

U.S.-French alliance makes air strikes possible

by Edward Spannaus and Mark Burdman

At 2:00 a.m. Sarajevo time on Aug. 29, NATO launched the largest operation in its history, and the biggest military operation in Europe since World War II, hitting Bosnian Serb positions with waves of air strikes. The first step was to suppress the Bosnian Serb “integrated air defense” (IAD) system, hitting radar and anti-aircraft sites. Next to be hit were command-and-control sites and ammunition dumps. A wide range of weapons was utilized by the U.S.-led NATO forces, including laser-guided bombs and HARM radar-killing missiles.

The decision to carry out the air-strike campaign represents a success for President William Clinton and French President Jacques Chirac, over the opposition of the British government and the United Nations apparatus. Lyndon LaRouche commented on Aug. 30 that President Clinton “has applied regular warfare techniques, aerospace-style, to a domain in which *irregular warfare*, or limited warfare, run by the British, the U.N., and the Serbs, was killing a lot of people. He has broken the magic of the London-orchestrated UNO travesty and Serb war crimes.” (See full text of LaRouche’s remarks, below.)

The long-overdue air raids reflect the process which *EIR* has been alone in reporting: that an agreement had been reached between Presidents Clinton and Chirac going into the July 21 London conference on Bosnia—an agreement which began to reverse the years of appeasement of Serbian war crimes which were set into motion by former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and former U.S. President George Bush. In the days following the London conference, the British and their U.N. stooges immediately undertook to sabotage the London agreements; this was particularly flagrant around the U.N. resistance to giving up the notorious “dual key” arrangement, which had hamstrung the ability of NATO to respond to Serb provocations and atrocities.

However, U.S. officials insisted on jettisoning the “dual key” arrangement, and NATO, led by the United States and France, took control—with the British kicking and screaming all the way.

Recognition of this new strategic combination came in the form of a lengthy commentary in the Sept. 1 *Le Monde*, entitled, “A Franco-American Wager on Peace,” by Alain Frachon and Claire Trean. The authors stressed that what is happening now in Bosnia, is happening “thanks to the determination of Presidents Clinton and Chirac.” France and the United States have established a “complementarity” of strategy, they wrote, whereby the French favoring of Rapid Reaction Force ground action, is wedded to American preference for NATO air strikes. This has developed with “Britain and NATO only following along,” and the United Nations bureaucracy “only lending its juridical clothing” to the whole operation.

Frachon and Trean pointed to the recent evolution in both France and the United States, whereby the “persistent antagonism on both sides” has been superseded. Chirac has changed the direction of French policy, toward identifying the Serbs as the adversary. What crossed his tripwire, were several things in combination, including the Bosnian Serbs taking French U.N. troops as hostages and publicly humiliating them, which is intolerable for a “gaullist” like Chirac, and the Bosnian Serb aggression against Srebrenica and Zepa.

The French daily *Libération* also took note the same day, that the determining factors, in the hard military actions currently taking place, are the “election of Chirac”, and a “Franco-American rapprochement on Bosnia.”

A major eruption

The raids were launched immediately following the visit of Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic to Paris on Aug. 28-29, during which he met with Chirac for several hours. Be-



The results of Serbian "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia. The NATO air raids that began on Aug. 29 have destroyed the aura of invincibility of the Serbs and their British sponsors.

fore leaving the Bosnian capital on Aug. 28, Izetbegovic and his prime minister, Haris Silajdzic, had both stated that there would be *no further negotiations* with the Contact Group, unless military measures were taken against Serbia, following the Aug. 28 bombing of the marketplace in Sarajevo by Bosnian Serb forces, which killed at least 33 civilians and injured more than 80 others.

In a discussion with French intellectual Barnard-Henri Levy (reported by *Le Monde* and the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*), Izetbegovic recounted some of what had happened during his Aug. 28-29 visit. Izetbegovic said that Chirac had called British Prime Minister John Major after the Sarajevo marketplace massacre, and Major was opposed to any significant retaliation against the Serbs. Then, on the night when the U.S. decision to unleash the NATO bombing was undertaken, Chirac called Major again, and Major "erupted into anger" against the bombing strategy.

As the air raids went into their second and third day, British officials pulled out all the stops to try and force a suspension of the strikes, so that the Serbs could "negotiate." British spokesmen were quoted as saying that the U.N. had no intention of bombing the Serbs into submission.

While U.S. officials continued to press their diplomatic negotiations, one of the most most significant official statements in the immediate aftermath of the launching of the raids came from State Department spokesman Nick Burns, who announced: "We hope that the lesson that has been learned by the Bosnian Serb leadership, is that their quest for

a Greater Serbia is over. It is finished. The tide of the war has turned against them."

Burns went on to explain that the tide had begun to turn against the Serbs during the Croatian offensive, and had now turned decisively against them with the launching of the NATO air strikes.

