

'Ibykus Principle' Is Hunting Britain's Blair

by Mark Burdman

To understand the extraordinary political drama unfolding in Britain since the July 17 death of Dr. David Kelly, Britain's paramount expert on Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction" (WMD), one may read the great German poet Friedrich Schiller's ballad, "The Cranes of Ibykus." Schiller's poem depicts how the Greek poet Ibykus is murdered, and as he dies, calls on cranes flying overhead to avenge him. When his murderers attend a festival—where Ibykus was expected to offer his famous poetry—they see the cranes, and, impelled by conscience to cry out, "See there, the cranes of Ibykus," give themselves away.

In the third week of July, as Tony Blair romped around Asia, above the Prime Minister's offices at 10 Downing Street, there may well have been similar cranes, awaiting the moment that "consciousness brings guilt to light."

No matter what shenanigans the mentally unbalanced Blair and his coterie may now attempt to fend off such unpleasant sounds, Britain is undergoing a seismic shift in public consciousness, as well as in the political and intelligence establishment, against the British Prime Minister. Even if first police reports ruled Kelly's death a suicide, there is a widespread sentiment, in Britain and elsewhere, that Blair is responsible for his death—either through some kind of bizarre network, or by a calculated psychological terror operation to drive the man over the edge.

Reports from Washington are that "the Kelly affair" is being watched closely in the Bush-Cheney Administration. If Blair sinks under the pressure of this latest blow to his beleaguered role, this will have big consequences for the Dick Cheney-centered junta now running Washington policy. Blair has been a most faithful tool in carrying out their neo-imperial policies.

But there is a deeper reason. It is not only Blair and Co. who would have wanted Kelly out of the way. For the increasingly desperate Cheney crowd, Kelly was the classic case of "the man who knew too much." He was probably the man, more than anyone else, who knew the ins and outs of Iraqi weaponry and weapon plans. He was angry and distraught that his expertise, and the expertise of his collaborators, had been abused and misused to launch an unjust and unnecessary war. Were he alive to speak, especially after the disgusting way he was treated in recent times by the Blair mob, "all the trees in the forest might fall."

The ironical twist, is that Kelly died at about the same

time, on July 17, that Blair was addressing a joint session of the U.S. Congress, to the wild cheers of evidently deranged American legislators. Of added irony, is the fact that in his Capitol Hill speech, Blair edged toward acknowledging, for the first time, that not all he had said about Iraqi WMDs before the war may have been in strict accordance with the truth. But "history will forgive us" since the war was justified, he insisted. The blowback from the death of David Kelly will guarantee, that neither history nor any well-meaning person will ever forgive Tony Blair. The cranes are circling over him.

'Dark Actors Playing Games'

On mid-afternoon, July 17, Dr. Kelly went for a walk, leaving his home in Oxfordshire. Soon before midnight, when he had not yet returned, his worried family called the police, which then put out an all-points alert. The next day, it was announced that his body had been found, 8 kilometers from his home. Soon thereafter, the police declared his death a suicide, reporting that he was found with a slashed wrist, and a bottle of painkillers by his side.

Two days before his disappearance, Kelly had been subjected to nasty rounds of questioning by Labour Party Members of Parliament from the House of Commons Select Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC); they were trying to force him to admit that he had been the "mole" for BBC Defense Correspondent Andrew Gilligan, who, in late May, had exposed Downing Street's efforts to get the Iraq War under way. Gilligan had cited an unnamed intelligence source, that Blair's chief "spin doctor" and media czar, Alastair Campbell, had "sexed up" the September 2002 Blair/10 Downing Street dossier on Iraqi WMD, to make the immediate Iraqi threat seem much greater than it was. In particular, Gilligan's report called into question the dossier's contention, repeated by Blair on more than one occasion, that Saddam Hussein's regime could launch weapons of mass destruction "in 45 minutes," thereby posing a mortal threat to British forces in the Mediterranean-Near East region, and possibly to the British Isles itself.

Despite incessant badgering from FAC parliamentarians, Kelly refused to buckle under and play the Blair-Campbell game, to discredit Gilligan and BBC.

