

Blair in trouble after NATO summit fiasco

by Mark Burdman

Having failed utterly in his mission to win over the U.S. Presidency and the NATO alliance to his policy of a ground war against Yugoslavia, British Prime Minister Tony Blair returned home, his tail between his legs, to face a growing backlash against his war-mongering policies. It is not to be excluded, that “Mad Bomber” Blair will see his regime fall apart, in the weeks and months ahead.

Blair left for the United States two days before the April 23-24 NATO summit in Washington, aiming to capitalize on what is known in Britain as the “Falklands factor,” a reference to former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s launching war against Argentina in 1982, to bolster her flagging popularity inside an economically ravaged Britain and to set a precedent for future NATO “out-of-area” deployments. According to the April 25 London *Sunday Telegraph*, Blair closely coordinated his Yugoslavia-Kosovo strategy with Thatcher. He clearly modelled his intervention into U.S. politics on Thatcher’s 1990 intervention into the United States, to “stiffen” then-President George Bush’s resolve for war against Iraq.

With that policy now in ruins, Blair faces a revolt on two levels. First, among what might be called the “patriotic” constituencies in Britain, among normal citizens, retired military professionals, and so on, there is a mood summed up by London *Times* senior commentator (and former editor) Simon Jenkins on April 28: “I can only report that this war is leaving thousands of patriotic people baffled, concerned, and even outraged.” The same day’s *Daily Telegraph*, which has led the jingoistic war propaganda, admitted: “This newspaper has received a great number of letters over the past month questioning British military involvement in Kosovo. . . . What comes through is an instinctive distrust of Tony Blair’s open-ended commitment to liberal universalism.”

The “Letters to the Editor” pages of both the *Times* and *Telegraph* are filled each day with communications from retired military officers, blasting the war effort.

Second, and of great relevance to an oligarchical society like that of Britain, there is a significant sentiment among senior figures in the British establishment that Blair’s Balkans policy has been—among the words used—“lunatic, crazy, hysterical, and megalomaniac.” In most cases, these individuals share the ultimate aim of royal family favorite Blair, to

establish a new global British Empire in which a weakened United States would become a de facto member of the British Commonwealth. But, these individuals are aghast that Blair has “put all his eggs into one basket” in the Balkans, and is recklessly gambling, at an historic juncture at which, they believe, Britain could achieve its aims in a much less messy way.

The danger, is that the British monarchy that is behind Blair, will try to reverse its setback, and outmaneuver cooler heads in the establishment, by launching new provocations on other fronts, particularly escalating efforts to create a new global economic dictatorship, as the world financial system enters its next phase of collapse. It can be expected that the monarchy and its minions will aim their ire especially at U.S. President Bill Clinton, who resisted Blair’s pressures, and at Lyndon LaRouche, whose efforts were instrumental in bringing about Blair’s U.S. humiliation.

‘Like living under Goebbels’

On April 26, University of Edinburgh Prof. John Erickson told *EIR* that “there is a great deal of dissatisfaction and anger in Britain at what Blair is doing. His policy, and that of his government, is extravagant and hysterical. There are influential people I speak to, who are incandescent with rage at what is going on.” Erickson said, “If you read the British press, you would think we are living under a Josef Goebbels. It’s going so far, that [Blair’s Minister for Overseas Development] Clare Short declared last week that anyone who opposes the Balkans war is a Nazi sympathizer. But turn that upside down: I’m beginning to think that that recent article, by [the late] Lord Beloff, comparing Blair and his circle to Hitler’s Nazis, had more than a ring of truth” (see *EIR*, Feb. 26, 1999, p. 55).

Cambridge University fellow John Casey, in an op-ed in the April 29 *Telegraph* entitled “‘Big Lie’ Behind a Reckless and Half-Witted Adventure,” wrote: “A chief aim of NATO at the moment is to bamboozle us into believing in a fantasy world. That may explain the government’s intense hostility to any criticism, or even analysis, of the way the war is going. . . . The tireless, robotic reiteration by NATO spokesmen and our own leaders that the campaign is working is now the Big Lie. . . . All we have is self-righteous posturing under the guise of high moral tone, and a refusal to inform the public of the dangers that amount to a betrayal of democracy. This war, by comparison with which Suez [the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Suez in 1956] was an operation of Metternichian cunning, is the most culpably reckless, half-witted adventure that this country has embarked on in my lifetime.” Casey blasted Blair for being on “linguistic autopilot,” in constantly reaffirming that the Balkans intervention would be a model for further NATO-led “humanitarian” military interventions around the globe.

The most persistent dissident voice within the establishment media has been that of the *Times*’s Jenkins, who has

been at odds with that paper's own bellicose editorials on the Balkans war. On April 14, as the war was entering its fourth week, Jenkins charged that "NATO gambled," and "the gamble failed." Blair and NATO can talk all they want about "world policing," he said, but the outcome of the military action in Yugoslavia is "anarchy," and threatens to lead to "a third world war."

