

fect that “a secret deal has been agreed between Syria and Iraq for the supply of military equipment to Baghdad. . . . Relations between the two countries have been improving significantly in recent months, with agreements already signed to develop both political and economic cooperation. Now, after a new deal between the Syrian and Iraqi intelligence services, military equipment valued at about £60 million is to be shipped across the border.” Referring to the shortage of spare parts in Iraq, due to the embargo, Evans wrote, that “under the Damascus agreement, Syrian spare parts for military equipment would be converted for use by the Iraqi army, the sources said. The parts would include engines for Russian-made tanks and tracks for armored fighting vehicles. Syria is also expected to supply spares for anti-aircraft radar facilities—hit by recent American and British bombing—lorries, aircraft and helicopters, and ammunition.”

The same day, the Israel daily *Ha'aretz* ran an article by its defense expert, Ze'ev Schiff, which shed light on the military options being considered in Israel against Syria. Schiff said that there were two factions in Israel, one in favor of solving the problem of southern Lebanon through diplomatic means, the other preferring a military option. The hawks, he wrote, were ignoring the guideline of the former Defense Minister Mordechai, “who did not allow the fighting against Hezbollah to develop into a military confrontation with Syria. It is also the view favored by Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz, who maintains that as long as there is a chance of peace talks with Syria, a military confrontation should be avoided, unless the government decides otherwise,” Schiff wrote.

Schiff, who is usually privy to insider information from military intelligence circles, went on to say, however, that the government had apparently decided “otherwise.” “There are those with a different perspective. Arens is one of them.” They have the analysis that “Damascus has no strategic or military aces up its sleeve but does know how to effectively utilize the few good cards it holds against Israel, in view of our weak position. Thus,” he concluded from this reading, “Syria must be told categorically that it is risking war with Israel,” because Israel cannot be expected to let the Syrians get away with utilizing Hamas or the Hezbollah forces. Schiff was careful to say, that this of course did not mean that Arens et al. were preparing war on Syria; rather, he claimed, “a wider conflict could develop if the situation gets out of control.”

In light of the article planted by the *Times* on the same day, it is interesting to note that Schiff listed the options Syria had as follows: “Syria could also disrupt Israel’s relations with the Palestinian Authority or Jordan, or could upgrade its joint operations with Iran *and even Iraq.*”

The following day, March 9, the same paper reported on what Defense Minister Arens was actually doing. Arens, it said, had instructed the General Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) to reexamine the military situation in Lebanon and present him with various “alternatives” to the present

restrictive use of the forces on Lebanese territory. Arens told reporters on March 8, that he was “not convinced that the way to deal with the Lebanese problem is necessarily through negotiations,” and he added that when he talked about alternatives, he was referring both to “the territory and to the rules of the game.” In the view of Arens—who, together with Ariel Sharon, had launched the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, “Lebanon is not a country in the real sense of the word. It is ruled by the Syrians. There is just a pretense of it being an independent country.” He also said that “there is no chance of reaching an agreement with the Syrians without a total [Syrian] surrender of the Golan. Anyone who says differently is deluding himself or the public.”

The upshot of Arens’s review of the deployment in Lebanon, is that Israeli military, currently confined to the southern part of the country, should feel free to occupy the entire land area, an idea shared by the IDF command. The perspective, then, which Cohen probably discussed with the Israeli intelligence and military leaders, was for an Israeli drive into Lebanon. According to an Israeli strategist, this has been being prepared by Netanyahu, who has “placed his selected hawks in the leading positions of the armed forces.” The strategist added that Netanyahu planned to “cancel the understandings with the Hezbollah that have been maintained since 1996,” regarding the rules of engagement in southern Lebanon. “This,” he continued, “could mean a move, soon, into Lebanon, and possible confrontation with Syria.”

Britain’s Fatchett runs war against Iraq

by Scott Thompson

On Feb. 22-25, The Right Honorable Derek Fatchett made his fourth visit to the United States since he became the British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with ministerial responsibility for the Middle East, in 1997. Fatchett’s mission is to coordinate the decade-long, insane war against Iraq, and specifically to topple Saddam Hussein. In this, he is coordinating closely with the U.S. Principals Committee of Vice President Al Gore, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Henry H. Shelton, Defense Secretary William Cohen, and other top officials who have effectively carried out a coup d’état against President Clinton (as described elsewhere in this *Feature*).

