

Lewis Libby Bestrides Underworld of Empire

by Anton Chaitkin

Lewis Libby, chief of staff and national security aide to Vice President Dick Cheney, is a leader of the Administration faction promoting war with Iraq and a global explosion of other conflicts. Despite his power and importance, it is understandable that Libby is shielded from the public view; that no biographical sketch has been published. Lewis Libby's career so blatantly represents the gangsterism driving events to a catastrophe, that as a leader of the war project, he must cling to the shadows.

His life has alternated between two closely intertwined tracks. For half of the years since 1980, sponsored by Paul Wolfowitz (his Yale professor), Libby has pushed imperial war schemes from within government posts. *EIR* has previously published details of Libby's role with the "chicken-hawks." For the other half of these two decades, Libby has been an attorney for the "godfather" of Russia's "Mafiya" killers and mass looters, Marc Rich—work performed entirely under Libby's mentor and law partner, Leonard Garment.

Wolfowitz is now Deputy Secretary of Defense. He and Libby supply the "brains" for their war-mad superiors, Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Marc Rich is currently a target of several nations' law enforcement agencies' crackdown on an immense Russian Mafiya money-laundering scheme, despite the pardon for Rich that Libby and his clique orchestrated from President Clinton.

Leonard Garment, Nixon's Reinventor

Following a 1983 indictment, Rich fled the United States, facing 325 years in prison; the official charges specified only trading with the enemy (Iran) and tax evasion, leaving untouched Rich's plundering of Africa, decimating of Russia, and bloody organized-crime operations in New York. Libby told investigators for the House Government Reform Committee, on March 1, 2001: "In the Spring of 1985, Mr. Rich . . . asked Mr. Leonard Garment, a Washington attorney, to represent [him] in connection with an outstanding criminal indictment. At the time, Mr. Rich had already renounced his U.S. citizenship and was living in Switzerland. . . . About this time, Mr. Garment asked me to join his firm. Mr. Garment assigned me to help assess [possible] legal defenses to the tax and energy fraud charges to which the Rich companies had already pled guilty." Libby left his post under Wolfowitz in the Reagan Administration, went to work for Garment and



Lewis Libby's in-the-shadows role as power-broker out of Vice President Cheney's office, is not really separable from his other role, lawyer for international swindler Marc Rich over the past two decades.

Rich, returned for a stint in the next Republican Administration, went back again to Garment and Rich, and once more back to the official war business under Cheney as Vice President. Through these decades, the Rich enterprise has paid millions of dollars for his services.

The power faction that has employed Libby, both in and out of government, is the subject of our inquiry.

Leonard Garment has gained slight fame as President Richard Nixon's attorney in the Watergate scandal, and even less notoriety as the lawyer for Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard's recruiter and controller, Col. Aviem Sella, and for gangster Rich. Garment and his friend, Purple Gang mobster and Dope, Inc. billionaire Max Fisher, working together as a team, have had increasing influence in the Republican Party since the 1960s. A thoroughly sanitized version of their story is told in two books, Garment's autobiography (*Crazy Rhythm*, 1997, written in cooperation with his law partner Libby), and the Max Fisher authorized biography (*Quiet Diplomat*, by Peter Golden, 1992).

Richard Nixon, formerly U.S. Vice President, had been defeated for the Presidency by John Kennedy in 1960, and defeated again two years later running for California governor. Looking for a fresh start, Nixon moved to New York in 1963 and joined the Wall Street law firm of Mudge, Rose. Leonard Garment, a rising partner at that firm, befriended Nixon, introduced him politically and assured the humbled politician that Destiny was calling. The Max Fisher biography quotes Garment: "Wall Street was not Nixon's natural field of action. In politics, people are very direct. . . . However, on Wall Street, it's a very complicated, convoluted language. And then you have country clubs and golf and private clubs in town. That was not Richard Nixon's cup of tea."

In 1967 Garment organized the cynical advertising for "The New Nixon" to win the Presidency in 1968. As Garment comments in his autobiography, "Joe McGuinniss's book *The Selling of the President* . . . bestowed fame, fortune and legendary status on the Nixon advertising campaign and its per-

petrators, the members of our media [group].” Victory put Garment into a select White House circle.

