

'Cheriegate': Britain's New Profumo Affair?

by Mark Burdman

Under conditions of the onrushing disintegration of the global economic system, the hallowed institutions of Great Britain are coming under enormous strain. We recently documented, how the House of Windsor has been hit with several crises that have the potential to effectively dismantle the British monarchy. Now, the Queen's Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is facing his most serious crisis since coming to office, five and a half years ago. This centers around the scandalous, deceptive, and likely illegal behavior of his wife, Cherie.

"Cheriegate," as the British media are calling it, has the makings of being a 2002-03 variant of the famous "Profumo affair," which brought down Conservative Party Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, in October 1963, making way for the premiership of Labour's Harold Wilson. That scandal involved a prostitution ring, headed by one Christine Keeler, which was simultaneously extending its "services" to British Defense Minister John Profumo and the Soviet military attaché in London, and was intertwined with weird occult networks, in and around London. Profumo was forced to resign, as alarm rose over potential security lapses because of his behavior, and Macmillan was soon obliged to follow.

Scandals are the preferred way, in the United Kingdom, for demolishing a prime minister. In a Dec. 9 discussion with *EIR*, a well-connected London source, who has himself been involved in efforts to "steer" the current "Cherie scandals" so as to cause significant damage to the Blair premiership, declared, "Such scandals are a way, for the powers-that-be, to slam the brakes on Blair. I assure you, there is a conscious effort to make the Blair couple seem as strange as possible, even stranger than the Windsors. The object of this, is to manipulate Blair politically, to force him to knuckle under, or, if he doesn't knuckle under, force him to resign. He could be removed from power quite easily, if this scandal moves in certain directions."

'Blairism Has Had Its Day'

Blair is vulnerable, now, for several reasons. First, on the economic front, Britain hovers on the edge of a giant shock, because of the imminent collapse of the London/Southeast England-centered housing bubble and the unsustainable levels of consumer debt. The ongoing series of firefighters' strikes, and the likelihood of more strikes in the public sector in the weeks to come, have undermined Blair's authority and credibility, and opened the way for a challenge against him,



Tony and Cherie Blair: skilled in what Jonathan Swift called "The Art of Political Lying."

from within Blair's own Labour Party, from the ambitious and opportunistic Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown.

Over the Dec. 7-8 weekend, two leading Labour Party figures called on Blair to "stand down," and allow Brown to assume leadership over the party. One of them, Mark Seddon, editor of the leftist *Tribune* magazine and a member of Labour's national executive, declared, "Blairism has had its day. We are seeing the beginning of the end of New Labour."

Secondly, Blair has drawn the ire of powerful elements of the British establishment, because of his support for allying with the United States in a war against Iraq, even at a time when the momentum toward war, from the Bush White House itself, is waning. Such establishment elements regard this war as insane and its results as incalculable. The most recent to join the chorus of anti-war voices, has been none other than Britain's own commander in the 1991 Gulf War, Maj. Gen. Patrick Cordingley, who declared his opposition, on BBC's "Panorama" television show, on the evening of Dec. 9. He is the latest of a plethora of former senior figures in the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who have denounced the current Iraq war drive, in opposition to her own shrill support for the war.

Blair continues his reckless provocations. In a Dec. 10 interview with the *Financial Times*, he insisted that UN Security Council Resolution 1441, mandating the dispatch of weapons inspectors to Iraq, was actually a mechanism for initiating a strike against Iraq. He said that no second resolution would be required to start military operations against

Iraq, since the “implication” of the resolution is that, “if there is a breach and Saddam doesn’t comply, then we are prepared to take actions. . . . I believe that, at the heart of that UN resolution is really a deal, let’s be frank about it.” This has been accompanied, by endless prattle from the Prime Minister’s Office at 10 Downing Street, about the “mortal threat” represented by Iraq—a “mortal threat” that many leading British military professionals and strategists don’t believe exists.

The only prominent, albeit washed-out, British public figure who has rallied to Blair’s defense, on this issue, is the pathetic Thatcher, who flew on her broomstick to Washington, during the week of Dec. 8, to speak before an audience of 800 academics and senior politicians at the neo-conservative Heritage Foundation. Introduced by Vice President Dick Cheney, who praised her for having “the tenacity of the British bulldog,” she lavished praise on Blair, for steadfastly allying with the United States, against the “twin monsters” of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, and against “psychopaths” like Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein.

