

# CounterPunch

APRIL 16-30, 2008

ALEXANDER COCKBURN AND JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

VOL. 15, NO. 8

*Bitter Struggle over Identity  
of 17th Reincarnation*

## Who Will be the Dalai Lama's Successor?

By Peter Lee

The Tibetan community's inherent suspicion about the sincerity of Chinese engagement was certainly deepened by the passage of a law on September 1, 2007, that would regularize selection of reincarnations by the Chinese government and forbid recognition of reincarnations outside China's boundaries.

Clearly, if the Dalai Lama dies in exile outside Tibet, the selection of his successor will be subject to Chinese interference and manipulation of the kind that has attended the selection of the Panchen Lama.

The Panchen Lama is, after the Dalai Lama, the most eminent figure in Tibetan Buddhism and a key figure in identifying the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama. Thanks to Chinese meddling, there are two Panchen Lamas now. One, a little boy of six at the time of his selection by the Dalai Lama in 1995, was immediately detained by the Chinese and has spent most of his life languishing in Chinese custody. The second Panchen Lama, subsequently designated by the Chinese government, has been unable to take up his seat at Tashilhunpo Monastery because of Tibetan opposition and currently resides in Beijing.

But a charismatic successor to the Dalai Lama apparently already exists in the exile community at Dharmasala, in the foothills of the Himalayas, in northern India.

He is Ogyen Trinley Dorje, head of the Kagyu (Black Hat) sect of Tibetan Buddhism. He is the Karmapa – a manifestation of Chenrezi, the Buddha of compassion in Tibetan Buddhism, as is the Dalai Lama – and is 17<sup>th</sup> reincarna-

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*Fixers Indicated HRC was Key in Pardon Deal*

## Bill Clinton and the Rich Women

By Jeffrey St. Clair

Despite her campaign's ongoing slurs against Bill Richardson, the nation's only Hispanic governor, Hillary Clinton probably feels like she has Puerto Rico, the final primary, in the bank. Those delegates were sown up nine years ago on August 16, 1999, when Bill Clinton issued commutations for 16 members of the FALN Puerto Rican nationalist group serving long sentences for robbery, bombings and sedition. That rare act of humanitarian intervention endeared the Clintons to many Puerto Ricans, obviating the sins committed by the administration at Vieques Island, which had been turned into a toxic bombing ground.

But if Hillary wants to claim credit for the FALN pardons (a strategic decision at the time, geared to helping her win a U.S. senate seat in New York), she should also own up to her role in a much more problematic case, the midnight pardon of billionaire fugitive Marc Rich.

Hillary has never addressed her role in the Rich pardon. In fact, she's rarely been asked her opinion on the free pass given to one of the world's most wanted fugitives, a man who violated embargoes against Iran and South Africa and fled the country rather than face trial in what was billed as "the biggest tax evasion case in history." The senator has variously said that she was "unaware" of the decision and "surprised" by it. When pressed, she merely cackles.

Even though 300 pages of core documents relating to the pardon decision remain under seal at the Clinton Library, a review of the available record tells a much different story. In fact, the Rich legal team viewed Hillary as a secret weapon, and as one door after another closed on their search for a pardon they focused more and more on invoking what Rich

lawyer Robert Fink called the "HRC option."

Who is Marc Rich? And why did he need a presidential pardon?

Born in Belgium to Jewish parents, Marc Rich moved with his family to the United States to escape Hitler. Young Marc soon went to work for a commodity firm in New York called Phillip Bros., later acquired by Salomon Brothers. He soon made his mark as an oil trader and, along with his friend Pincus "Pinky" Green, he is credited with inventing spot market trading in oil, ferrous metals and sugar. Billions flowed into the firm.

But Rich and "Pinky" Green felt underappreciated and underpaid. They bolted the firm, and Rich angrily vowed to "grind Phillip Bros. into oblivion." In 1974, the pair started their own holding company, eventually known as the Marc Rich Group, and began making oil deals with Iran, Iraq and wildcatters in Texas. He and Pinky were soon billionaires and big shots in the global petrochemical trade.

