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Essay; 1st Global Political Scandal

By **WILLIAM SAFIRE** NOV. 12, 1992

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On Election Day 1992, forty months after the F.B.I. raid on the Atlanta B.N.L. bank funding our illegal arms buildup of Saddam Hussein, Deputy Attorney General George Terwilliger III sent a memo to all Department of Justice section chiefs. It reveals the current strategy of the Iraqgate cover-up: Finger the C.I.A.

"Anyone who currently possesses . . . information in the possession of the intelligence community regarding the B.N.L. matter," he wrote his fellow political appointees, "and the Department's awareness and/or receipt of that information, is directed to supply any such documents to Charles Platt of Judge Lacey's staff. . . ."

Terwilliger III then added the kicker that career prosecutors in the Criminal Division tell me is evidence that the new in-house counsel has been drawn into the worldwide obstruction of justice: ". . . with a copy to Dennis Saylor, Special Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, immediately."

When an Iraqgate grand jury is finally impaneled, one of its targets is likely to be **Robert Mueller**, that same Criminal Division's chief. Here we have the political flunky to that likely target getting copies of, and trying to act as conduit for, all evidence that might be used in questioning his bosses under oath.

The day following this improper intercession ("for coordination purposes"), Judge Lacey sent Justice attorneys a memo quoting my observation in this space that "veteran straight arrows will not wish retaliation by volunteering evidence to their political boss's patsy prosecutor -- but will testify about their superior's wrongful interferences when a grand jury is convened by a court-appointed independent counsel."

The patsy prosecutor then solemnly promised: "You have my word that I will accord to any communication you have with me the same confidentiality it would be given were it to be in the form of Grand Jury testimony." If that's so, why send a copy to the suspects?

Coverup-**General Barr** and **Mr. Mueller** were instrumental in appointing the lawyer for the American subsidiary of the British company Matrix Churchill to be U.S. Attorney in Atlanta a few months after the raid on the Atlanta bank.

Matrix Churchill's key officers in Britain, standing trial for running a front for arms sales to Iraq, were suddenly set free this week. We now have proof that they were in effect agents of the British Government, directing the flow of weaponry to Saddam Hussein -- apparently in cooperation with the Italian Government, which owns B.N.L., and with the Bush Administration, which sought to build up Iraq covertly.

Iraqgate is the first global political scandal. The leaders of three major nations are implicated in a criminal conspiracy: first, to misuse taxpayer funds and public agencies in the clandestine buildup of a terrorist dictator; then to abuse the intelligence and banking services of these nations to conceal the dirty deed; finally, to try to thwart the inexorable course of justice.

Iraqgate is also the largest ripoff of the U.S. Treasury in our history. The Italian Ambassador prevailed on the U.S. Attorney General to block investigation of banking officials in Rome; Justice then forbade its own investigators to go abroad. That political protection of corrupt banking guarantees ultimately cost the U.S. taxpayers \$1.9 billion.

Were the intelligence services of the U.S., Britain and Italy all aware of -- and participants in -- the West's secret, unlawful arming of Saddam? Of course; but the stonewalling strategy of the departing Justice politicians is to have the C.I.A. take the gaspipe for all the wrongdoers. That's why Terwilliger III is seeking "lost" C.I.A. memos for house counsel (copies to the suspects).

At the same time, all the Coverup-General's men are trying to piggyback on a Weinberger pardon plea. The Iraqgate crew, citing President Bush's N.S.D. 26 as its license to break the law, wants its sins forgotten as part of an Iran-contra pardoning orgy. Mr. Bush, if he wants to depart in style, should eschew that dishonor.

Instead he should call on his A.G. to respond to Senate Judiciary's call by Nov. 18, as the law requires, by seeking court-appointed independent counsel who could work with Britain's independent judge and with independent Italian magistrates.

That's how to uncover the first global political scandal.

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