of Obama?”, *EIR*, March 21, 2014.



NATO

President Obama, in Brussels March 26, where he effectively declared a New Cold War against Russia.

the Congress has gone along with Obama's heated rhetoric and British-ordered threats, there is genuine worry that the world could be on the brink of general war. Second, the Senate Democrats are furious that President Obama has continued to rule by Executive order and regulations, bypassing Congress altogether on some vital issues where Congress has exclusive Constitutional authority.

Feinstein was hardly looking for a fight with a Democratic President, but every attempt that she had made to settle the issue through private channels to the White House was rebuffed. The breaking point came when Obama refused to get on the phone with her after her Senate floor speech, according to senior Congressional sources. And when Obama endorsed a Justice Department investigation into the Senate Intelligence Committee on the basis of complaints from Brennan, that kicked the affair into a public confrontation.

The behavior of President Obama has even gone beyond that of Dick Cheney and George W. Bush in

creating an imperial Presidency. Widely read columnist Paul Craig Roberts, a former Reagan Administration official, has been writing numerous columns warning both of Obama's ripping up of the Constitution, and his flight forward to nuclear war. In his latest column, Roberts links the President's provocations against Russian President Vladimir Putin, with Obama's drive for dictatorship at home.

Roberts' Indictment of Obama

Citing Obama's just-concluded visit to Europe, where he delivered a speech in Brussels effectively declaring a new Cold War, Roberts writes:

"Obama, whose government overthrew the democratically elected government in Ukraine and appointed a stooge government that has threatened the Russian provinces of Ukraine, falsely accuses Putin of invading and annexing Crimea.

"Obama, or his handlers and programers, are relying on the total historical ignorance of Western peoples. The ignorance and gullibility of Western peoples allows the American neoconservatives to fashion news that controls their minds."

Roberts then takes up Obama's visit to Europe, where he escalated the war of words against Russia and Putin:

"Obama's speech on March 26 at the Palace of Fine Arts in Brussels is surreal. It is beyond hypocrisy. Obama says that Western ideals are challenged by self-determination in Crimea. Russia, Obama says, must be punished by the West for permitting Crimeans to exercise self-determination. The return of a Russian province on its own volition to its mother country where it existed for 200 years is presented by Obama as a dictatorial, anti-democratic act of tyranny.

"Here was Obama, whose government has just overthrown the elected, democratic government of Ukraine and substituted stooges chosen by Washington in the place of the elected government, speaking of the hallowed ideal that people in nations can make their own decisions about their future. That is exactly what Crimea did, and that is exactly what the U.S. coup in Kiev contravened. In the twisted mind of Obama, self-determination consists of governments imposed by Washington.

"Here was Obama, who has shredded the U.S. Constitution, speaking of individual rights and rule of law. Where is this rule of law? It is certainly not in Kiev where an elected government was overthrown with force. It is certainly not in the United States where the

executive branch has spent the entirety of the new 21st century establishing government above the law. Habeas corpus, due process, the right to open trials and determination of guilt by independent jurors prior to imprisonment and execution, the right to privacy have all been overturned by the Bush/Obama regimes. Torture is against U.S. and international law; yet Washington set up torture prisons all over the globe.”

A Government Based on Lies

Roberts’ trenchant observations continue:

“How is it possible that the representative of the war criminal U.S. government can stand before an European audience and speak of rule of law, individual rights, human dignity, self-determination, freedom, without the audience breaking out in laughter?

“Washington is the government that invaded and destroyed Afghanistan and Iraq on the basis of lies. Washington is the government that financed and organized the overthrow of the Libyan and Honduran governments and that is currently attempting to do the same thing to Syria and Venezuela. Washington is the government that attacks with drones and bombs populations in the sovereign countries of Pakistan and Yemen. Washington is the government that has troops all over Africa. Washington is the government that has surrounded Russia, China, and Iran with military bases. It is this warmongering collection of Washington war criminals that now asserts that it is standing up for international ideals against Russia.

“No one applauded Obama’s non-sensical speech. But for Europe to accept such blatant lies from a liar without protest empowers the momentum toward war that Washington is pushing.”

Roberts then warns that the actions proposed by Obama in Brussels could trigger a new war:

“Obama doesn’t say what effect the U.S./NATO military buildup and numerous war games on Russia’s border will have on Russia. Will the Russian government conclude that Russia is about to be attacked and strike first? The reckless carelessness of Obama is the way wars start.”

He concludes with this pointed question:

“Why are people so blind that they do not see Obama driving the world to its final war?”

Roberts’ charges against Obama echo Lyndon LaRouche’s documentation of the evidence for Obama’s impeachment, a prospect that has taken on new life with the open revolt of Senate Democrats against the Presi-

dent. LaRouche has called on Congress to file articles of impeachment as the only certain way to avoid a plunge into a thermonuclear war of extinction. He has nailed Obama as a British stooge who is acting on behalf of an empire which has concluded that war is the only way out of the imminent collapse of its financial system.