But this shrieking banshee, who, with her Washington diatribe, had violated doctors’ orders that she no longer speak in public, is a voice in the wilderness, on the matter of Tony Blair.

‘Number 10 Have Not Told the Truth’

The “Cherigate” affair erupted on Dec. 1, when the *Mail on Sunday* tabloid ran a banner front-page story, revealing that Cherie Blair had used the services of a convicted Australian fraudster and con-man, Peter Foster, to obtain private property in Bristol, at significantly reduced cost. As soon as the story came out, the 10 Downing Street communications team, headed by Blair’s chief spin-doctor Alastair Campbell, went into high gear, exonerating Cherie from all blame, and hurling charges against the *Mail on Sunday*.

The *Daily Mail* tabloid retaliated on Dec. 5, publishing texts of e-mails between fraudster Foster and Cherie Blair, replete with statements of mutual praise. In response, Mrs. Blair had to acknowledge wrongdoing. But that was not sufficient, as Campbell’s crew was in a rage that she had misled them, setting them up for an embarrassment, by not having let them know about her relations with Foster. So, Mrs. Blair had to issue a second statement, taking full personal responsibility for having not told the truth, although avoiding the issue of her relationship with such a curious character as Peter Foster.

In the coming days, matters got curiously and curiously. It was revealed in the British press, that Foster had served jail sentences on three continents: his native Australia, in Great Britain, and in the United States. Further, he had boasted about his “profession,” in a book called *Revealed Secrets—The Art of the Reverse Sell*, in which he wrote: “Being a con-man is one of the most prestigious and respectable professions you can pursue.” Public leaks also indicated, that Blair’s own

10 Downing Street, had received a warning notice, four years ago, about Foster’s antics.

All told, it was hardly likely that an accomplished lawyer, and aspiring top judge to the British courts, such as Cherie Blair, would have been ignorant of whom she was dealing with. But it got still worse.

On Dec. 9, it was revealed that Mrs. Blair had intervened, on behalf of Foster, in a discussion with his lawyers, on ongoing legal proceedings for his deportation from Britain. The Dec. 10 *Times* commented that this revelation was “the most damaging yet to hit Mrs. Blair, the Downing Street machine, and the Prime Minister,” and had left Campbell’s communications team “wondering where the next ‘thunderbolt’ was coming from. It raised fresh accusations that Number 10 have not told the full truth.” A *Times* editorial on the same day, declared Cherie Blair’s behavior to be “absolutely reckless.”

The opposition Conservative Party, which had for some days maintained an eerie silence on the Foster matter, called, on Dec. 10, for an independent inquiry into the goings-on around Foster’s deportation proceedings.

Meanwhile, Mr. Blair has refused to say anything substantive, beyond reiterating that his wife has done nothing wrong. In one interview to a British journalist, he said his great regret, was that the attention paid to Cherie, was diverting the public’s attention from really important issues—like Iraq!

The Strange Miss Carole Caplin

The whole matter becomes yet more sordid, given the following amazing detail:

Foster is the boyfriend of a certain Carole Caplin, formerly a soft-porn topless model, and leading figure in a 1980s British psychology-sex cult called Exegesis, the which was denounced, in a Parliament report, as “dangerous.” Her curriculum vitae might just be the subject of harmless media tittle-tattle, were it not for the fact that Caplin is Cherie Blair’s “lifestyle” adviser, confidante on “New Age” and other matters, and has received £3,000-4,000 *per month* from the Blair couple, in the recent period, for her services.

The *Mail* has taken the lead, in beginning to chart out Caplin’s international connections, raising the question, of the extent to which the Blair residence, and thereby the Blair government, has been penetrated by all species of odd characters. One former Caplin intimate, Sue Harris, told the *Mail* on Dec. 9, that Caplin extensively “traded on her association with the Blairs.” Indeed, Foster got to Cherie Blair, through his relationship to Caplin.

An earlier *Mail* story, written from Tel Aviv, had quoted her former Israeli lover and fiancé, Doron Dalah, expressing alarm that, with Caplin, the Blair circles had been under assault from a “psychopathic” personality.

Harris further reported that she had witnessed Cherie Blair and Carole Caplin naked together in a shower, with Caplin declaring that she was “scrubbing the toxins from Cherie. This was a big thing for Carole—she believed that many

people were toxic, and that this was at the root of evil. She'd always say, 'Toxic people are going to be wiped out.' It was all quite sinister."