But the public belittling in the House of Commons was a minor aspect of what was done to Kelly. During five days, he was kept in a safehouse in London, and subjected to intense grilling, various forms of pressure, and likely blackmail, by individuals from the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and, reportedly, from the British secret services.

The British media have suggested, that Kelly was threatened with loss of pension, and/or prosecution under Britain's draconian Official Secrets Act. Both of these carry with them serious consequences: the former, both financial and psychological, for a married man with three children, who has devoted his entire adult life to public service; and the latter, possibly including imprisonment and loss of various civil service privileges.

But it is probable that the threats were much greater than that. According to the July 20 *Sunday Times*, Kelly himself sent out an e-mail, right before his death, warning of “many dark actors playing games.” According to the *Times*, he referred to the “intolerable” pressure being placed upon him, and charged that he had been put “through the wringer,” during meetings with MOD officials. He said he had felt “betrayed” by the MOD.

It is hardly surprising, that the verdict of suicide has been greeted with skepticism in Britain and among intelligence specialists around the world. But even were it accepted, there is a vast constituency, in Britain and elsewhere, that holds the government responsible for having impelled Kelly to his death. Polls taken during the week of July 21 show 40% of respondents holding the Blair government responsible, and according to *EIR*’s observers in Britain, the word in the pubs—where average Britons gather to discuss politics, sports, and other matters—is that “Blair is to blame for Kelly’s death.”

In a July 22 discussion, one of Britain’s leading military experts put it this way: “What Blair and 10 Downing Street have done in this Kelly case is disgraceful. . . . What was done to him goes against the entire civil service ethos that has prevailed in Britain for an extremely long time. Here you have a scientist, a quiet family man, unused to political controversies and the public limelight, and suddenly dragged out in public, under pressure. From that standpoint, I am personally convinced that he committed suicide, because he cracked under what was done to him. Who ever heard of a public servant being treated this way in Britain? Normally, when a problem like this comes up, the department chief, in this case from the Ministry of Defense, would come out, to explain what is going on; not a man working deep in the background, like Kelly.”

‘All Hell Would Break Loose’

The question arises, why were Blair, Campbell, and the MOD, under Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon, so frantic?

The government began domestic hostilities, by launching a fratricidal war against the BBC, a government-owned corporation. The immediate aim was threefold: to discredit the Gilligan report, thereby hoping to discredit other criticisms of the government; to paint the BBC as dictated by “anti-war bias”; and to narrow the fight to this one issue of “the source,” so as—as former Cabinet minister Robin Cook has correctly charged—to divert attention from the much greater issue, that Blair brought Britain into “war under false premises.” Blair, Campbell, et al., know that millions of Britons agree that this was a “war under false premises,” and so, they were desperate to shift the agenda.

It was a losing fight from the outset. As Alan Clayton, *EIR*’s man in Glasgow, stresses, the BBC remains an icon, particularly for Britain’s older generation. At a time when most traditional British institutions, such as the postal service, have been privatized, BBC remains state-owned, and is there-

fore seen, in one sense, as part of the “common weal.” Beyond that, there are positive memories of the role BBC played during World War II, when its anti-Nazi broadcasts helped keep morale high, at a time that Britain was under dire threat. According to Clayton, Britons who are asked whether they believe BBC or “No. 10,” respond 98-2 in favor of BBC.

In trying to entrap Kelly with the aim of saving their own necks, Blair’s team have set a trap for themselves; even the game of focussing attention on “the source,” is blurring. Since July 21, many journalists, from BBC and elsewhere, have come forward to reveal that Kelly was hardly one “lone source” or “junior technician,” but rather a key figure in the defense/intelligence apparatus.

On July 24, the *Independent* reported that he was “a consultant to the Defense Intelligence Analysis Staff, which can draw upon classified information provided by the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), MI5, GCHQ [Cheltenham], military intelligence and material supplied by allied espionage services.” This means, first, that Kelly was briefing Gilligan and others, as a representative of an intelligence/secret service grouping who are aghast at the Blair war policy; and second, that their wrath is now likely going to be thrown against the Prime Minister and his coterie.