Max Fisher put huge sums into the 1968 race, money originating largely from organized crime. He reputedly had carried cash for the Detroit Purple Gang across the Canadian border in payments for drugs and booze, and was an owner in the Gang-controlled oil industry. Garment and Fisher worked together through the Nixon Administration. Introducing Fisher in his autobiography, Garment speaks of “my organizing . . . meetings for the American Jewish leaders with Nixon and [National Security Advisor Henry] Kissinger. The principal force behind these meetings was . . . Max Fisher, who had amassed a large fortune in the oil business. . . . His exploits in forging an alliance between Israel and a succession of Republican presidents deserve—and have gotten—a whole book [i.e., the Fisher authorized biography].” Fisher and Garment’s power faction shifted a section of the American Jewish community from liberalism into right-wing politics. Their allies in Israel moved Israel to the right. This gangster/right-wing axis has become the nightmare Likud government in Israel today.

When Nixon plunged into trouble for covering up the Watergate bugging adventure, Garment became official Counsel to the President. Garment and Fisher got the embattled Nixon to send massive arms shipments to Israel during the 1973 Mideast war that coincided with the Watergate crisis.

Criminalizing Politics

Fisher and Garment operated together in pressuring Russia on Jewish emigration. As one result, gangsters, many of them not Jews, poured into Israel, into New York, out of and back into a disintegrating Soviet Union. Rich, a financial contributor to this process and acknowledged agent of the Israeli Mossad, became a kingpin of the wildest criminals sprung from Russia.

For example, Rich, his New York partner Ronald Greenwald, and Israeli Likud operative Shabtai Kalmanowitch created a front company which ran Bophuthatswana in Africa, bringing in money-laundering casinos and taking over the country’s platinum mines. In 1985—the same year that fugitive Rich hired Garment and Garment hired Libby—Rich, Greenwald, Kalmanowitch, and a team of Israelis tied to Ariel Sharon made a coup d’état in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Most of the country’s diamonds were smuggled into the black market through Russian Mafiya routes. Kalmanowitch was later arrested in London, extradited to the United States, skipped bail, and fled to Israel, where he was again arrested, charged with spying for the KGB.

Garment represented Rich through various law firms. Libby, Garment’s protégé, followed Garment into employment at Dickstein, Shapiro and Morin (in 1986-89); Mudge, Rose, the old Nixon firm (after 1992); and Dechert Price & Rhoads (late 1990s).

In 1989 Libby switched into the Pentagon, where he and

Wolfowitz urged then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to adopt a global pre-emptive warfare doctrine in response to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Cheney embraced it, but the elder President Bush and his other advisors kept this insanity somewhat contained. It emerged as a reigning doctrine after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Along the way, Garment’s sponsor, Max Fisher, took control (in 1975) of the United Fruit Company, renamed United Brands. This banana firm in effect ruled Central America, sponsored coups and dictators, and was blamed by anti-drug officials for running about 20% of the cocaine and marijuana coming into the United States in the 1970s. Fisher and United Fruit influence moved Israeli arms into Western Hemisphere covert wars—a circuit that wound up in the crimes of Iran-Contra in the mid-1980s.

The year Fisher became United Brands chairman, President Gerald Ford granted his request to appoint Leonard Garment to the UN Human Rights Commission. After working in New York with Ambassador to the UN Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Garment and a team of “neo-conservatives” ran a Moynihan-for-Senate campaign, setting the mold for a new breed of Democratic Party operatives for the gangster/Israeli right-wing axis. In the 1980s, this corrupt cross-party apparatus was formalized: Michael Steinhardt—half-billionaire son of a Meyer Lansky syndicate fence, Wall Street speculator, and Marc Rich’s New York investment partner—founded the “centrist” Democratic Leadership Council. Steinhardt chaired the DLC until 1995, when he turned it over to Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.). In 1996, Steinhardt visited the exiled Rich in Switzerland, and began planning the campaign to get Rich a pardon. He coordinated with Mossad operative Avner Azulay, head of the Rich Foundation in Israel.

Since Democrat Clinton was the target, Democrat Jack Quinn was retained by the Rich-Garment-Libby-Steinhardt forces, and officially managed the pardon case. Quinn was formerly Vice President Al Gore’s chief of staff, and was known as a loyalist for the Gore/DLC side, following their instructions even when he had nominally worked for President Clinton. Libby told the Congressional probers, “Sometime in 1999, I first learned that Mr. Rich had . . . retained Mr. Jack Quinn. . . . I participated in efforts to brief Mr. Quinn about the case and the subsequent efforts to prepare yet another request to the southern district.”

Beginning with the June 2002 “Operation Spiderweb” crackdown on the Russian Mafiya, a law enforcement net has gradually been closing once again on Rich—his partnership with arms trader Grigori Loutchansky, launderer of Soviet, Russian, and Israeli dirty money; and other Rich companies involved in laundering stolen Russian assets into Israel, among other crimes. It is now imperative that Lewis Libby, the beneficiary and prime protector of this underworld empire, be removed from the levers of power, before he helps drag the world into a disaster.