

A British hand is behind the world terror rampage

by Jeffrey Steinberg

In the span of 48 hours, over the weekend of Feb. 24-25, the stability of the Middle East and the Caribbean region was severely damaged by acts of irregular warfare—just as the 19-month peace process in Northern Ireland was shaken weeks earlier by a string of terrorist bombs, purported to have been carried out by the Irish Republican Army (IRA). And, while the mass media in the United States have been treating these events as isolated affairs, investigations by *EIR* suggest that all of these actions are part of an effort by the British Crown and its vast array of intelligence assets and collaborators, to bring to an end the fragile progress toward peace in some of the most troubled parts of this planet, and, in so doing, to wreck the Clinton Presidency.

In recent campaign appearances in Texas, and in a policy speech delivered on Presidents' Day weekend in Virginia, Democratic Party Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche has stepped up his warnings to President Clinton, that his recent policy vacillations have provided the administration's enemies in London, and in the "Bush leagues" here in the United States, with a golden opportunity to conduct irregular warfare and crush the "outbreak of peace," from the Balkans, to Ireland, to the Middle East. Since the very beginning of the Clinton Presidency, there has been a "war and a half" between London and Washington—driven by the Clinton administration's break, albeit tenuous, with British geopolitics.

Playing the 'Fidel card'

On Feb. 24, Cuban Air Force jets shot down two civilian Cessna planes, which Cuba accused of flying over its airspace. The planes belonged to a Cuban exile group, based

in Miami, called Brothers to the Rescue. The shoot-down precipitated a diplomatic crisis between Washington and Havana, and has disrupted a year-long effort by the Clinton administration to devise a policy for normalization of relations.

In intelligence parlance, Brothers to the Rescue is a classic example of an "asteroid" operation—a group run by renegade "former" intelligence operatives, out to disrupt official U.S. government policy. The leading patron today of these "asteroids" is former President George Bush, whose son Jeb is a key figure in the right-wing Cuban exile circles in Miami. These "asteroid" intelligence operatives are very often far more closely tied to the British intelligence services than to anything operating in American interests.

Brothers to the Rescue was founded in 1989 by José Basulto, a Cuban-American veteran of the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, who, during the 1980s, was active in the Nicaraguan Contra operation of George Bush and Oliver North, which was, at its core, a guns-for-drugs crime enterprise.

During its initial years of activity, Brothers limited its actions to flights into the Caribbean, searching for boats of Cuban refugees attempting to reach the United States. In the past several years, the group has shifted its focus to more provocative actions, including violations of Cuban airspace and other efforts to destabilize the Castro regime. In January, a Brothers' plane flew over Havana and dropped anti-Castro leaflets on the city. The Cuban government has protested the Brothers' actions, and the Clinton administration earlier ordered the Federal Aviation Administration to probe the group's activities.

The shift toward more provocative actions—at odds with Clinton administration efforts at constructive engagement of Cuba to assist in the transition from communism, as spelled out in recent interviews by Special Presidential Adviser on Cuba Richard Nuccio—may be linked to reports that former CIA operations officer Theodore G. Shackley has been once again at work inside the Cuban community in Miami. Shackley was a pivotal figure in the Bay of Pigs fiasco, having run the Miami CIA station at the time. He was also a pivotal behind-the-scenes figure during the Reagan-Bush era in many of the “Bush league” covert operations. Shackley is presently a well-paid consultant to Dutch oil trader John Deuss, a front man for Royal Dutch Shell oil interests.

Castro’s own game

There is another wrinkle to the Brothers to the Rescue affair. The group has also been penetrated by Castro’s own intelligence services. On Feb. 23, the day before the shoot-downs, a leading member of the group, Juan Pablo Roque, disappeared. A former Cuban Air Force pilot who had defected to the United States in 1992, Roque resurfaced several days later in Havana, denouncing the group. He reportedly delivered information to the Castro regime, indicating that the Brothers were planning an attempt to assassinate Castro.

Even before the re-defection, Castro had been increasingly flaunting his true anti-American posture. Castro, after all, remains the leading sponsor of the São Paulo Forum, a collection of narco-terrorist-linked leftist political parties, involved in destabilizing most of the countries of Ibero-America.

And, on Jan. 12-14, the Castro regime hosted a “Solidarity with the Third World” convention in Havana, during which it bestowed an award on Rafael Cancel Miranda, the Puerto Rican terrorist who fired shots on the floor of the U.S. Congress in 1954—an outrageous endorsement of anti-American terrorism.

Castro has also recently been flaunting his long-standing collusion with George Bush, through his protection of former Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, whose family is now under investigation by U.S. and Mexican authorities for involvement in drug-money laundering. Salinas was one of Bush’s closest allies and protégés, and remains, despite the drug-money allegations, a darling of Wall Street and London.

Hamas and Sharon in bed again?

Also on Feb. 25, Hamas suicide bombers carried out two terrorist attacks in Israel. One bus bomb attack in Jerusalem killed at least 26 people and injured dozens more during the morning rush hour. Coming just months before the Israeli elections, the terrorist attacks created a political crisis for both Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, and have jeopardized further progress toward peace.

President Arafat has accused right-wing fanatics in Israel of collaborating with Hamas in the bombings, telling report-

ers that “it would take superman” to carry out such an attack without help from extremists inside Israel.

Arafat’s statements are not at all far-fetched. It is a not-so-well-kept secret, that during the period of the Likud governments in the 1970s and ’80s, segments of Israeli intelligence helped create Hamas as a “countergang” to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Seizing the opportunity to defeat Prime Minister Peres in the May 29 elections, Likud hawk Ariel Sharon, an asset of London’s Hollinger Corp. intelligence front and one of the leading figures linked to the early sponsorship of Hamas, is now attempting to forge an alliance of four right-wing parties to beat the Labor Party and kill the peace process.

It is no secret that the primary weapon in the hands of opponents of the Middle East peace process—from London to the West Bank—is irregular warfare. In February 1994, months after the signing of the original Oslo Accords at the White House in September 1993, Jewish underground terrorists shot up a mosque in Hebron during Friday prayers, in a clear effort to derail the peace effort. The Jerusalem bombing in February 1996 took place on the anniversary of that Hebron attack. And, while the assassination late last year of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, by a Jewish fanatic opponent of peace, gave new impetus to the peace process, there is widespread fear inside Israel that several more terrorist atrocities, claimed by Hamas or Islamic Jihad, could jettison the Israel-Palestine deal altogether.

Questions about the London bombing

The other major Clinton administration peace initiatives—in Northern Ireland and Bosnia—are also being jeopardized by irregular warfare, and, once again, the hand of the British is ever-present.

After the recent disruption of a 19-month cease-fire by the IRA, Washington and Dublin officials are now desperately scrambling to get the all-party peace process back on track. As *EIR* has already reported, there are serious questions about whether the recent bombings in London that punctured the peace, which had been stubbornly opposed by the John Major government despite massive U.S. pressures, was actually the work of the IRA. Historically, British SAS has always run “IRA” countergangs that have often been responsible for the most bloody atrocities.

According to one high-ranking U.S. law enforcement official, the recent London bombings, which nearly blew up two years of Clinton administration efforts to move the Major government toward a peace agreement for Northern Ireland, does not conform to known IRA profile. The bomb that blew up a train station near Canary Wharf was made of ammonium nitrate and fuel oil—the same ingredients used in the Oklahoma City bombing in April 1995. The IRA has never used this type of bomb. The second bomb, which went off in London several days later, was constructed from plastic explosives—also never used by the IRA.