The other important element of the strategic situation around the air strikes is the *lack* of any significant response from Moscow—other than muted protests. The respected Russian military commentator Pavel Felgenauer, writing in *Sevodnya* on Aug. 31, said the Bosnian Serbs should not expect any help from Moscow. "The worsening of the situation in former Yugoslavia has shown the total impotence of Russia's policy," wrote Felgenauer. "Russia may perhaps be a great power, but not in this region, at any rate, not in 1995."

Documentation: LaRouche's view

In an interview with the radio program "EIR Talks" on Aug. 30, Lyndon LaRouche was asked for his assessment of the NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serb targets. Here is his reply:

There are two aspects to this process, first of all what President Clinton *said*, about this action, and what he *did*. Now what the President did, was excellent. And the fact that he adopted it as *his*, was also excellent. The problem was, the President was constrained, I think, by some State Department or crisis management people, to try to appear to be in line with the diplomacy run through the State Department to

say that he hoped that this pressure of these air strikes would bring the Serbs to the bargaining table. Now, that was a *mistake*. I understand why the President would make such a mistake under these present circumstances, but I prefer to look at what he *did*, and what he did is good.

The President has obviously turned to the Department of Defense, and given them both a *mission*, and the *latitude* for rules of engagement, for conducting that mission, in the real circumstances. That is, the President has applied regular warfare techniques, aerospace-style, to a domain in which *irregular warfare*, or limited warfare, run by the British, the U.N., and the Serbs, was killing a lot of people. He has broken the magic of the London-orchestrated UNO travesty and Serb war crimes.

The situation is somewhat complicated because, first of all, you have a bunch of communists, actually, like Karadzic and his people, who are the so-called Bosnian Serbs. Now, they're not real close to the church, any church, in any real sense, they're really old, hard-core communists. They're much closer to the British Tavistock Institute, the Sigmund Freud Institute, and people like that, because they're psychological warriors; and therefore, they're desperate and dangerous, as opposed to Milosevic's Serbs, in Serbia, as such, who are a little less dangerous.

Then you have also, under Karadzic and Mladic, these commanders in Bosnia of the Serbian forces there, the Chetnik forces, you have people who *believe they are criminals*, because they have participated in crimes against humanity. And thus, even though, say, prior to 1991, and so forth, even 1992, many of these people who were residents of Bosnia, would have had no inclination to commit the kind of crimes in which they participated, under the influence of Mladic and company, they committed horrible crimes against humanity, against their neighbors.

Therefore, anyone who's committed those kinds of crimes against their neighbors, no matter what their motivation would be otherwise, are desperately fearful that they should ever fall into the hands of the survivors of their victims. So we have a very desperate situation in Bosnia, for that reason. There is *no basis on Earth* on which the Bosnian Serbs would ever submit to any kind of honorable peace agreement.

But, what Clinton has done, together with the allies and their cooperation, is to reverse the situation. Up until now, it has been the thesis of London and the United Nations, that the Croats and the Bosnians were really defeated, and they should admit it at the peace table, and accept whatever crumbs the British and their Serbian puppets offered. Now the situation is reversed. Through the proper application of aerospace power by the United States and its allies, it is now the *Serbs* who are defeated; and when Clinton says they should come to the peace table, he's really saying, "Well, these guys are really going to be defeated, there's nothing they can do. We are going to defeat them. They should admit it now." That's the good part.

Interview: Nedzib Sacirbey

'The credibility of NATO was at stake'

Mr. Sacirbey is the ambassador of Bosnia and Hercegovina to the United Nations. Our reporter Umberto Pascali reached him by telephone at the U.N. Mission in New York on Aug. 30, 1995, as the news of NATO retaliatory airstrikes against the "Bosnian Serbs" of Radovan Karadzic was being broadcast.

EIR: So the situation is improving?

Sacirbey: Well, you know, the British had to decide they have to follow America.

EIR: How did they get to decide so?

Sacirbey: I do not know how they decided that, but the credibility of the United States, of NATO, of the West, of the United Nations was at stake. Because Karadzic's Serbs did not believe in anything these organizations and countries would say, and accordingly, they did behave in the most aggressive way, thinking: how strong we are and how weak NATO is. Consequently, the lack of credibility resulted in escalating aggression.

I am glad that finally NATO responded. I think it is very good that they used their expertise and reached the only possible conclusion, i.e., that Karadzic's Serbs are responsible for this massacre [in Sarajevo]. If NATO had not reacted this time the credibility of NATO, of the West, the U.S., and the U.N. probably would have vanished. *They did not come just to save Sarajevo but they came to save their own face and credibility.*

EIR: The air strikes are ongoing.

Sacirbey: Yes, they say they are going on for three or four days, until the Serb artillery around Sarajevo will be moved 20 kilometers back. This was the decision and the request that was made following the first massacre of Sarajevo civilians when 68 people were killed in the market place [on Feb. 6, 1994].

EIR: The air strikes now, according to your information from Sarajevo, are where?

Sacirbey: They are around four areas: Sarajevo, Gorazde, Tuzla, and Mostar, and finally the Rapid Deployment Forces did use their heavy weapons—their cannons—to hit the targets, and some time ago I was informed that they used 597 shells.