Around this time, Rich courted a buxom young Jewish singer/songwriter from Worcester, Massachusetts, named Denise. He whisked her off to his seaside villa in Marbella, Spain, where the couple were married and rapidly assumed the life of international jet-setters and art collectors.

Then in 1983 crisis hit the Rich family. The U.S. Attorney's office for the Southern District of New York notified Rich and Pinky that they were under investigation for fraud, illegal oil deals with Iran and the apartheid regime in South Africa, and tax evasion. Documents were subpoenaed. Indictments were in the works. Rich hired D.C. heavy-hitter Edward Bennett Williams to fend off assaults of a vicious young prosecutor – none other than Rudy Giuliani.

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tion of the sect's founder, the third most revered figure in Tibetan Buddhism after the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. A 2007 profile in the *Independent* quoted the remarks of Tibet expert, Jane Perkins: "He turns 22 next month, he now speaks six languages, and he's becoming more and more of a magnet here... There's absolutely no doubt that he is the new star: dynamic, powerful, full of young energy but with tremendous discipline and dignity, enormously sage for his age... In which case he could take some of the load off His Holiness's shoulders."

Ogyen Trinley Dorje even comes with his own heroic myth – a dramatic escape from Chinese minders over the Himalayas to Dharmasala in 2000, when he was just 14.

The Karmapa comes to the United States May 15 through June 2 for the first time, to conduct public teachings in New York, Boulder and Seattle.

It's an important first step for the Karmapa on the world stage at a crucial time for Tibet. The visit may serve as a coming-out party for the next leader of the Tibetan émigré community, one who will inherit the Dalai Lama's mantle and serve as the public face of the Tibetan

struggle for decades to come, no matter what skulduggery the Chinese try to commit when the current Dalai Lama passes on.

### Accusations Levelled at the Karmapa

To descend from high expectations to coarse political reality, the Karmapa is locked in a bitter struggle with a dissident faction within his own sect. He's been accused of being a Chinese mole. He's unable to enter the seat of his order, the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim. And he might not even be the true Karmapa.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa fled his traditional seat at the Tsurphu Monastery in 1959 (subsequently leveled by the Chinese army in 1966) with the relics of his sect, built a new seat, Rumtek, in Sikkim, and amassed great wealth and influence while in exile. He died in 1985. Four regents were charged with finding his reincarnation. They apparently didn't get along.

At a crucial juncture, after the search had languished for a decade, one of the regents decided to look inside a keepsake the 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa had given him and found... a poem giving detailed instructions as to the location of his successor!

The reincarnation, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the son of seminomadic herders inside Tibet, was identified in 1992. The Chinese accepted his designation, and Ogyen Trinley Dorje was installed in the restored Tsurphu Monastery for instruction under the eyes of his Chinese minders.

Then, in 2000, Ogyen Trinley Dorje made his dramatic escape from China. In Dharmasala, he won the endorsement of the Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama owes his position as the head of Tibetan Buddhism to the pre-eminence of his sect, the Gelugpa. However, Gelugpa pre-eminence relates to a political struggle inside Tibet as recent as the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is only grudgingly acknowledged by the Kagyu, who always point out that their sect is older and their reincarnations of the Karmapa began a century before the reincarnations of the Dalai Lama commenced.

In fact, as a scurrilous anti-Dalai Lama message circulating through the Internet these days makes clear, there are indications that the Gelugpa sect, directed by the Dalai Lama's hard-case brother (and CIA asset in the conduct of the clandestine

guerilla war against China inside Tibet), Gyalo Thondup, even resorted to assassination in order to quash the Kagyu sect's attempts to create an alternate political power center in the Tibetan émigré community in 1977.

At all events, Ogyen Trinley Dorje's heroic escape, his charisma, and the Dalai Lama's endorsement put the wind at the young Karmapa's back, and he apparently won the loyalty of most of the Kagyu monks and monasteries worldwide, with one important exception.

That exception was the most powerful of the regents, Shamarpa Rinpoche.

