

The Nairobi and Dar es Salaam attacks

In our present case, we find the International Army for the Liberation of Islamic Shrines (IALIS), which is a combination of several London-centered Islamist groups: the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Al-Gamaa, together with a Kashmiri group under the leadership of multimillionaire terrorist financier Osama Bin Laden. This group came into being earlier this year, under a different name (the International Islamic Front), in the escalation between the UN weapons inspectors and Iraq, which was close to exploding into a new war in the Middle East, but was defused by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, with the support of the U.S. administration, China, and Russia. At that time, the British did not get the war they wanted, which would have totally discredited the United States and President Clinton in the Third World.

Two days before the Nairobi-Dar es Salaam attacks, London's Islamic Jihad issued a declaration vowing to attack American interests all over the world, alleging that the CIA had carried out an operation against its members in Albania "months ago," to arrest and extradite three of them to Egypt where they might be executed. In London, there was a consensus among extremist Islamic groups to maintain that the Islamists under Bin Laden had carried out the attack. A group which is a splitoff of Bin Laden's London-based Committee for Advice and Reform issued a communiqué to justify and give credibility to the reports in the British and American media, that the IALIS is Bin Laden's group.

A number of groups in London praised the bombings and sent communiqués and messages to the international press saying that the bombings were a great victory for the oppressed Muslim nations against U.S. tyranny and its allies, and that the Islamic movement should carry out more such actions. Among the groups who sent such messages were the Egyptian "Supporters of Sharia" of Abu Hamza Al-Misri, who enjoys political asylum in London while under a death sentence in Egypt, and the Al-Muhajiroon of Omar Bakri. Islamic Jihad's official fundraising and propaganda outfit, the Islamic Observation Center, which was licensed by the British authorities in 1996, justified the attack and demanded that the United States change its policies toward Islamic nations.

Egypt has led an international effort to put an end to the protection and manipulation by Britain of a zoo of terrorist groups that threaten the security and economy of Egypt and other countries. In addition, Egypt carried the fight a step further by promoting the idea, through its official press, that the United States can gain nothing by looking inside the "Islamist" circus, but should realize that the bombing is the clearest sign of the involvement of the "former European colonial powers," through their intelligence and military power in the continent, to kill in the cradle the U.S. policy approach initiated by Bill Clinton (despite all its tragic flaws) in Africa recently.

Taliban conquer northern Afghanistan

by Ramtanu Maitra

The fall of the northern Afghan town of Mazhar-e-Sharif to the Taliban has sent a shock wave through Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. These Central Asian nations have reacted strongly against the growth of the orthodox Wahabi variety of Islam in the region, preached by the Saudis and practiced by the Taliban.

The latest march by the Taliban to conquer north Afghanistan has also widened the rift between Tehran and Islamabad. Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazzi has informed Pakistani Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz that the Taliban have kidnapped 11 diplomats from the Iranian consulate in Mazhar-e-Sharif. "Pakistan and the Taliban bear responsibility for the lives and safety of the staff at Iran's consulate," Kharazzi said. Iran, along with the Tajiks and the Russians, has reportedly backed the anti-Taliban forces in the north, and has accused Pakistan of aiding and abetting the Taliban movement in Afghanistan.

Anxious voices were also heard in Moscow and Tashkent, where Uzbek President Islam Karimov recently notified the nation's Parliament that he will "personally shoot Islamists, if this becomes necessary." Karimov accused Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan of hiding the Uzbek Islamic radicals in their training camps. Uzbek authorities recently claimed to have unearthed a network of "Islamic extremists," and accused them of a number of rapes in Namagan, the undeclared capital of Islamic extremists in Uzbekistan.

Moscow, which is beefing up the 25,000 troops it already has stationed along the Afghan-Tajik border, has complained bitterly of the Taliban and Pakistani involvement in Chechnya. On July 18, Chechen President Aslan Maskhodov extended a state of emergency and a curfew for ten more days, following an attempt on his life. He blamed the spread of the "anti-Islamic pernicious Wahabi doctrine" as the reason behind the militant anti-Russian secessionism in Chechnya. In a strongly worded statement, the Russian Foreign Ministry condemned "the direct involvement of Pakistani military in the planning and material-technical provision of the Taliban operations," and said that Russia reserves the right to take necessary steps jointly with the Commonwealth of Independent States member-nations to protect its borders.

It is not the first time that the Taliban have wrested control of the town of Mazhar-e-Sharif; a year ago they took it, but the Russian- and Iranian-backed northern alliance pushed them back southward again. Subsequently, mass graves were

found, indicating that there had been a mass killing of Taliban by northern alliance troops.