On April 16, in a piece entitled "Bloody Liberals: The Empire Has Struck Back with Greater Force and Left-Wing Sermons," Jenkins correctly warned that what Blair and his coterie are attempting to do, is to create a new British Empire, based on the "liberal imperialist" Victorian-era model. Jenkins recalled that, in the 19th century, "The Balkans minorities fascinated the Victorians. Defending them against attack challenged their faith and their manhood." He cited Prime Minister Gladstone, and the poets Byron and Tennyson, as three examples, and then wrote that today's editorials in the London *Guardian*, the leading Labour Party-leaning establishment daily, "lack Tennyson's metre, but today's liberal imperialist revival is no less bold." There is the "quasi-imperial" handling of the case involving the extradition of Chile's Gen. Augusto Pinochet, and "President Saddam Hussein is being bombed by Iraq's one-time overlord, Britain, like the regular thrashing of a Victorian schoolboy 'for his own good.' . . . An air assault on Yugoslavia escalates toward all-out war, . . . to cheers from the *Guardian*, the *Independent*, and the *Observer*, and from the massed Labour benches in the House of Commons."

Jenkins blasted the use of the phrase "moral purpose" to justify what he calls "the new imperialism," commenting that "the builders of the last British Empire," such as "Gordon of Khartoum and Milner's Cape Town 'kindergarten,' . . . would have applauded Mr. Blair's Balkan adventure. Gladstone would have been ecstatic." In Kosovo, he said, "NATO seems intent on setting up a classic colony."

Jenkins asserted that the "liberal ideals" of the immediate post-World War II period had meant anti-colonialism and opposition to neo-imperial adventures. "This liberalism appears to be dead," he said. "The implications are awesome. The last British Empire was supposedly acquired in a fit of absent-mindedness. The next one is being acquired in a fit of morality. I do not know which is worse."

In comments to the London *Observer* on April 18, Jenkins warned that a ground war in Yugoslavia "would be stark raving lunacy. . . . This concept of NATO as the policeman, the agency of the new world order, does such offence to concepts of self-determination, concepts of non-intervention in internal affairs. It's such an offence to reality." Worst of all, this "Victorian fantasy" cannot work, and is leading Britain "into a blind alley."

'Pure globaloney'

On April 28, after Blair's return from the United States, Jenkins wrote that "Britain appears to be alone in NATO in its eagerness to invade Kosovo," and charged that Blair was

"redrawing the boundaries of British foreign policy," with the policy of military intervention in sovereign states that was enunciated in Blair's major address in Chicago on April 22 (see p. XX).

The principles of "globalization" that Blair postulated in his Chicago address were also attacked in a *Times* commentary published next to the April 28 Jenkins piece, under the title, "Tony, You're Talking Globaloney." David Selbourne wrote that "the thesis of 'globalization' . . . expresses a strong, even apocalyptic, death-wish for the nation-state. . . . It is pure globaloney."

In his discussion with *EIR*, Erickson denounced what he called the "Blair Doctrine," as "the final destruction of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia (following the 1618-1648 Thirty Years War in Central Europe), that tried to define the morality and efficacy of intervention. The Westphalia principles were reaffirmed in the 1970s Helsinki agreements. Now Blair is trying to overturn all this, and that is a major problem, all the more so as he defines this as a doctrine, and has configured it with Margaret Thatcher, who has prompted him."

"A desperate situation"

But even among senior figures who share the idea of "globalization" and some concept of a "global order" led by the British and their Commonwealth, there are those who insist that Blair's Balkans policy is getting Britain into a hopeless morass. One such figure stated, in a recent private discussion, that the Balkans adventure had created "a very desperate situation. . . . The whole idea of bombing the Serbs into submission shows a complete ignorance of history. . . . It's appalling. Every historian of any worth in Britain opposes this war. Blair is trying to re-create the 'Falklands factor,' imitating Thatcher before him."

On April 23, George Joffe, Director of Studies at London's Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), told *EIR* that "there's a lot of truth in the view that Tony Blair and his government are trying to create a new empire. There's an attempt to replace a perfectly valid international organization, the United Nations, with NATO. I think this is just like the 'Concert of Great Powers' formed at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, when Britain, Prussia, and Austria decided how policy should evolve. This is now a very similar era, with a select few countries saying 'We know best.' There is a revival of the ideas of colonialism—the White Man's Burden, Manifest Destiny, La Mission Civilatrice—under the new guise of 'humanitarianism.' "

Joffe said that the plans of Blair et al., as now conceived, "won't work." "Moral self-righteousness is a pretty bad basis for forming global structures," he said. "I don't object to the goal, of universal rules of law, I would support it wholeheartedly, if an effective international organization were implementing it. But the way it's being done, is that some parts of the world are imposing rules of law on others who don't agree. . . . It's just not being gone about the right way."