### Battle over the Black Hat: Shamarpa Rinpoche Enters the Story

Shamarpa Rinpoche had from the beginning refused to accept the miraculous letter in the amulet or the recognition of Ogyen Trinley Dorje by the Dalai Lama – which he regarded as a gross intrusion into the affairs of the Kagyu sect as well as an infringement upon his prerogatives as its leading Rinpoche, a title is generally reserved for tulkus (incarnate lamas) and those recognized by the proper authorities within a lineage as "choje lamas" ("superior dharma masters").

In 1992, just as the Karmapa was about to be installed at the restored Tsurphu Monastery inside China, Shamarpa Rinpoche showed up at the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim with an Indian army escort to denounce the selection, triggering a violent *mélée* with the outraged monks, and an open split in the Kagyu sect.

Shamarpa Rinpoche averred he had made a secret visit to Lhasa in 1988 to scout for a Karmapa reincarnation and had found one: Trinley Thaye Dorje, son of an aristocratic family who, to the great confusion of casual observers, shares two of his three names with the other contestant, Ogyen Trinley Dorje.

In 1994, two years after the installation of Ogyen Trinley Dorje at Tsurphu, Trinley Thaye Dorje made an unheralded escape from Tibet to India with his family and was recognized by the Shamarpa Rinpoche (although, it seems, not many others) as the Karmapa.

Nevertheless, Shamarpa has indefatigably advanced the claim of his protégé, while dismissing Ogyen Trinley Dorje as a Chinese mole intent upon stealing the sect's treasures.

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After Ogyen Trinley Dorje fled China and took up residence in Dharmasala, Shamarpa Rinpoche stubbornly fought the young man's efforts to establish himself at Rumtek and invest himself as Karmapa with the treasure of the sect that is guarded there: a black hat reputedly woven from the "hair of 100,000 Buddhist angels" that the Karmapa has to hold down with one hand when he wears it to keep it from flying back to heaven (this hat is invisible to the less worthy; for public events a replica, fabricated at the order of the Chinese Yongle emperor in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and presented to the 5<sup>th</sup> Karmapa, serves as a stand-in).

Hopes for decisively resolving the dispute in Ogyen Trinley Dorje's favor were dashed by Shamarpa Rinpoche's successful prosecution of a lawsuit in Indian court that, in 2004, awarded jurisdiction over the Rumtek monastery to the Karmapa Benevolent Trust – which Shamarpa controls.

Now Rumtek, its relics, and its considerable assets are in legal limbo. Ogyen Trinley Dorje is unable to enter Rumtek, don the black hat and declare himself the undisputed 17<sup>th</sup> Karmapa; at the same time the Sikkim authorities are unwilling to enforce the ruling on behalf of the Karmapa Benevolent Trust by clearing the monastery and expelling and arresting monks so that the Trust can establish control.

Since this is Tibetan Buddhism, where ancient esoteric faith and cybersavvy collide, the dispute is fought out on the Internet with competing websites, locked Wikipedia entries, and flame wars while employing the traditional tools of slander, invective, and ceaseless righteous posturing.

Ogyen Trinley Dorje made an effort to resolve the dispute by meeting with Shamarpa Rinpoche in January 2007.

If he hoped that Shamarpa Rinpoche would acknowledge the facts on the ground – Ogyen Trinley Dorje's popularity and the desire of the Tibetan émigré community in general and the Kagyu sect in particular for unity – he was apparently disappointed.

The Rinpoche's supporters promptly leaked the fact of the meeting, emphasizing that it was Ogyen Trinley Dorje who asked to meet with the Rinpoche, not the other way around, and that the Rinpoche was clearly banking on his victory in the Rumtek lawsuit as his trump card.

A photo of the two in a hotel room in India, with the Rinpoche stoutly facing the camera lens while Ogyen Trinley Dorje stared morosely at an obtrusive flower arrangement, made the rounds, as did insiders' spin on the Rinpoche's negotiating position.

One account stated, "It is understood that Ogyen Thinlay was encouraged by the Tibetan government to meet with Shamarpa and negotiate the controversy to the extent that Shamarpa withdraws the charges against HH Tai Situpa, HH Gyaltap Rinpoche, those currently occupying Rumtek and the Joint Action Committee. In return was offered Ogyen Thinlay's public acceptance of Tenzin Chentse as an incarnate Karmapa."