The role of Pakistani intelligence

The Taliban, a zealous and indoctrinated Pushtoon lot, were trained and armed by orthodox mullahs in Pakistan with help from its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). ISI has long been heavily infiltrated by foreign intelligence agencies, particularly the British MI6, and is beyond the control of Islamabad. The ISI also possesses a huge amount of sophisticated weapons which were originally supplied in the 1980s by Western nations to fight the Soviet invaders in Afghanistan.

Last year, when the Taliban were under pressure from the northern alliance army in Kabul, the London *Sunday Telegraph* reported that ISI chief Brigadier Afridi personally directed operations to help the Taliban build up their defenses. It said that Afridi had ordered the delivery of huge stockpiles of arms and ammunition from military dumps along Pakistan's western borders to the Taliban. There were also reports of Pakistani Army men disguised as tribal Pushtoon militiamen helping the Taliban.

The Taliban have been particularly harsh on women and all non-orthodox Islamic groups. They have also executed many Afghan leaders and citizens in public for violating the Taliban-imposed religious codes. In addition, the orthodox Sunni Taliban have persecuted the Afghan Shias and have identified Tehran as their enemy. Iran has called the Taliban "a war-mongering, extremist, and radical" group.

In addition, Taliban Information Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi acknowledged last year that Osama bin Laden, the millionaire Saudi terrorist involved in violence against the United States, was "my guest." Another terrorist, Aimal Kasi, who killed two CIA officers in Langley, Virginia, has also reportedly been given shelter by the Taliban.

Behind the religious facade, the Taliban have built up opium cultivation in Afghanistan, despite denials by their leaders. Guns and poppies have provided the muscle to the Taliban. They have been accused of not only supplying *jihadis* to the Chechen rebels against Moscow, but Afghanistan has also been recognized as a key center for training "Islamic militants" sent to the Indian part of Kashmir, the western Chinese province of Xinjiang, and southern Tajikistan.

What has intrigued many is the synchronization of car-bomb explosions at the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and the victory of the Taliban in northern Afghanistan. Since the Pakistani ISI is what it is, there is a strong likelihood that the fire of "extremism" will be spread further into the Central Asian nations, challenging all those forces—such as Commonwealth of Independent States member-nations and China—which are involved in "trust-building measures" in the military field and shrinking troop deployments along shared borders. Lurking in the background, most likely, is an Israeli gameplan to break the Middle East peace accords.

Milosevic creates catastrophe in Kosova

by Umberto Pascali

The onslaught of Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic's military machine against Kosova that began on July 18, is leading toward a humanitarian catastrophe. Starting with the assault on the town of Rahovec, the combined forces of the Yugoslav Army, the special police, and the paramilitary gangs are taking, one by one, the villages and towns inhabited by the Kosovars, the ethnic Albanians that make up more than 90% of the Kosova population.

The latest reports are of heavy attacks against villages close to the Albanian border, in the Reka and Keqe regions. Tanks and heavy artillery, with a total of 250 vehicles, have been sowing terror and destruction. Serb helicopter gunships have been seen over the town of Gjakova, going in direction of the assaulted villages. In the municipality of Gjakova alone, 30 villages are now deserted, reduced to scorched earth.

The same is true throughout large areas of Kosova. In front of Milosevic's tanks and sadistic gangs, civilians are escaping en masse. According to the official calculations of humanitarian agencies, the number of refugees is now more than 300,000, out of a total ethnic Albanian population of 1.8 million. In reality, the number of the refugees is higher, and growing by the minute.

As in Bosnia, Milosevic's Nazi-like strategists have terrorized old people, mothers with children, and other civilians into fleeing their homes, despite the unknown fate that awaits them. But what has been prepared for the Kosovars is, if possible, even worse. According to reports available to *EIR*, Milosevic is applying a conscious policy of destroying harvests, livestock—anything that could be used as food. So, today's genocide is the pale reflection of the famine of tomorrow.

"It is a vicious tactic. First the Serbs are shelling civilian villages and towns to make the people run, then they burn or blow up the buildings to ensure civilians cannot return," an observer reported. Many towns taken over by Milosevic's gangs have been burned to the ground after the population has been pushed out. There is no house, village, shelter to come back to. Austrian Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schuessel warned: "Above all, I fear a humanitarian catastrophe this winter, because the Serbian Army is burning fields . . . and killing cattle. Soon there won't be anything for these people to eat."