Two Congressional Voices Against War

March 31—By the end of the Congressional session last week, both Houses of Congress had “debated” and passed bills approving Barack Obama’s war-confrontation policy against Russia. The virtual unanimity of support for the Administration’s lies about Russian aggression qualified both Houses to be dubbed Houses of Prostitution, not government.

The Senate passed its bill by voice vote, and the House also passed it, overwhelmingly. However, unlike the March 6 vote of condemnation of Ukraine, 19 Congressmen (two Democrats) gave “no” votes, and 13 abstained.

The floor debate, both in the bill’s markup and in the final debate, was shockingly one-sided, in favor of the war sentiment. Below, we highlight two notable exceptions, Rep. Alan Grayson (D-Fla.), during the March 25 markup in the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.) during the House floor debate March 27.

Grayson

The following excerpt was published by theblaze.com:

“You may say that [Yanukovich] was thrown out of office for good reason. There are allegations against him that he was corrupt; there are allegations against him that he used the military against his own people to stay in power. But the fact is that from the perspec-



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Florida Rep. Alan Grayson

tive of the Crimeans, *their leader, the one* that they placed in charge of their country, was thrown out of power. So it should come as no surprise—as Secretary Kerry recognized—that the Crimeans had had enough, and they wanted to leave this artificial entity called the Ukraine.

“Now, in fact, the Russians *did assist*, they assisted by disarming the local Ukrainian army and navy. That’s what they did. They did it virtually bloodlessly. They did that so that the Ukrainian army and navy could not interfere with the referendum that was held. That is the fact of the matter.

“Why are we pretending otherwise? Why are we speaking about *naked aggression*? Why are we speaking about stealing Crimea, why are we speaking about bullying, or the new Soviet Union, or thuggery, or audacious power-grabbing, or *bully-bear* Putin, or Cold War II? I’m surprised [Rep.] Judge Poe [R-Tex.] didn’t tell us that an *Iron Curtain* has descended over Sevastapol.

“This is not some new Cold War that’s occurring. In fact, it’s quite the contrary. We should be *pleased* to see; pleased to see, when a virtually bloodless transfer of power establishes self-determination for two million people somewhere in the world—anywhere in world. And in fact, what we’re seeing here instead, is the vilification of Putin; the vilification of Yanukovych; the vilification of *anybody* that we try to identify as our enemy. Before that it was Saddam Hussein; since then it’s Assad. This does not help. The basic principle here is self-determination. That’s what’s happened in Crimea, and it’s not for us to determine otherwise” (emphases in original).

Rohrabacher

Rohrabacher is the head of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats.

“Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation, and I realize that I am a lone voice—or almost a lone voice—in this discussion today. I see this legislation as a bipartisan green light to reigniting the cold war. Unfortunately, many of my friends and colleagues, both colleagues today and my friends from the time when I spent in the Reagan White House, 7 years, many of these people feel that the cold war is not over, that it never did end. They are more comfortable with treating Russia as if it were still under Communist rule.

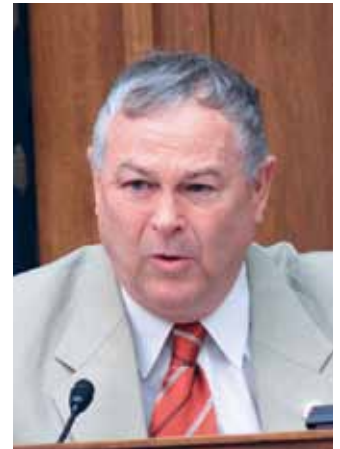
“Well, Putin is not a Communist leader. Putin is a nationalist who loves his country and he is looking out for the national interests of his country. For us to try to demonize him and to try to suggest that he is doing this as he did in the cold war and he is still KGB, et cetera, is not doing the cause of peace any good.

“This is what started this whole slide in the wrong direction toward the type of confrontation we are having today. In Ukraine, a democratically elected President was removed from power, and that was a democratically elected President who is more inclined towards better relations with Russia. He was removed from power. And then the Russian Government, under Mr. Putin, decided to ensure the people of Crimea the right to self-determination. Because even Secretary of State Kerry has verified and testified before our committee that the people of Crimea obviously want to be part of Russia; this is not a power grab. This is defending their right to self determination, and certainly the people of Crimea have the right to make that determination just as the people of Kosovo had their right to leave Serbia behind.

“Our military action there to try to protect the right of self determination of the Kosovars, it cost many, many lives. This Russian military move, with all this power grab, et cetera, has resulted in the loss of one life. That is in stark contrast to when we bombed Belgrade, we bombed Serbia.

“No, we should not permit ourselves to reignite a cold war. We should make sure that we realize that the actions we are taking here suggesting the United States must rush in and be the arbiter in every one of these type of conflicts is always stretching our budget. But in this particular bill, we are going to put our name on a loan of \$800 billion to a country that we are going have to borrow the money from China to get.

“The United States can no longer afford to right every wrong in the world and be the arbiter. In this case we would be arbitrating in the wrong direction.”



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California Rep. Dana Rohrabacher