## He's been accused of being a Chinese mole. And he might not even be the true Karmapa.

### An Iota of Difference: Echoes the Arian heresy

Shamarpa's bottom line appears to be: Ogyen Trinley Dorje is *a* Karmapa, but not *the* Karmapa. And if he wants to avoid the criminal prosecution of his friends, mentors and supporters in the fallout from the court case, he'd better share the Karmapa title with the Shamarpa's candidate, give up hopes of Rumtek, and adopt Tsurphu – *inside China* – as his seat instead, leaving the field in India/Sikkim – and the considerable wealth of the order – to Trinley Thaye Dorje and Shamarpa Rinpoche. And the Dalai Lama should stay out of the dispute.

The implication of this saga is that, if and when Trinley Thaye Dorje becomes the public face of the Tibetan émigré movement, he won't be a leader ... he'll be a figurehead, locked in an intractable dispute with powerful factions within his own sect and beholden to forces outside the sect for legitimacy, power, and access to the monastery that is the seat of his order.

It's ironic that Ogyen Trinley Dorje, who ostensibly left China to escape Chinese political interference in his Buddhist studies, now finds himself se-

questered in Dharmasala under the anxious scrutiny of the Indian government, at the center of a grinding political struggle behind rival factions in his own sect, and forced to turn to the rival Gelugpa sect and the Dalai Lama to validate his standing.

His need to shore up his position vis-à-vis Shamarpa Rinpoche through support outside his sect also puts the young Karmapa in play as a political asset to be claimed and exploited by the contending forces roiling the larger Tibetan émigré movement.

In 2000, the Tibetan expert Robbie Barnett speculated that Ogyen Trinley Dorje might have the clout and standing to fight effectively for Tibet inside China.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Karmapa, Barnett says, has "the same guts and determination" and the background to deal with Beijing [as the Panchen Lama did]. "The Chinese need a leader in Tibet to sanction their regime, and the Tibetans need a leader who can wrest concessions in return," Barnett says. "Those brought up in exile are extremely unlikely to be masters of the mechanics, the peculiarities of Chinese political culture and diplomacy which are essential for this task."

On the other hand, remarks made last year by Ngawang Woeber, leader of the militant GuChuSum Association of former Political Prisoners, made it clear that the young firebrands inside the émigré movement hope that Ogyen Trinley Dorje will confer his prestige on the more confrontational policies vis-à-vis the Chinese government that they prefer.

Woeber said: "Although the Karmapa has repeatedly said he doesn't see a political role for himself, we do hope he will rise to the occasion when the time comes. He could contest elections for the post of 'Kalon Tripa' and that would sustain our historical tradition of being led by monks."

Freedom activist Tenzin Tsundue, like others, feels that "the Karmapa is winning the confidence of the Tibetan youth and is most well placed to take charge."

The choice before the Karmapa is between inheriting the Dalai Lama's conciliatory Third Way approach or adopting the militant demand for independence. CP

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When Giuliani requested that Pinky and Rich turn over their passports and post a large bond, Williams acted indignant and personally avowed to the federal judge overseeing the case that his client was not a flight risk. Two days later, Pinky and Rich were on a plane bound for Europe. As expected, the indictments came: a 65-count charge alleging fraud, trading with the enemy (Iran), and tax evasion. Humiliated, Williams resigned in a huff, and Rich found a succession of new lawyers over the next decade, including former Nixon attorney Leonard Garment and Lewis Scooter Libby, who would later find refuge in the awesome power of presidential privilege.

The tycoon's eventual passage to safe harbor in Switzerland went from Sweden through East Germany. Rich dropped millions at every stop, especially in Switzerland. He and "Pinky" Green choose the town of Zuq to establish their new headquarters in a blueberry-colored office tower. Entreaties were made to Swiss officials, and money liberally dispensed.

Rich had found his sanctuary. He summoned Denise and the children to join him in his mansion near Lucerne and then renounced his U.S. citizenship.

The exile of Marc Rich was not an idle one. Indeed, from 1983 to 1996 Rich's fortune ballooned from a mere billion dollars to more than \$7 billion.

