

Will Anglo-Americans or Israel strike Iraq first?

by Joseph Brewda and Mark Burdman

Bloody regional and civil wars, and U.S. strikes targeting the broad region including the Mideast, North Africa, West Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and Central Asia, are on the Anglo-American drawing boards.

In a March 8 interview, imprisoned Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche noted that the Anglo-American elite fears that the nations of eastern Europe and the Community of Independent States (CIS) might "align themselves in common cause with the nations of South America, Africa, and Southern Asia for a global development direction, a new global economic order based on the right of all nations to economic development and technological progress." For this reason, the Anglo-Americans are determined to inflict "virtual economic scorched-earth conditions" on eastern Europe (see page 8).

For similar reasons, the Anglo-Americans are intent on destroying those Asian and African regions contiguous to Europe that might be the first to benefit from such an alliance involving the now reunified Germany, eastern Europe, and the Third World, he observed.

Drumbeat against Iraq

Following the appearance of Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz at the U.N. Security Council on March 11, British and American officials delivered explicit warnings that new strikes against Iraq are in the offing, perhaps within days.

The pretext for the strikes would be Iraq's alleged failure to comply with U.N. Resolution 687, which requires Iraq to destroy its "weapons of mass destruction." Iraq has asked that some of its military industry be instead converted to vitally needed civilian production. British Prime Minister John Major had threatened on March 8 that he would support bombardment of Iraq if Iraq continues to make this request.

"If that proves to be necessary, the answer is yes, I would support it," Major told BBC. British officials said on March 6 that Major agreed in a telephone conversation with President George Bush that day, that they would use whatever means necessary to force Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to comply with the U.N. resolution.

Bush and Major are both facing electoral challenges this year, at a time when the collapse of the American and British economies is thoroughly undermining their credibility with the electorates. Since the British election, now officially announced for April 9, is the earlier one, British pressure for such a move may be much stronger than that coming out of Washington. Informed estimates are that Bush would prefer a "summer surprise," in late June or in July, whether it be an attack on Iraq or a strike against Cuba or North Korea, since that would be closer in time to the November elections, and the "psychological effect" would not have worn off by November.

An air strike against Iraq might also be timed with a CIA/British intelligence-fostered Kurdish uprising in northern Iraq, and a related Shiite uprising in the south. In January, CIA director Robert Gates toured the region to prepare for this. In early March, the Iraqi newspaper *Babel*, owned by Saddam Hussein's son, warned of a "foreign conspiracy" targeting both regions. "It is a time bomb ready to explode whenever the foreigners decide," the paper said. The recent release of a U.N. report which asserts that Iraq's alleged abuse of Kurds and Shiites represents the worst human rights violations since those committed by Nazi Germany, is intended to provide propagandistic cover for this plan.

Another strike might target Libya under the claim, for which no evidence has been provided, that the Libyan government was responsible for blowing up Pan American Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in December 1988.

The Israeli 'breakaway ally'

According to one highly informed British strategist who just held consultations in Washington with senior American Mideast experts, there are two schools of thought about how to strike at Iraq, one favoring an American-led action and the other an Israeli operation. "I understand there is a project under which President Bush would undertake to remove Saddam, by whatever means are available, between now and the American election in November, and this would be carried out under U.N. auspices," he said. "However, the assessment of informed Americans is that it might all be done a different way. Israel might try to offer to carry out an anti-Saddam strike on their own. The U.S., as it were, would denounce it, in the U.N. and so on, but the denunciation would be for the public view, while privately, American officials would be jolly pleased."

Recent high-profile spats between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and the Israeli government ostensibly over bitter differences concerning U.S. housing loan guarantees, and related assertions that Baker has made anti-Semitic remarks in cabinet meetings, are largely designed to provide the United States with justification for claiming that the defiant Israel is out of control.

On March 8, Israeli Health Minister Ehud Olmert told an Israeli press conference that his country might strike North Korean ships carrying missiles to Iran on its own, regardless of what the United States does.

On March 5, Israeli Chief of Staff Ehud Barak threatened independent Israeli raids against Iraq, because, he claimed, Iraq still has hundreds of Scud missiles and thousands of chemical warheads, and that, despite all the pressure from the United Nations, Baghdad is capable of rapidly relaunching its nuclear program. "There will be no peace whatsoever between Israel and its neighbors as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power," Barak told the Israeli Army magazine *Bamahane*.

The Israelis may also be planning to invade Lebanon. On March 5, the head of the Lebanese delegation to the Washington Mideast "peace talks," Suhayl Shammas, told the press that the leader of the Israeli team negotiating with Lebanon, Uri Lubroni, threatened a new invasion, if the Lebanese did not eliminate the Hezbollah. In February, Israel assassinated the head of that Iranian-backed organization, Sheikh Abbas Musawi, and then launched a 24-hour invasion of Lebanon shooting up U.N. peacekeeping forces in the process. Although one U.N. soldier died, the United States has refused to condemn the invasion.

On March 6, the security chief of Israel's embassy in Ankara, Turkey, was assassinated by a car bomb, a half-mile from the presidential palace and across the street from the army barracks. Israeli media claim, without evidence, that the Hezbollah was responsible, leading to further calls for reprisal.

The Anglo-Americans are fostering other civil and regional wars, in part intended to provide a pretext for future

"peacekeeping" interventions, either under U.N. or NATO auspices.

The most important and dangerous war developing in the region is that between the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaidzhan. The apple of discord between the two states is the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh within Azeri territory, which both states claim, although so far fighting has been restricted to Armenians in the enclave and the Azeris. The borders were drawn by Josef Stalin in 1923 to provide a ready means to inflame each state against the other, rather than against Moscow. The March installation of former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze as chief of the ruling State Council in neighboring Georgia, gives those elements in the Russian establishment tied to the West the means to arrange for the joint destabilization of the region.

Over the near term, neighboring Turkey might be drawn into the war on the side of the Turkic Azeris. Just how dangerous the situation might soon become is shown by remarks by Turkish President Turgut Özal on March 6 that the government of Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, should aid the Azeris by "scaring the Armenians."

For the first time, neighboring Iran is depicting the conflict in religious terms. On March 2, *Jomhuri Eslami*, one of Iran's leading newspapers, denounced the Iranian government for remaining "indifferent" to "massacres" of Azeris allegedly conducted by the Armenians. Iran had responsibilities "dictated by Islamic solidarity when Muslims are massacred," it said. It has long been an Anglo-American objective to trigger a mutually ruinous religious war between continental Europe and the Mideast.

The fact that the now ruling Azeri Popular Front of Azerbaidzhan defines Azerbaidzhan as Turkish, and also lays claims to Iranian Azerbaidzhan, also shows the potential of the conflict spreading to involve Turkey and Iran.

Another way of spreading wars in the region is through the Anglo-Americans' "Kurdish card." The Kurds live in a large contiguous area in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran. The various Kurdish liberation organizations are controlled by the Anglo-Americans and Israel.

On March 7, Gen. Teoman Koman, the head of Turkish intelligence, reported, "We have information that the PKK [Kurdish Workers Party] will launch an uprising around the middle of March." "They will not succeed," he said, but it will take time to suppress it. The Kurds claim about two-fifths of Turkish soil.

On March 3, Turkish Prime Minister Demirel told Parliament that he had warned the Syrian ambassador to Turkey about continuing to support PKK rebel training camps in Lebanon's Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley. "I told him this was not a friendly situation," he said. It may be that the Anglo-Americans seek to provoke a Turkish war with Syria to finish off the only Arab state that represents any military threat to Israel.