

## *Those Skeletons in Her Closet*

# How Vulnerable Is Hillary?

If Hillary Clinton truly enters the race against Rudy Giuliani, and the word we hear from the White House is that she definitely plans to, it will be the first time she'll be standing square in the sights as a candidate, and forced to respond directly to all charges flung at her along the campaign trail. It's true that she's been the target of investigation before, but the venues of combat have been depositions, a grand jury session and one appearance before Congress to justify her health program, where the legislators treated her with ermine gloves.

So what are her immediate vulnerabilities, after seven years of close scrutiny? Remember, 80 to 90 percent of the Whitewater scandal had HRC's fingerprints all over it. She was the corporate lawyer who finagled the lucrative land swaps and mortgage scams that had Seth Ward, Webb Hubbell's father-in-law, acting as a money channel.

It was the billing records from that phase of the Clinton's property operations that first went missing and finally came to light in HRC's private quarters. By her own admission, HRC was handling all the Whitewater financial work for the Clintons.

HRC's riposte to onslaughts by Giuliani on such matters will no doubt be that she and Bill have emerged unscathed from the most ferocious scrutiny in American investigative history, by Ken Starr and his team. But Starr never did issue a report on Whitewater, and HRC narrowly escaped indictment for perjury committed in the course of her grand jury deposition testimony. Hickman Ewing was handling this aspect of Whitewater for the Starr probe. He found that HRC was safe under the statute of limitations for what she did back in the Whitewater era, but was open to a perjury rap.

In the end Starr didn't have the nerve, but HRC may not be quite out of these particular woods yet. HRC's erstwhile partner at the Rose Law Firm, Webb Hubbell, has now had Starr's charges restored against him by a federal appeals court, and faces trial on the matter of whether he was bribed to silence when he

got highly lucrative consultancy fees after he'd left the Justice Dept. and, in some cases, after he'd been indicted.

This Hubbell trial is set to start in August of this year, and HRC will obviously be a prime focus of the prosecutor and the press. Hubbell is looking at some serious prison time if he goes down and might have some incentive to sing.

As a corporate lawyer HRC has plenty of unwholesome skeletons rattling in the closet, quite aside from Whitewater. The Rose law firm is not a charitable institution. Its work in the sale of the Beverly nursing home chain is perhaps something that Giuliani's researchers will take a passing interest in, since the sale did leave a number of old folk facing higher fees and all the discomforts attendant on being kicked out in the snow.

Then there was the LaFarge cement and incineration business on whose board HRC sat. Any third-party Green candidate might take an interest in the conduct of this enterprise. And as HRC tries to muster the support of New York's labor unions, Giuliani will perhaps evoke her years on the Wal-Mart board, a company not noted for its admiration for the proud tradition of Gompers and Debs.

There's the matter of HRC's inexplicable enrichment, to use a phrase that Mexican prosecutors hung around the neck of Raul Salinas. Salinas has had to explain how he got more than \$120 million from Mexico to a Swiss bank. In HRC's case the sum was piddling by comparison, a tad under \$100,000. But it was the manner in which, under the kindly guidance of Jim Blair, chief corporate counsel for Tyson Foods, and also of the futures magician "Red" Bone, Hillary's modest investment of \$1000 in cattle futures bloated up to the \$100,000 level that HRC has always had some difficulty in explaining.

More unsettled business comes in the form of Travelgate, another chapter in the Starr investigation. Starr did say nothing impeachable had come out of his

Travelgate probe, so far as Bill Clinton was concerned. But Bill was a peripheral figure in that affair. HRC was at the heart of Travelgate. David Watkins, a deputy White House counsel ultimately forced to resign for over-ebullient use of White House helicopters, did make notes—now in possession of the Starr team—recording that it was HRC who wanted Billy Dale and his staff "out now".

Suppose HRC accuses Giuliani of violating civil rights and of having about his person the aroma of the police state. Now imagine the righteous prosecutorial finger of Rudy Giuliani pointing straight back at HRC, reminding her and the voters of New York of Filegate. Once again, HRC seems to have been the person who brought on board Craig Livingstone, former barroom bouncer, to head up White House security and amass several hundred files on enemies of the Clintons, possibly including Rudy Giuliani himself. Will HRC defend the cruel erosions of civil liberties accomplished on her husband's watch? What will she say about her husband's Effective Death Penalty Act?

HRC will defend herself from all charges of scandal by deploring these souvenirs of Ken Starr's long and costly effort to beat down Bill Clinton. She will insist that Giuliani concentrate on substance. But her own record on substance isn't so hot. Her supervision of health reform back in 1994 ended in debacle. And although she will doubtless be offering herself as a friend of the poor and down-trodden, evoking her work as board member of Marian Wright Edelman's Children's Defense Fund, the dismantling of the welfare system occurring on the Clintons' watch is perhaps not a substantial achievement she will want to boast about. After all, Peter Edelman, Marian's husband, did resign from Health and Human Services in protest.

HRC has taken a principled stand...on Palestinian rights, and Giuliani has already lost no time in reminding voters of this.