Even as he neared the top of the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list, Rich also didn't see any reason to abandon his operations in the United States. In 1989, Rich secretly acquired the controlling interest in a West Virginia-based company called Ravenswood Aluminum. Ravenswood was embroiled in a tumultuous battle between management and workers at the plant when in 1990, under Rich's long-distance orders, the company tried to bust the union. "It was a brutal affair," says Dan Stidham, president of the Ravenswood union local at the time of the lockout. "I'm still pretty upset with Clinton for pardoning that guy after all we went through."

Meanwhile, back in Lucerne, Rich was beginning to cultivate the Israeli government. He established the Rich Foundation in Tel Aviv, which would distribute more than \$100 million to Israeli causes over the next decade. To oversee the foundation, Rich selected a former high-rank-

ing Mossad official named Avner Azually, whose ties to the intelligence agency probably never totally evaporated. Azually was a useful conduit to Israel's political elite. He was close to Yitzak Rabin, Ehud Barak, Shimon Peres and Ehud Olmert. A decade later, Azually would play a key role in securing Rich's pardon from the Clintons.

Through Azually, Rich offered his services to the Israeli government, especially the Mossad. Indeed, according to letters from Israeli officials, Rich played the role of a "Say-Ayon," or unpaid asset of the Mossad. In fact, Rich was subsidizing Israeli intelligence operations. He financed numerous covert missions and allowed Mossad operatives to work co-

**"Of all the options we discussed, the only one that seems to have real potential for making a difference is the Hillary option."**

vertly in his offices around the world.

Around this time, Rich launched into a public liaison with a glamorous Italian widow by the name of Gisela Rossi. He flaunted the affair in front of Denise, the tycoon's wife who had followed him into his luxurious life on the lam. Denise filed for divorce and prepared to return to New York. But Rich, whose net worth now neared \$10 billion, was offering her only a tiny settlement. So Denise took matters into her own hands. She removed a Van Gogh painting from the wall of their palace in Lucerne and warned her estranged husband that unless he ponied up more money, she would take the masterpiece with her. Ultimately, Rich offered her a settlement of \$200 million. Although the amount is far less than she would have gotten in most U.S. courts, Denise signed the papers and took her daughters with her back to Manhattan.

Rossi and Rich soon married and now divide their time between St. Moritz and Marbella, Spain.

The machinations to secure a pardon from Bill Clinton for Marc Rich began in earnest in the fall of 1998, when Rich's public relations flack in the U.S.,

Gershon Kekst, squirmed his way into a seat next to Eric Holder, the number two in the Clinton Justice Department, at big D.C. party thrown by Daimler/Chrysler. Without mentioning Rich by name, Kekst asked Holder how a man of considerable resources might be relieved of the burden of being "unproperly indicted by an overzealous prosecutor."

Holder took a sip of wine and told Kekst that such a man would need to hire a D.C. lawyer who knows the ropes and has deep connections inside the Clinton administration. "He comes to me and we work it out," confided Holder.

"Can you recommend such a person?" Kekst inquired.

Holder pointed to a man sitting at a nearby table. "There's Jack Quinn," Holder whispered. "He's a perfect example."

Kekst dutifully wrote down Quinn's name, did some research on the former lawyer for the Clintons, and transmitted the joyful news to the Rich camp.

Quinn formally became Rich's lawyer on July 21, 1999. His fees were stiff: an initial retainer of \$355,000, plus a minimum payment of \$55,000 each month. Quinn's firm, Arnold and Porter, reserved the right to represent clients suing Rich on matters. Rich consented.

Initially, Quinn intimated to the Rich team that securing the pardon would be a relatively easy matter. A few calls to his good friend Holder, and that would be that. Quinn was wrong. When Holder contacted the prosecutors in Manhattan about the Rich case, they vowed to oppose any deal until Rich returned to the U.S. and entered a plea in the case. Rich refused.

From that point on, the Rich team, including his sympathizers inside the Clinton administration, hid their maneuvers from federal prosecutors. After discussions with White House aides Bruce Lindsey and Beth Nolan, Quinn sent out an email calling for a new approach: "It's time to move on the GOI [Government of Israel] front but we have to get the calls initiated over there."

