

London Leaves U.S. To Hold the Bag In Iraq-Afghanistan Debacle

by Dean Andromidas

The British security establishment has signalled that Her Majesty's troops will be pulled out of Iraq sometime soon, leaving the United States holding the bag, in a mess which London was instrumental in creating. This is precisely at a time when powerful New York- and London-based financial interests, through their lackey, Vice President Dick Cheney, are about to unleash a military attack on Iran. London has indicated that it will not stop Cheney, while positioning itself to exploit new "opportunities" that will arise with the inevitable collapse of the United States' policy resulting from Cheney's attack on Iran.

Gen. Sir Richard Dannatt, Chief of Staff of the British Army, Britain's highest ranking military officer, caused an uproar, when he told the *Daily Mail* of Oct. 12 that Britain should get out of Iraq.

"We should get ourselves out sometime soon because our presence exacerbates the security problem," he said. "I don't say the difficulties we're experiencing around the world are caused by our presence in Iraq, but undoubtedly our presence in Iraq exacerbates them. We are in a Muslim country and Muslims' views of foreigners in their country are quite clear."

Dannatt said things might have been different if Britain had been invited in by the Iraqi people. But, "the military campaign we fought in 2003 effectively kicked the door in."

As for the decision to dismantle the Ba'athist Iraqi government, he said, "I think history will show that the planning for what happened after the initial successful war fighting phase was poor, probably based more on optimism than sound planning. The original intention was that we put in place a liberal democracy that was an exemplar for the region, was pro-West and might have a beneficial effect on the balance within the Middle East. Whether that was a sensible or naive hope history will judge. I don't think we are going to do that. We should aim for a lower ambition."

Not reported outside the *Daily Mail*, was Dannatt's affirmation of the need for a dialogue with Iran and North Korea: "Particularly Iran—If we paint them into a corner I think that is being too simplistic. Dialogue and negotiations make eminent sense and military posturing doesn't."

Not a 'Colonel Blimp'

Dannatt did not give this interview on the eve of his retirement; in fact, he had just become Chief of Staff in August. Nor is he simply a frustrated officer blowing off steam over a policy that is so obviously untenable. The move is calculated to signal a shift in British policy. He knew exactly what he was doing.

Dannatt gave the interview to the right-wing *Daily Mail*, an evening tabloid known for being militantly opposed to Tony Blair's Labour government. The *Mail*, after publishing the article on the evening of Oct. 12, quickly gave the BBC a heads-up, so it would get broad coverage on the 10:00 evening news. By Oct. 14, the story was filling up two to four pages of every British newspaper.

Dannatt is no Colonel Blimp, but is very familiar with the politics of British defense policy as well as intelligence operations. He has done several tours of duty in Whitehall (top British government offices), including as advisor to more than one defense minister. He has also served in politically tricky peace-keeping missions in Kosovo and Bosnia.

Dannatt is also an evangelical Christian, vice president of the Officers' Christian Union, and president of the Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association.

The Focal Point Is Washington

It is not the death of British soldiers in Iraq that worries powerful London-centered financial interests, but changes in Washington. While Cheney is plotting a nuclear strike against



Royal Navy/POA Tony Leather

Royal Marine Commandos in Afghanistan. While the British military establishment is speaking out against the disaster in Iraq and Afghanistan, their concern is not with British soldiers, so much as with strategic issues of British power.

Iran, more sane political forces are looking for an exit strategy from Iraq and a war-avoidance strategy with Iran. London wants to be in the center of that debate, just as it was at the center of the plot to invade Iraq in 2003. This was confirmed by former Lord William Rees-Mogg, former editor of *The Times* of London, who enjoys extensive contacts with right-wing circles in the United States.

Commenting on Dannatt's statements, Rees-Mogg wrote in *The Times* on Oct. 16, "The general is making a local contribution to a global debate whose focal point is not London but Washington. If he had not intervened, this debate might have been entirely decided inside the Washington Beltway, with almost no contribution from Britain. The global strategy of the Western alliance is already under review in Washington—Britain will play an important part in executing that strategy, and certainly ought to have a voice in framing it. . . ."

The only viable solution to the unfolding catastrophe in Southwest Asia is that of American statesman Lyndon LaRouche, who has called for a peace policy based on the principle of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe. The United States would bring

together all the nations of the region, especially Syria, Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, to help create a sovereign Iraqi government, in the context of an ambitious regional economic-development policy. Only after throwing Cheney and Bush out of the White House, could this or any relatively sane alternative policy be implemented.

In the absence of LaRouche's policy, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, led by former Secretary of State James Baker III, is about to put forward another, far more limited and potentially dangerous alternative. According to media leaks, the two alternatives being considered by the group include a political approach, in which Iran and Syria, the two countries highest on Cheney's hit-list, are invited to aid in a regional approach to stabilizing Iraq and the region. The second is a unilateral withdrawal to military bases outside of Iraq, where a policy of "containment" would be implemented.

Supporting the second option, the *Daily Telegraph*, mouthpiece of the British right, in an editorial on Oct. 18, commented that the political option was "floated simply to enhance the attractions of the second option—a phased withdrawal. This proposal—handily leaked in the run up to the mid-term elections—has the logic of the inevitable. . . ." The editors conclude: "Iraq must, in the end, be master of its own destiny. And that process can start in earnest only when it becomes apparent that an Iraq without coalition forces could not possibly fare any worse than an Iraq with them in place."

A senior British intelligence source concurred with the assessment that powerful British policymakers were preparing for the regional disaster, but added that they won't lift a finger to stop it. He said that Dannatt's interview was a declaration by the British Army brass that they want to get out, and that they no longer wish to take responsibility for the situation.

Commenting on the Iraq Study Group proposal, the same source concurred that the political option could not be carried out as long as the Cheney-Bush duo is still in power and is being backed by Blair and the British "right wing." Therefore, the second option will most likely be carried out, with the British being the first ones to leave. In fact, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, on Oct. 18, told the House of Commons that the British will be out within 10-16 months.

"If we are lucky," the source said, "whoever manages to take power in Iraq will seek to cooperate with Iran and its neighbors. But most likely, the chaos will continue and the Turks, the Saudis, and everyone else will jump in. It will be a disaster that will last for decades."

The source then pointed to a broader danger: that the European elites have fully adopted the underlying anti-Islamic agenda. "In the U.S., they call it Islamo-fascism; in Europe, they accuse the Muslims of failing to 'integrate.' When the Europeans use the term 'integrate,' they are expressing their own intolerance." He feared this attitude would preclude the Europeans acting alone for a positive change.