

LaRouche case could expose Bush-Irangate link

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Even as President George Bush continues to stay one step ahead of those detractors who accuse him of major criminal involvement in the Iran-Contra affair, investigations by this news service continue to turn up hard proof of key Bush aides' witting roles in the political frame-up and jailing of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

Top among the list of Bush intimates caught up in the growing LaRouche scandal is ethics "guru" and White House General Counsel C. Boyden Gray. Gray served throughout the Reagan years as Vice President Bush's chief counsel, a position from which he also played a major role in White House intelligence operations, according to one retired senior military officer. At the outset of the Irangate scandal, Gray was caught drafting a doctored chronology of George Bush's involvement in the Iran-Contra affair that omitted crucial Bush meetings with such pivotal players as CIA operative Felix Rodriguez (a.k.a. Max Gomez) and Israeli counter-terrorism official and Oliver North intimate Amiram Nir.

Bush's by now infamous meeting with Nir at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem during the summer of 1986 prompted a British television network to air a 30-minute documentary on Feb. 16, asserting that Nir was the actual architect of the disastrous arms-for-hostages policy adopted by the Reagan administration. The Thames TV documentary, while never accusing President Bush of involvement in Nir's mysterious death in a plane crash in Mexico last December, strongly suggested that if anyone was in possession of the "smoking gun" proving Bush's Irangate role, it was Nir, and

that no one benefited more by Nir's untimely death than the President.

The London *Times* even more recently suggested that John Tower had been given the secretary of defense post as payback for his role in the Tower Commission whitewash of Bush's Irangate role. And the London satire sheet *Private Eye*, which is known for its leaks from Britain's intelligence services, ran an early February report on Robert M. Sensei, the London-based head of Republicans Abroad and an alleged Bush intimate, who was convicted in 1988 of stealing millions of dollars from Kuwaiti Airways while working as a secret agent for CIA director William Casey in the mid-1980s. Sensei defended himself (unsuccessfully) by saying that he was operating under secret permission of the Kuwaiti Royal Household to aid Oliver North in shipping arms to Iran in exchange for the release of American hostages.

The Bush-Irangate story, however, remains long on accusations and short on hard evidence, 18 months after the congressional probe, a presidential campaign that saw armies of investigative reporters crossing the globe seeking the Bush-Irangate connections, and a special prosecutor's investigation.

No such ambiguity or lack of a paper trail exists with respect to Bush's office and the LaRouche affair. In fact, any investigator out to lift the veil of secrecy surrounding the Bush Irangate connection would do well to focus on the LaRouche frame-up, which involved some of the very same players who were caught up in the middle of what Sen. David

Boren during Irangate hearings called the “secret parallel government.”

A paper trail to the White House

On Oct. 6, 1986, over 400 federal, state, and local police invaded the Leesburg, Virginia headquarters of this magazine, seizing millions of documents and arresting three long-time associates of Lyndon LaRouche on phony charges of credit card fraud and conspiracy to obstruct justice. In a pair of superseding indictments over the next 10 months, four other individuals—including LaRouche himself—were indicted on the obstruction conspiracy count.

From the outset, the defendants labeled the entire affair a government frame-up, motivated by, among other things, recent victories of LaRouche-backed candidates in major regional elections around the United States, and LaRouche and *EIR*'s strident opposition to Reagan administration policies and covert operations in Central America, the Far East, and Europe. In effect, the defense attorneys charged, a “Get LaRouche” interagency task force had been created at the Reagan-Bush White House.

On Feb. 26, 1988, three months into the LaRouche trial in Boston federal court, Lawrence Walsh, the Irangate Special Prosecutor, declassified and released to the defendants a May 5, 1986 secret cable from Richard Secord to Oliver North that had been seized from the Old Executive Office Building safe of NSC staffer North. The six-line document, which had been transmitted over special scrambler transmitters, provided to *The Enterprise* (the “private” name given to the North-Secord Contra resupply operation) by the National Security Agency (NSA), stated:

“051625Z May 86. Our source reports that terrorists plan to use airfield near Texas border. Strip is at intersection of Marfa vor 280 radial and Hudspeth vor 168 radial. Lewis has met with FBI and other agency reps and is apparently meeting again today. Our man here claims Lewis has collected info against Larouche—let’s see how polygraph goes. Rgds, Dick. BT”

In a meeting between defense attorneys and Assistant U.S. Attorney John Markham at which the Secord-to-North cable was handed over, Markham told the LaRouche lawyers on the record that the “our man here” referred to by Secord was Oliver B. Revell, the deputy director of the FBI and the Bureau’s representative on the White House interagency task force that ran the Iran-Contra project. The government subsequently tried to backtrack on this admission, claiming that “our man here” was actually a reference to an aide to Secord.