***The Hubble trial is set to start in August and HRC will obviously be a prime focus of the prosecutor and the press.***

*Beaten and Paralyzed by Cops, Cut Off Medicaid, Ignored by the Press*

# Max Antoine: New Jersey's Louima

Is there a rationing policy by the press that we are allowed only one atrocity against a Haitian per decade? While the recent guilty plea of Justin Volpe in the Abner Louima torture trial generated some headlines, an equally brutal incident in Irvington, NJ, has passed by virtually without attention. This case involves a gang of cops who forced their way without probable cause into an apartment where a party was going on, hurled racist language, beat up several guests and nearly killed one of them, after he asked for their badge numbers. It also involves complicit emergency medical teams who refused treatment to the battered victims, a prosecutor's office that chose to go after the victims rather than the cops and an utterly indifferent press. In other words, a typical day on the streets in black America.

On June 2, 1996, Marie D. Antoine, a Haitian immigrant, was hosting a family birthday party at her apartment in Irvington. Apparently, one of the neighbors called Irvington police to complain about the noise. At 2 a.m., three Irvington police officers, Phillip Rucker, Alfredo Aleman and Keith Stouch arrived at the apartment and asked that the music volume be lowered. The stereo was turned off.

But 15 minutes later the police returned and forced their way inside. The officers entered without a warrant and without the consent of Marie Antoine.

When they came through the door, one of the officers allegedly yelled, "Get the fuck out, the party's over!" The officers searched the apartment, apparently for drugs, with flashlights. Frustrated that the guests did not immediately begin to leave, the police began pushing and shoving people out the door. At this point, Marie Antoine's brother Max, a paralegal who ran an accounting service, told the guests (most of whom were Haitians) that they had the right to be there and that in America the police weren't permitted to "act like the Ton Ton Macoutes." He asked his sister, Marie, to write down the officers' badge numbers so that he could file an official complaint.

Officer Rucker apparently overheard Max Antoine's comments. According to

numerous witnesses at the apartment, Rucker pushed his way through the crowd, knocking to the ground Marie (who was six months pregnant at the time), and grabbed Antoine by the neck. Rucker allegedly rammed Antoine's head into the wall. Then, guests say, Antoine was hit in the head by a nightstick swung "in a baseball-like fashion" by Officer Aleman.

Antoine dropped to the floor in agony. Now all three cops were on top of him, and witnesses say that Officer Stouch stomped on him while the other officers flailed away at his head and body with their nightsticks. Several of the guests tried to intervene, but they were shoved aside.

Meanwhile, the three cops dragged Max out of the apartment and into the hall, where he was kicked and beaten again. Marie Antoine tried to stop the abuse, asking, "What are you doing to my brother?" According to Marie, Officer Rucker turned to her and said, "I will teach him about

**According to Marie, Officer Rucker turned to her and said, "I will teach him about American law".**

American law." Max was then handcuffed and dragged down a flight of stairs, screaming in pain, as his five year-old daughter, Nelchael, watched in horror.

At the bottom of the stairs, witnesses report, the police picked Antoine off the floor and shoved him through the doorway, pushing his head through the glass pane on the storm door. Max was then placed in the back of the police cruiser and sprayed in the face with a burning chemical, most likely pepper spray.

By this time, 10 more police officers arrived on the scene. As in the Rodney King beating, none of them attempted to stop the attacks on Antoine. Instead, they cordoned off the area and sent all the guests inside the apartment.

Max Antoine's ordeal was far from over. When he reached the police station, he repeatedly asked for medical treatment. Instead, he was led across the lockup area and, still handcuffed, thrown into a cell and beaten and kicked again. Antoine says that when he asked to use the phone to call for an attorney, one of the officers snapped,

"Shut up and die like a man."

Despite the fact that he was bleeding profusely, police didn't call the emergency medical team until after Max Antoine had been booked. When the medics arrived, they refused to give him any medical attention. Antoine, whose injuries were numerous, excruciatingly painful and life-threatening, spent two nights in jail before he was released to his family.

Antoine was taken to St. Barnabas Hospital, where he was placed in intensive care. His injuries were serious and debilitating. He sustained a fractured left eye socket, a broken jaw, bowel and bladder damage and spinal injuries. Over the next few months, he underwent 17 surgeries, including lumbar and spinal implants.

The beating left Max Antoine permanently disabled. He is now paralyzed below the waist and blind in his left eye. He has suffered brain damage and has lost sexual function. According to his wife,

Max is often depressed and suicidal. His medical bills are piling up and he has no way to pay them off.

Antoine and several of the guests at his sister's party lodged complaints with the Irvington Police Dept. and the prosecutor's office. Ultimately, a grand jury was convened. But the prosecutors never called any witnesses and no charges or other disciplinary action was taken against the police officers.

The Antoines also sought the help of the Clinton administration. However, the Justice Dept. has so far refused to investigate the case.

Antoine, however, has been charged with resisting arrest and assaulting a police officer. He is slated to go to trial on July 26.

Antoine and his family have filed a civil suit against the Irvington police and the emergency medical service, saying his civil rights were violated and that he received inadequate medical care. Certainly, he has suffered awful ordeals because of (Antoine continued on page 7)