Through Caplin's influence, Mrs. Blair visited a witchcraft specialist, or shaman, and has consulted Sylvia Caplin, Carole's mother, who specializes in "communication with the spirit world."

As the London insider referenced above stressed to *EIR*, such kinky activities were one key feature of the 1963 Pro-fumo affair.

On Dec. 8, the *Sunday Telegraph* claimed that the Downing Street Press Office had, some time back, issued a stern warning that Cherie Blair should break with Caplin, but this was not heeded. There are numerous reports of tensions between Blair and his own media spin-doctors, over the whole mess.

Like 'Nixon During Watergate'

On the evening of Dec. 10, the Blairs tried a comeback. Cherie Blair took to the national airwaves, in a combined retreat and attack. With tears welling in her eyes, she apologized to her national audience for what she had done, but also spat out, that she refused to "crawl," and would not be intimidated into changing her ways. A seasoned Scottish observer reported that "nothing like this has ever happened on British television." He added, "For me, it was reminiscent of Nixon during Watergate."

With this speech, 10 Downing Street went on a counterattack, trying, through all media and other channels available, to insist, that now "the matter has been settled." However, nothing at all has been settled. Above and beyond the disreputable Foster-Caplin duo—details of which Mrs. Blair avoided talking about—the whole affair has confirmed, for millions in Great Britain, that the Blairs are compulsive liars, who have contempt for the public, in the ruthless pursuit of their own ambition and power. It is only a matter of time, before Blair starts babbling in public about Iraq, and his audience starts laughing derisively, knowing he is lying through his teeth. Cartoonists in Britain are depicting Tony and Cherie with Pinocchio-length noses.

Andrew Rawnsley, senior commentator at the *Observer*, and the leading expert in the United Kingdom on the goings-on in the inner sanctums of "New Labour." put the relevant point well, when he wrote Dec. 8, that, were the Conservative Party opposition to be clever, it would state publicly, that it should not be a surprise to find Cherie Blair working with a con-man, since she has lived with Britain's leading con artist for the last five and a half years—Tony Blair's time in office.

Intelligent Britons are probably consulting the great Jonathan Swift's famous essay, "The Art of Political Lying." It is the best introduction, for understanding, and dealing with the Blair species. But politically, that species is not likely to be around much longer.

Venezuela Shuts Down, On Brink of Civil War

by David Ramonet and Gretchen Small

The options for what happens next in Venezuela are few, and none good. If a strong and decisive intervention by inter-American institutions does not force President Hugo Chávez to negotiate his resignation, or if the military does not intervene to achieve the same end, the polarized political situation is leading the country toward bloody street fighting. The country is so polarized, in fact, that civil war could result, even if either of those interventions do occur.

It is not merely the stubbornness, a product of the President's clinically crazy mental state, which has led to this situation, but the hardcore adherents of violence with which he surrounds himself, who are hell-bent on playing the ultimate card of his fascist "revolution." After four years of a government which collapsed the national economy and destroyed the institutions of state, Chávez has confronted, throughout the past year, an organized opposition centered around the "Democratic Coordinator," which joins various political parties and civil associations, including the business organization Fedecámaras and the Venezuelan Labor Federation. Since Dec. 2, the Democratic Coordinator has carried out a national civic strike, which has led to the total paralysis of the oil industry, the heart of the Venezuelan economy.

One year ago, analysts forecast that Venezuela would be the next country to face an institutional crisis similar to that of Argentina. But they never imagined it would occur like this. So-called "globalization" has cornered every nation in the world, and especially in this hemisphere, and has led to the disintegration of the institutions. In the case of Venezuela, Chávez—brought to power, as *EIR* has documented, by the City of London, Wall Street, and such local toadies as Gustavo Cisneros—has been the instrument. But the tragedy is, that the opposition—made up of the same organizations and personalities which led the country into this situation in the first place—does not offer a solution, either, to the fundamental problem facing the nation: how to deal with the misery in which 80% of the population lives? How to escape from the grip of globalization and the International Monetary Fund?

It is a dramatic failure of leadership which has brought Venezuela to the brink of a civil war which threatens to end in national disintegration. In discussions with regional leaders, U.S. statesman Lyndon LaRouche pointed to the failure of Venezuelan leaders, on either side of the barricades now dividing the country, to break with the oligarchical games which