The fact that a document seized from the safe of Oliver North proved that the National Security Council’s *Enterprise* was engaged in an anti-LaRouche effort in the spring of 1986, coincides precisely with the efforts of then-U.S. Attorney William Weld, who, according to documents released through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), held a war council

in Boston in February of the same year to plot out a nationwide series of phony criminal prosecutions against LaRouche and his collaborators.

On March 1, 1988, in response to an order from Judge Robert Keeton, defense attorneys were provided with a copy of another document referencing “Lewis” and operations “against LaRouche.” This highly unusual government memo, undated, with no letterhead or any other identifiable markings, was a cut-and-paste compilation of eight paragraphs from a four-page FBI secret document, apparently written on May 1, 1986, several days before the Secord to North communiqué.

The subject of the document was a series of interviews conducted by FBI agents in El Paso and San Antonio, Texas on May 1, 1986 with Frederick Lewis, Ron Tucker, and Gary S. Howard.

According to that memo, “A search of FBIHQ indices concerning Lewis, Tucker, and Howard determined that during 1984, they were in contact with supporters of Lyndon LaRouche. . . . During December 1984, the FBI attempted to interview Lewis concerning his contacts with LaRouche. However, Lewis advised that all inquiries directed to him should be directed through his attorney pursuant to an alleged agreement his people made through the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the FBI. . . .

“The above FBIHQ indices information was provided to San Antonio and El Paso prior to their interview of Lewis, Howard, and Tucker. When asked about their possible ties to LaRouche, they claimed they had previously been requested by the FBI and CIA to penetrate the LaRouche organization.”

The memo also reported the following curious exchange between the three would-be LaRouche infiltrators and their FBI interrogators:

“Lewis, Tucker, and Howard indicated they have a very high level source in the Federal Government who advises them regularly concerning cooperation or the lack thereof between Lewis and his associates and the Federal Government.”

Who was the Texas trio referring to? Strong circumstantial evidence points to C. Boyden Gray in the Office of the Vice President.

The release of the memos, proving the defense’s charges of a government “Get LaRouche” interagency group, drew nationwide headlines. In a March 27, 1988 interview with the *Washington Post*, Gary S. Howard told reporter John F. Harris that the trio was in contact with C. Boyden Gray. The specific subject of one May 1986 meeting between Gray and the Texans was the information contained in the May 5 Secord to North cable, according to Howard’s statements to the *Post*. Subsequent inquiries by *EIR* and by other publications indicated that the Texas-based trio had regular access to Gray, due to George Bush’s close relationship with Midland, Texas

Sheriff Gary Painter. Howard and Tucker had been deputy sheriffs under Painter since his election in 1984. Midland, Texas is George Bush's hometown.

Furthermore, on June 29, 1987, Howard and Tucker had filed a multi-million dollar civil suit against the U.S. Customs Service in the United States Claims Court in Washington, D.C., charging that the government had failed to pay them expenses and a sizable "bounty" for their role in the Customs "sting" operation code-named Houston III, in which British arms dealer Ian Smalley was indicted and eventually acquitted of charges he sold arms to the Ayatollah. In an Oct. 22, 1987 affidavit by Gary Howard, filed in response to a government motion to dismiss the case, the Texan listed, among the leading witnesses he would call, none other than Boyden Gray.

According to court records in *Gary Howard and Ronald Tucker v. U.S.A.* (Civil No. 386-87 C), the two Texans had been working as "sting" agents for the U.S. Customs Service and other federal agencies nonstop since 1979, "in investigations ranging from dope smuggling, counterinsurgency, commando training, and covert military operations."

The 'Get LaRouche' operation

By no later than August 1984, according to other, previously classified CIA and FBI documents released during the early phases of the Boston LaRouche case, Howard, Lewis, and Tucker were involved in a series of highly illegal "sting" operations targeted at associates of Lyndon LaRouche.