Letters and calls soon flooded the White House from Israeli officials and high profile Jews, including Shimon Peres, Ehud Barak, Ehud Olmert and Elie Weisel. In one way or another, each had received benefits from Rich or one of his foundations. A problem soon developed. When presented the opportunity to discuss presidential pardons with Clinton,

many of these leaders, anxious perhaps to legitimize Israeli penetration of the U.S. government, choose to plead the case of convicted spy Jonathan Pollard instead of Rich.

Quinn scrambled comically for a solution. Quinn sends an urgent email to Robert Fink, Rich's longtime New York lawyer.

From: Jack Quinn. To: Fink, Robert, NY.

"Hope you're checking email; I don't have access here to avner's email address, or marc's, and wonder if you can inquire whether there is a possibility of persuading Mrs Rabin to make a call to POTUS [President of the United States]. He had a deep affection for her husband."

Fink leaps into action with an email to Avner Azualy, the former Mossad officer, now heading the Rich Foundation in Tel Aviv.

From: Fink, Robert, NY. Sent: Saturday. To: Avner Azualy

"... Jack asks if you could get Leah Rabin to call the President; Jack said he was a real big supporter of her husband..."

Azualy writes back with distressing news.

From: Avner. To: Fink, Robert, NY.

"Bob, having Leah Rabin call is not a bad idea. The problem is how do we contact her? She died last November ..."

Eventually, Quinn secures a letter and congenial phone call to Clinton from Rabin's daughter, who doesn't really know Rich. Their best hopes seem to be evaporating.

The scene shifts to a crowded restaurant in Paris. It's Valentine's Day. Two men are having dinner and drinking wine. They know each other well. One man has just received a \$100,000 contribution from the other man's boss. The man on the receiving end of the money is Abe Foxman, and the financial gift was for his group, the Anti-Defamation League. The man picking up the hefty dinner tab is Avner Azualy – though Marc Rich will soon reimburse him.

Rich has one last shot, Foxman advises. They need to get directly to Bill and Hillary. And the key to unlocking the inner doors of the White House, Foxman told Azualy, is Denise Rich. Foxman confided that he and Denise had flown together on Air Force II to the funeral of Yitzak Rabin.

There was just one problem. Denise Rich still loathed her husband.

Entreaties are made to Denise, now a New York socialite and successful songwriter, by Quinn and others on the Rich teams. Three times Denise Rich declines to come to the rescue of her former husband. Then suddenly, in November 2000, she agrees to help. What made her change her mind?

That remains open to speculation, but given Marc Rich's history and Denise's view that she was shortchanged in the divorce, it may well have involved a financial offering. This much is known. On November 16, Avner Azualy flies to New York and takes Denise to dinner. He pleads for her to back Rich's pardon to her friends Bill and Hillary. Two days later Denise consents.

Denise calls her close friend Beth Dozoretz for help in the best way to handle the matter. Another rich Manhattan socialite, Dozoretz had been the finance chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Dozoretz had contributed more than \$1 million to Democratic coffers. Bill Clinton was the godfather of her daughter.

Dozoretz who, like Denise Rich, would later plead the Fifth at a Senate hearing in the matter, helped Rich craft her strategy. Almost immediately, a check for \$25,000 was sent from Denise Rich's account to the DNC. This was soon followed by Denise Rich's first letter to the Clintons, imploring them to pardon her ex-husband. Dozoretz also helped Rich bundle a \$450,000 contribution to the Clinton library fund. (A Democratic fundraiser told the *New York Times* in 2001 that Denise had also pledged another million in four installments over the next two years. This figure was disputed by Denise Rich. But the donor lists to the Clinton Foundation are kept secret.) In all, Denise Rich made at least \$1.1 million in contributions to Democratic causes, including \$70,000 to Hillary's Senate campaign and PACs, and at least \$450,000 to the Clinton Foundation.

For her part, Dozoretz kicked in another million of her own money to the fund. This is the same library that now refuses to release more than 300 pages of Clinton's records relating to the pardon. She later lavished gifts on the Clintons as they left the White House, including antique furniture for the new home and golf clubs for Bill.

