

War-mongering Brits launch new assault on Clinton

by Edward Spannaus

Never in recent memory have the British been so exposed as they are at this moment, in their mad push for an expansion of the Balkans war, and their vile attacks on U.S. President Bill Clinton for his resistance to their war-mongering entreaties.

While the U.S. news media portrays the British-U.S. split, if at all, in the mildest of terms, the British press has been absolutely frothing at the mouth over President Clinton's refusal to back the British campaign to introduce ground troops into Yugoslavia. On May 16, the *Sunday Times* of London declared that the entire postwar Anglo-American "special relationship" is now threatened.

Three days earlier, an editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* described President as having been "the chief ditherer" at the Washington NATO 50th anniversary summit in April, when Britain was isolated in its call for a ground war. "Things have gotten so bad," the editorial stated, "that there are now mutterings that the normally first-class sharing of military and strategic information between Britain and the United States is being impaired." (*EIR* had already been advised through its own sources that indeed, President Clinton has ordered a downgrading of the long-standing intelligence-sharing arrangement between the United States and the U.K.)

Most shocking of all, was a letter published alongside the *Daily Telegraph* editorial, written by a well-known British historian, Alistar Horne. "Though no one would advocate shooting President Clinton, it is pretty clear that, if only Congress had removed him by impeachment back in January, NATO would not now be in the mess it finds itself," Horne wrote. "Is it therefore any wonder that NATO puts up so feeble a performance with such an American Commander-in-

Chief at the helm?" Whatever the outcome of the Kosovo conflict, Horne concluded, the "far more lasting damage will be the injury inflicted by one spineless political leader upon NATO and the Western alliance as a whole."

Cook's mission

On May 16, the British press announced that Foreign Secretary Robin Cook would be coming to the United States to press the issue of ground troops, and the British media were filled with attacks on President Clinton and the United States for resisting the British calls. The *Sunday Telegraph* reported that Cook "will fly to Washington this week for crisis talks to stiffen Western resolve in the war against Serbia amid growing British military frustration over America's reluctance to commit ground troops."

The *Sunday Times* of London claimed that Prime Minister Tony Blair "feels 'a deep sense of frustration' with Bill Clinton after failing to persuade him to commit ground troops to Kosovo." The same article reported that Blair and Cook had been on the phone to Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright all the previous week, and that "there is a growing sense of frustration with the Clinton administration's intransigence."

On May 17, the London *Times* harkened back to Winston Churchill's call for a "special relationship" between the British Empire and Commonwealth, and the United States, and it warned that that relationship is now threatened because of "a reluctant Bill Clinton."

The previous day, another article in the *Sunday Telegraph*, by military historian John Keegan, and entitled "Blair's Mission: To Make Clinton Fight," also referenced the "special relationship," declaring: "Mr. Blair has done

more for Mr. Clinton than he has received in return. It is time for tough talking.”

By May 18, the fight between the British and President Clinton was so obvious, that the issue dominated the White House press briefing that day. White House spokesman Joe Lockhart was bombarded with questions about the British, and he had to reiterate that President Clinton “has no intention to use ground troops,” while repeatedly telling reporters that “the British can speak for themselves.”

It is also being reported that President Clinton spoke to Blair on May 18 and “expressed his displeasure” over the articles in the British press, and he asked Blair to “please get control” of those who appeared to be speaking on his behalf. (This was reported by the *New York Times* on May 20, and the next day by the London *Guardian*.)

When Cook arrived on Thursday, May 20, he was almost invisible. No public events were scheduled on the day of his arrival, and he seemed to be relegated largely to meeting with Secretary of State Albright. This was at the same time that informed sources were reporting that Albright had been all-but-removed from policymaking and diplomacy on the Balkans, and that the President was using Strobe Talbott, his longtime friend and Albright’s top deputy, as his point-man for the Balkans negotiations.

Diplomatic efforts

What President Clinton is pursuing is a twofold “exit strategy”—seeking a negotiated settlement of the Kosovo conflict, and planning for postwar reconstruction along the lines of what many refer to as a “new Marshall Plan.”

In the days leading up to the “accidental” bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, serious efforts were under way to hammer out a diplomatic settlement which could have been acceptable to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, including Russia and China. The May 7 NATO attack on the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade had the predictable disruptive effect on those efforts. Now, the negotiations appear to be back on track and near to reaching fruition. Talbott met all day on May 18 in Helsinki with Russian envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin and Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, who is acting as mediator on behalf of the European Union and the United Nations. Chernomyrdin then went to Belgrade, where Yugoslav officials are indicating they may be willing to accept the G-8 proposal which had been worked out prior to the Chinese Embassy bombing. Talbott, Chernomyrdin, and Ahtisaari then met again on May 20 in Moscow, while the political directors of the G-8 were meeting in Bonn.

Postwar reconstruction

The only viable exit strategy for the Balkans War is a postwar “Marshall Plan” to reconstruct that ravaged region and build up its transportation and industrial infrastructure. This general approach was offered by President Clinton already before the NATO summit, in the President’s April 15

address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors meeting in San Francisco, when he said: “We must follow up the example of the World War II generation, by standing up to aggression and hate, and then by following through with a post-conflict strategy for reconstruction and renewal.” Clinton stressed that people “have to have something to live for,” and he argued that the peoples of Southeast Europe “need to have more to gain by working together than they do by having constant fights with each other . . . and we need to reach out and help lift them up there.”

Well-intentioned as the President’s plans are, they are not sufficient in their present rather vague and limited form. And, the absolute danger in some of the current thinking, especially in the plans being worked out by the European Union, is that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank will sabotage any effort at large-scale infrastructure and development projects, just as they have done in post-Dayton Bosnia.