In August 1984, Frederick Lewis was introduced to this writer by a former Air Force sergeant named Bob McWilliams. At the time, a LaRouche colleague in Bogotá, Colombia, Patricia Londoño, had been kidnaped by associates of the Medellín Cartel and held for several days before eventually being released as the result of enormous international pressure. Londoño was in a hospital in Cali, Colombia recovering from the ordeal and preparing to travel to the United States under security escort.

Lewis had been interviewed in Washington in early August and was being considered for possible participation in a trip to Colombia to escort Mrs. Londoño back to Washington. He was not hired for the mission, and in a letter to this writer dated Aug. 12, 1984, Lewis expressed disappointment at not having been hired, but proposed a follow-up meeting, because "my guys in Dallas just called me, they have some very interesting information ref Iran/Nigeria."

This writer did indeed travel to Dallas in early September 1984 to interview Howard and Tucker on their investigations into arms smuggling to Iran. What the Texans were proposing was a high-priced contract to provide "exclusive" stories on their exploits in the world of undercover investigative work.

The contact with the Texans was terminated at that point. Late in the year, however, Howard and company surfaced in the middle of a harebrained scheme to "rescue" Soviet scientist Andrei Sakharov from a Soviet gulag and bring him to

the West. *EIR* learned of the scheme when two relatives of Sakharov, living in exile in Boston, Massachusetts, contacted Lyndon LaRouche for possible aid in the venture. LaRouche, in a series of discussions with the relatives, bowed out of the affair and cautioned them against any dreams of a "Mission Impossible" escape from Russia for their relative. Cautioning them more generally about con men posing as international soldiers of fortune, LaRouche offered to help the two relatives to steer clear of a possible scam.

When the pair referred a LaRouche associate to Gary Howard as the "mastermind" of the escape plot, price-tagged at \$2 million, alarm bells went off and the Sakharov family members were warned to stay away from Howard.

Lies, infiltrations, and frame-ups

In September 1987, at the start of the LaRouche trial in Boston, the Central Intelligence Agency was ordered by the court to produce a series of previously classified documents which the court found to be exculpatory to the defendants.

Among those documents were a series of CIA "Memoranda for the Record." The first one, dated Sept. 20, 1984, within weeks of the Dallas meeting, described the Londoño escort project in the following terms:

"1) On 20 September, [redacted] the [redacted] called me to report the following: 'A very reliable contact of mine says that Geoffrey Steinberg is in the Washington area attempting to recruit former and present CIA employees. Steinberg wants them to work as a drug assassination squad in Columbia and Bolivia. Steinberg has some \$20 million in a Swiss bank account and \$1/2 million with him. He is associated with Linden LaRouche.'

"2) [redacted] says that he passed this information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. I passed this information to Deputy Director for Security [redacted], Deputy Director for Personnel [redacted], Associate Deputy Director for Administration [redacted] and National Intelligence Officer for [redacted]."

The second document in the sequence, dated Sept. 26, 1984, was from the Director of Security of the CIA to the Director of the FBI, now CIA director William Webster. It stated, in part:

"1) On 20 September 1984, a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employee, Mr. [redacted] telephonically advised a current employee that one Jeffrey Steinberg is allegedly attempting to recruit personnel to assassinate unnamed persons in Bolivia and Columbia. Steinberg is reportedly attempting to recruit Cuban nationals who worked for CIA as well as CIA retirees and active duty personnel with a paramilitary background. [redacted] advised that Steinberg has attempted to contact CIA employees in [redacted]. Steinberg is reported to have twenty million dollars at his disposal. . . .

"3) In a subsequent call to the same employee on 25 September 1984, Mr. [redacted] advised that an unidentified

U.S. Government installation in Texas dealing in armaments may be targeted by a LaRouche group. . . .

"4) The information concerning Steinberg's alleged recruiting was verbally passed to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Liaison Officer [redacted] on 21 September 1984. Mr. [redacted] advised that a U.S. Senator had also passed the information to the FBI and the White House."

As the result of these wild fabrications passed by Howard, Lewis, and/or Tucker into the official files of the CIA, the FBI, and the White House, an FBI criminal probe was conveniently launched into Lyndon LaRouche. Within weeks of the Howard-Lewis-Tucker triggered FBI probe, Boston U.S. Attorney William Weld launched his "Get LaRouche" assault.

