

Brits escalate media war on Mr. Clinton

by Edward Spannaus

As the Anglo-American “special relationship” falls deeper and deeper into disrepair, certain sections of the British establishment have escalated their attacks on U.S. President Bill Clinton, through their own news media outlets and their assets inside the United States.

The incestuous relationship between the British and U.S. sides of this operation is remarkable. In our last issue (Feb. 18, p. 63), we reported on a major attack on Clinton in the Jan. 23 London *Sunday Telegraph*, which included a warning that Clinton could be forced out of office “before the year is out.” The *Telegraph* coverage was spearheaded by its Washington correspondent Ambrose Evans-Pritchard; this story was then dutifully picked up by the *Washington Times* and a few other outlets in the United States.

Evans-Pritchard then got a symbiotic boost from R. Emmett Tyrrell in the Feb. 11 *Washington Times*. Tyrrell is the editor of the *American Spectator*, a little-known neo-conservative magazine which had boosted its 200,000 circulation by 50,000 more copies with its January issue featuring the salacious “Troopergate” story about Clinton’s alleged sexual adventures while he was governor of Arkansas. (That story was written by an acknowledged homosexual, David Brock—a source which ought to arouse the suspicions of the conservative Americans who are supposed to become morally indignant over these reports.)

In his Feb. 11 *Washington Times* piece, Tyrrell reported: “Much more so than the American media, the British media are alive with reports on the Clintons’ scandals; and Mr. Evans-Pritchard, who is equal parts scholar, journalist, and adventurer, has been particularly tireless in examining those scandals.” Regarding Evans-Pritchard’s latest investigative safari to Little Rock, Arkansas and his findings, Tyrrell had this to say: “Americans, if they live in the greater D.C. area, perhaps read of this in the *Washington Times*. Otherwise, I guess you had to be in London.”

Tyrrell went on to report how Evans-Pritchard “fears for” the life of David Hale, an Arkansas businessman who allegedly authorized improper loans to associates of the Clintons. What Tyrrell fails to mention is that Hale is under indictment for fraud—a strong motive to implicate others, the higher placed the better.

Then, on Feb. 13, the *Sunday Telegraph* ran a prominent feature boosting—what else?—Tyrrell’s *American Spectator*, replete with scathing attacks against the First Family,

referring to the President as “Slick Willy,” to his political supporters as “pinhead rednecks,” and to Hillary Clinton as “the Dragon Lady.”

‘A strong British connection’

The *Telegraph* made no secret of the fact that London is steering Tyrrell’s efforts. “There has always been a strong British connection” to the *American Spectator*, said the *Telegraph*, noting that its Washington bureau chief, Tom Bethell, is English, and that Sir Peregrine Worsthorne, the flagship columnist for the *Sunday Telegraph*, is an active member of the editorial board, along with British journalist Paul Johnson. The *Telegraph* piece says that Tyrrell’s approach “has aroused admiration on the left”—and gives as an example Christopher Hitchens, whom the *Telegraph* describes as “the erudite Washington-based British journalist” who “welcomes Mr. Brock’s pursuit of the Clinton story.”

Sir Peregrine himself devoted much of his Feb. 13 column to praise of his friend “Bob” Tyrrell, who had just been in London for a memorial service for a former editor of the *American Spectator*. “This was particularly saintly of Tyrrell,” gushed Peregrine, “because he is masterminding the campaign which is beginning to look like it might do for Clinton what the *Washington Post* did for Nixon.”

On the same day, the lead story of the *Sunday Times* of London was an account of how Hillary Clinton and her law firm had benefitted from a “shady deal” involving the sale of a nursing home in Iowa. The next day, Rupert Murdoch’s *New York Post* ran coverage of the London *Sunday Times* story. The next day after that, the *Washington Times* reprinted on its front page large portions of the *Sunday Times* attack on Hillary Clinton and the Rose law firm.

Why the Brits?

Sources have reported that the Clinton administration is the most anti-British administration that the United States has seen for decades. Whether or not that overstates the case, it is undeniable that the British see it that way; they are fuming over Clinton’s decision to give a visa to Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams, and have been scrapping with his administration over Balkan policy for a year. The worst thing that his administration has done, in British eyes, was the criticism which began with Vice President Al Gore’s trip to Moscow in January of the International Monetary Fund and shock therapy. The British have grown used to compliant administrations on the U.S. side of the “special relationship,” and the mere idea of a President who doesn’t place the highest priority on that relationship drives them nuts.

The seamiest side of the “special relationship” was typified by the role of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; it is therefore notable that the London *Telegraph*, now playing such a prominent role in Whitewater, is owned by the Hollinger Corp. of Canada and Britain, a prime financial and political sponsor of Kissinger for many years.