Meanwhile, the deranged Blair made things worse by trying to undermine the supposedly independent inquiry into Kelly’s death, which he himself set up! In response to the furore that erupted after Kelly’s death, Blair decreed this inquiry, under Lord Hutton, a senior Law Lord and former Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland. In his announcement, Blair insisted that the inquiry’s remit be limited to “establishing the facts” about Kelly’s death. But Lord Hutton had a different idea, and told a packed press conference, that he, and only he would decide “the subject of my investigation.” Blair responded, on July 22, “It is important that he does what we asked him to do. I do not think it would be sensible to do any more.”

These Blair blurtings produced angry responses from within both his Labour Party and the opposition, with Liberal Democratic leader Charles Kennedy warning that “all hell would break loose” if any “roadblocks” were put in the way of an independent, wide-ranging probe.

Then, on July 23, BBC played its trump card: Susan Watts, Science Editor of the “Newsnight” program, declared that she also had interviewed Kelly, the videotape of which was under lock-and-key, and that she would be providing it to the Hutton inquiry.

Faced with what amounts to a national revolt against his rule, Blair is trying to take the heat away from himself. In that process, charges and counter-charges are flying, within the Blair entourage. Soon, we may see the carnage unleashed, reminiscent of the last act of *Hamlet*.

There is a growing battle between the Blair-Campbell duo and the Ministry of Defense, over who actually forced Kelly’s name into the public eye, and/or who forced him to publicly

come out. Since Kelly worked for the MOD, a great deal of this heat is directed at Defense Minister Geoff Hoon, who, though 100% behind the Iraq War, went on vacation as it was beginning! It is foreseeable that Hoon will be thrown to the wolves to protect Blair, or Blair-Campbell. On July 23, Kelly's widow Janice summoned Hoon to their residence in Oxfordshire, demanding an explanation of Hoon's role.

A more unlikely scenario, would be for the massively unpopular thug Campbell to be given the boot.

But such maneuvers would be, at best, time-buying measures. A leading social psychologist described the situation as "explosive. There is a tremendous anger, just below the surface, and it has been systematically building, over time. . . . People are simply fed up about the lying. It is not only the Iraq War, and the deception. The reality is that people are losing their jobs, and are being cheated on their pensions." He forecast social-political ferment on a scale not seen since the miners' strike of the 1980s, "but this time with significant levels of the middle class joining in. For such people, the death of Dr. Kelly has a special meaning; he was one of them."

One other nightmare for Blair was that, just as the news of Kelly death's was emerging, Britain was being rocked by allegations in the newest edition of *New Statesman* magazine, one of the most widely read publications for left-liberal circles in the U.K., that the Prime Minister is insane. The feature article alleged that "the question of Tony Blair's sanity is one that can no longer be avoided." Writer Peter Dunn interviewed numerous psychotherapists and other experts, who used terms like "psychotic" and "psychopath," to *EIR*'s sources in Scotland and London report that the level of distrust toward this government is gigantic. One report characterizes it as "a powderkeg, while some people are playing with matches." describe the British Prime Minister.

Downing Street issued a response, declaring that it were absurd to call the British Prime Minister "potty." *New Statesman* is owned by Geoffrey Robinson, a Labour Party moneybags and former Blair Cabinet minister. Robinson is a supporter of, and mouthpiece for Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer. The lead editorial of the same *New Statesman* was an unabashed endorsement of Brown to replace Blair immediately.

There is one other possibility, even more likely. Various British commentators are now drawing parallels between Blair and Prime Minister Anthony Eden in 1956-57. Earlier a popular Prime Minister, Eden dragged Britain into the 1956 Suez War fiasco. Once that was over, and Britain's strategic situation and political influence lay in wreckage, Eden took a vacation in the West Indies. He returned home, a nervous wreck, jibbering away, and resigned, under the care of his doctors.

Eerily, after his diplomatic tour in Asia, Blair was scheduled to go on vacation in the Barbados, at the home of rock star Cliff Richards. Commentators suggested that he would come home and "do an Eden."