As Dozoretz and Denise Rich plotted their strategy, Quinn and Azualy sought

another opening. In a December 19, 2000, email to Quinn, Azualy emphasizes the importance of Hillary's role in the affair. She has just been elected senator from New York, where Rich was indicted. If there was to be fallout, it might backfire on Hillary. She would need reassurance. Dozoretz and Denise would provide financial aid, but she might also need political cover. Azualy recommends Abraham Burg, former speaker of the Knesset. "Burg is on very friendly terms with Hilary (sic) and knows POTUS from previous contacts."

The next night there's a party at the White House honoring Barbra Streisand, Quincy Jones and Maya Angelou. Dozoretz and Denise are invited, and Denise lands a plum seat at the presidential table. Denise is wearing a burgundy ball gown trimmed in fox fur. She eats little and talks less. After dinner, Denise spies Bill having an intimate conversation with Streisand. She rushes across the room, cuts in on Babs and whisks Bill away. She makes an impassioned plea for the ex-husband, stuffs a letter into Bill's hand and whispers, "I could not bear it

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except July and August,  
22 issues a year.**

1- year hardcopy edition \$45

2- year hardcopy edition \$80

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were I to learn you did not see my letter.”

When Denise arrives home, she makes a call to Lucerne. It’s the first time she has talked to Marc Rich since the divorce. She describes her meeting with Clinton. Her friends say she ended the conversation by telling Rich: “You owe me.”

A week later the Rich team is getting antsy. There’s still been no word on how Hillary feels. Rich’s New York attorney Robert Fink sends an email to Quinn: “Of all the options we discussed, the only one that seems to have real potential for making a difference is the Hillary option.”

Quinn, Dozoretz, Burg and, perhaps, Denise call Hillary’s people. They are told that the senator needs cover. According to a December 26 email from Azualy titled “Chuck Schumer”: “Hillary shall feel more at ease if she is joined by her elder sen. of NY, who also represents the Jewish population.”

Gershon Kekst leaps at the opportunity, firing an email to Fink looking for Schumer’s pressure points: “Can Quinn tell us who is close enough to lean on Schumer?? I am willing to call him but have no real clout. Jack might be able to tell us who the top contributors are...”

But Quinn had been around

Washington a long time. He knew enough not to trust Schumer, a famous media hog who was already showing signs of being jealous of the attention Hillary was getting. Quinn notes: “I have to believe that the contact with HRC can happen w/o him. After all, we are not looking for a public show of support from her.”

Calls continue to flood the Clinton White House. The King of Spain. Sandy Berger. Ehud Barak. Meanwhile, Denise and Beth are skiing in Aspen. Beth’s phone rings. It’s Bill Clinton. Clinton tells Dozoretz, “I want to do it and am trying to get around the White House counsel.” Keep praying, Bill told the women. He also let them know that Michael Milken wasn’t getting a pardon.

A few days later, the two women are back in Washington. It’s now January 19, 2001. Jack Quinn is sitting at a board meeting of Fanny Mae. He quietly types a message to Denise on his Blackberry. (It’s not known if he bills both clients for this hour of his time.) The text message urges Denise to make one last call to Bill. Quinn tells her not to “argue merits” but merely to explain to Clinton that “it is important to me personally.”

Though both women will later dispute

it, the Secret Service logs show that the next afternoon at 5:30, Beth and Denise were admitted to the private quarters of the White House. This was Denise’s nineteenth visit to the White House. Beth had visited the White House 76 times in merely the last two years. The logs do not record when the women departed. This is the encounter that appears to have consummated the pardon.

At 2:30 in the morning on January 20, Clinton gets a call from his National Security Advisor. Marc Rich’s name has surfaced in an intelligence file in connection with an international arms smuggling network. Clinton calls Quinn. Quinn says the allegations are bogus. Bill turns to his staff, all of whom oppose the pardon that is now being signed. “Take Jack’s word,” Clinton snapped. Later Clinton will claim to have been “sleep deprived” when he signed the pardon, an excuse that his wife would resurrect to explain her fabrication of her landing under sniper fire in Bosnia.

Marc Rich bought his pardon and now flies freely in his private jet, while Leonard Peltier languishes in prison with no hope of release. That sums up Clintonism. CP

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