This is already the direction things are moving. On May 12, the European Union and the World Bank announced the formation of a joint task force “to coordinate the international response to the economic needs of the Balkans resulting from the Kosovo crisis.” The EU statement says that the task force will have an office in Brussels, “under the guidance of IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus, World Bank President James Wolfensohn, EC Commissioner Yves Thibault de Silguy, and ministers from the major donor countries.”

On the U.S. side, Deputy Secretary of State Stuart Eizenstat addressed a meeting at the State Department on May 18, in which he presented what was portrayed as the Clinton administration’s perspective on the reconstruction of Southeast Europe. Eizenstat said that the administration had held its first interagency discussion on this just four days earlier.

Eizenstat said that the administration has identified four aspects of policy for Southeast Europe: 1) humanitarian and refugee assistance, 2) balance of payments relief to the front-line states, especially because of trade disruptions caused by war destruction, 3) money for reconstruction of roads, bridges, and other infrastructure, and 4) integration of the region’s economies among themselves and with EU and Central Europe.

Eizenstat also said that three approaches for promoting reconstruction are under consideration: 1) the stability pact (human rights, democracy, etc.) led by the EU; 2) donor assistance coordinated by World Bank and EU; and 3) bilateral U.S. assistance, including foreign aid and trade benefits. He said that private investment is being sought, and that the U.S. Commerce Department is organizing a forum on investment in Southeast Europe to take place soon, probably in June.

Time is short, if a catastrophe next winter is to be avoided. What is needed is not only a crash program, but a dramatically different way of thinking about the whole program, breaking out of traditional ideas of “foreign aid” and IMF-style “reforms.” The outlines of the type of program needed, which

should be linked to the broader Eurasian Land-Bridge conception, and accompanied by global financial and monetary reform, is presented in this issue (see *Feature*).

This is truly the path to peace, the alternative to Blair's road to World War III.

Documentation

'Old-fashioned British imperialism'

The Blair government's Balkans policy is a case of "old-fashioned British imperialism," and "the righteous Tony Blair" is covering up the fact that the British Empire had one of the most horrific records in history of brutal ethnic cleansing, writes British historian Richard Gott, in the May 20 London *Guardian*. Gott explicitly supports President Clinton against British attacks on Clinton's refusal to send troops to the Balkans.

Gott stresses that any sense of history would place Blair and Co. in the historical tradition of the "Limps," the "liberal imperialists" of the 19th and early 20th century. Blair is like the "pro-war Herbert Asquith," who supported the late-19th-century Boer war, "with its concentration camps and slaughter of civilians." Recollections of that "pointless and barbaric" war, explain why "almost every British historian today is in the anti-war camp."

Today's British government push for the Balkans war is "nothing new. . . . It is a throwback to the colonialism of the last century, when the imperial powers intervened at will in the affairs of independent states and peoples. Today's British Limps threaten a return to those old imperialisms, recommending intervention whenever they feel that an individual sovereign state is not behaving according to their definition of how states should behave."

Gott writes: "At first, they thought they had the United States with them, but now, finding President Clinton reluctant to engage American ground troops in a Balkan war, they pour scorn on his leadership and his failure to pick up the white man's burden. Clinton at least has some sense of history. . . ."

"Yet Tony Blair has never so much as hinted that Britain was responsible, during more than 200 years, for some of the most dreadful, institutional ethnic cleansing the world has ever seen: poisoning, shooting, slaughtering, and—yes—bombing the indigenous populations of the British Empire.

"An outsider might conclude from Britain's contemporary war fever that a powerful imperial drive still survives in the British cultural make-up."

Gott stresses, that the only way British aims in this conflict can be achieved, is by setting up a "protectorate" in Kosovo:

"This is what the Liberal imperialists now wish to construct, with the help of NATO, in the Balkans."

'Shooting President Clinton'?

Excerpts from a letter to the editor by British historian Alistar Horne, published in the London Daily Telegraph, on May 13:

Sir: For once I disagree with John Keegan in his call for the sacking of Gen. Wesley Clark. . . . Why shoot the monkey when the organ-grinder's to blame?

Though no one would advocate shooting President Clinton, it is pretty clear that, if only Congress had removed him by impeachment back in January, NATO would not now be in the mess it finds itself. . . .

. . . On a visit to the United States last month, however, I was surprised—and very disturbed—to find my American political contacts united, from Left to Right, in agreement that Clinton was the most "shamelessly bad" President on record (as one eminent former secretary of state put it), even including the disastrous Warren G. Harding.

Is it therefore any wonder that NATO puts up so feeble a performance with such an American commander-in-chief at the helm? . . .

However the Kosovo tragedy is eventually resolved . . . what one fears may be of more lasting damage will be the injury inflicted by one spineless political leader upon NATO and the Western alliance as a whole.

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The British espionage citadel in Washington

by Scott Thompson

With all the flap about Chinese spying in the United States, why is no one making a stink about the fact that, every day, some 400 spies of one sort or another from the British Embassy fan out throughout our nation's capital to go "prospecting for golden nuggets of intelligence," according to British Ambassador Sir Charles Meyer? Given the growing rift between the Clinton administration and Her Majesty's Blair government over the conduct of the war against Yugoslavia, among other matters, perhaps the time has come for a crack-down on the activities of the Red Coats at the British Embassy, who rely upon a post-Franklin Delano Roosevelt "special relationship," to worm their way into the inner councils of the U.S. government.

The British Embassy sits on a hill at 3100 Massachusetts Avenue, right near Observatory Circle and the home of the