According to the *Washington Post* interview with Howard, shortly after the trio planted their wild tale into the files of the FBI and CIA, a meeting took place at the office of Washington, D.C. attorney F. Keith Adkinson to discuss an infiltration of the "LaRouche organization." Representatives of both the FBI and CIA were present. Adkinson, in an interview with the *American Lawyer* in May 1988, largely corroborated the story:

"One abortive attempt to infiltrate the group was allegedly made in 1984 by Adkinson clients, Gary Howard and Ronald Tucker, two Texas soldiers of fortune who claim they were acting as informants for the FBI and the CIA. Adkinson says that he held one meeting with Howard and Tucker at which the subject of infiltrating LaRouche's organization was discussed. And in the classic tradition of a boastful spook, Adkinson hints that this meeting was attended by others—whom he refused to identify. He leaves the listener with the unmistakable impression that the unnamed others were government agents."

A former congressional aide to Sens. Henry Jackson and Sam Nunn, Adkinson was the 1980 chairman of Democrats for Reagan, a rightwing social democratic campaign organization that was co-chaired by Elliot Abrams, later the Undersecretary of State for Inter-American Affairs and a key Iran-Contra insider. Prior to his congressional work, Adkinson had been with the law firm of Hollywood lawyer Greg Bowsler, who counts among his longtime clients Henry Kissinger and mob figure Sidney Korshak.

Howard and Tucker's overseas exploits

Simultaneous with their 1984 and 1986 anti-LaRouche efforts, Gary Howard and Ron Tucker were involved in their stock and trade of running "sting" operations for various federal agencies, including, apparently, the Office of the Vice President. It seems that the Texans, as part of their efforts against "covert military operations," went after a number of arms smugglers who were horning in on the business of The Enterprise—selling arms to Khomeini.

Considerable evidence of their exploits came out during a March 1988 trial at Old Bailey's Court in London. British

arms dealer Michael Aspin and three others were accused of plotting to sell 5,000 TOW missiles to Khomeini during 1985. Aspin's defense was that he had thought the effort was being conducted on behalf of the Reagan administration, and that he was operating under official sanction.

Aspin and his brother Leslie, who had longstanding ties to the CIA, both testified at the trial about meetings in West Germany with Irangate operative Ted Shackley, and in London with Ollie North. But the main contact between the American administration and the London arms traffickers, according to the court records, was through Gary Howard and Ron Tucker.

On April 20, 1988, the London *Daily Telegraph* carried a transcript of a taped conversation between Howard and Michael Aspin. The pair were discussing the proposed sale of TOWs to Iran. Aspin began by asking Howard, "What bank will this come from, Gary?" Howard responded, "One of the Chases." Then Aspin: "It's being worked officially now, is it?" Howard: "No, it's being worked unofficially. We can't play this kind of game officially to my knowledge." Aspin: "You mean you are getting the support of your government." And finally, Howard: "You've got it."

A line of inquiry

Clearly, Howard, Lewis, and Tucker are three among a myriad of shady characters who managed to insert themselves into the middle of the Reagan-Bush national security structure. Literally scores of names came up during the course of the Iran-Contra congressional hearings of would-be covert operators who latched onto one or another of The Enterprise's fiascos. Yet, the case of Howard, Lewis, and Tucker bears the unique signature of one of the most critical figures in the immediate orbit of George Bush.

C. Boyden Gray, who has been called "the man who kept the secrets" for Bush, opened his doors, apparently on more than one occasion, to the Texans. According to eyewitness accounts in London, Howard claimed that he was involved in the establishment of a super secret bureau under the direct control of the White House, with support from the Pentagon and the NSC. Howard made these claims in April 1986—during the time frame in which Secord and North were tapping into Lewis for "info against LaRouche."

The Howard-Gray link may very well hold the key to George Bush's role in the secret government. Prior to entering the government as Bush's general counsel, C. Boyden Gray had been a law partner for over 14 years of Lloyd Cutler of Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering. Cutler, a Democratic Party power broker, was Jimmy Carter's White House general counsel. The Gray-Cutler law firm epitomizes the backroom dealings between the controllers of the two major political parties in the United States—backroom dealings that were covered up systematically during the course of all the Iran-Contra investigations.

—To be continued.