A British Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Office (FCO) announcement on Fatchett’s trip said that he would start in New York, where he would discuss not only the Middle East, but also his responsibilities for North Africa and Asia, with the leadership of the United Nations. And, on the

Washington end of his tour, he was scheduled to talk about the same regions with leading members of the U.S. State Department, the National Security Council, and unnamed members of the U.S. Senate.

At a Feb. 25 appearance at the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, Fatchett made clear the main purpose of his visit. His appearance at the semi-private meeting at CSIS occurred one day after the Iraqi government claimed that U.S. and U.K. aircraft had dropped a large, laser-guided iron bomb within 30 miles of Baghdad, which led JCS Chairman Shelton to dismiss as Iraqi propaganda, the claim that the United States and United Kingdom were bombing outside the northern and southern “no-fly zones.” However, when a member of CSIS’s Iran-Iraq committee asked Fatchett whether the bombing had “a strategic purpose of overthrowing Saddam Hussein’s regime” and whether there was “a creep toward Baghdad” with the bombing, Fatchett, speaking in cagey diplomatese, admitted that it did:

“Is there a broader strategic aim? I think we went into this response in those no-fly zones with no broader strategic aim. It was simply to— unless you see preservation of those places

as a strategic aim. We didn’t go in with any other objective. I think that what has happened is that other consequences have flowed from that action. . . .

“There’s real action taking place there. As you can read in the papers today, that the Iraqi government said yesterday’s action taking place 30 miles from Baghdad. . . . We have no specific military targets in that sense, but, what we have said is that we will respond to the dangers wherever they are to the safety of our own aircrews.

“And, sometimes that may mean coming closer and closer to Baghdad, as we saw just yesterday. What we do know is that we are taking out quite significant military installations. . . . What this shows is the weakness in terms of the regime.”

The ‘final chapter’ for Saddam Hussein?

Helmut Sonnenfeldt, former crony of self-confessed British agent Sir Henry Kissinger, started the questioning at CSIS by asking whether there is “something that you can say that suggests more activism, than what you were ready to say in diplomatic terms in front of the camera during your speech.”

Fatchett responded: “Let me talk. I think there has been a

Profile: Derek Fatchett

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Derek Fatchett is one of the linchpins between the British government and the United States on policy toward Iraq, having made at least four visits on this and related issues to Washington, since he was appointed minister upon election of Labour Party Prime Minister Tony Blair in 1997.

Within the Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Office (FCO), Fatchett has responsibility for the Middle East and North Africa; the Far East and Pacific, including Hong Kong; South and Southeast Asia; Export Promotion; Cultural Relations; Green, Science, and Energy issues; and, FCO General Administrative Services.

Well-informed sources report that he works very closely with British intelligence on the Middle East and Iraq.

Fatchett is a Member of Parliament for Leeds, Central, a constituency he has represented since 1983. Among the positions that he held while Labour was in the Opposition, were Spokesman on Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1995-97) and Spokesman on Defense (1994-95). While in Opposition, Fatchett’s picture in *Dod’s Parliamentary Companion* makes him look like an academic bearded weirdo, but the FCO has given him a shave and cleaned

him up. He would now stand up well with any axe-wielding executioner in Madame Tousseau’s Wax Museum.

On Oct. 29, 1998, Fatchett took the oath of allegiance to support Queen Elizabeth II in all matters, in order to become a new member of the Privy Council, through which the Queen exercises her “Prerogative Powers.” The Council’s president is Tony Blair, who was groomed for his position as Prime Minister through being inducted into the Privy Council in 1994.

The Queen’s Prerogative Powers include “Orders in Council,” which are essential before any legislation passed by the House of Commons and House of Lords becomes law. It is also through the Privy Council, where ad hoc committees are formed by ministers such as Fatchett on issues such as the war of attrition against Iraq, that the Queen is able to advise, warn, and, if need be, block any particular policy course being taken by the party in power in Parliament with which she may disagree.

Clearly, Queen Elizabeth, who knighted seven members of the Bush administration for their role in Operation Desert Storm in 1991, agrees fully with Blair government policy toward Iraq.

According to sources who are familiar with how the Privy Council works, it was undoubtedly through this body and the Prime Minister’s weekly meetings with the Queen, that Fatchett’s role in the new U.S.-U.K. war against Iraq was decided.— *Scott Thompson*

step change in terms of the internal affairs of Iraq. I've made this argument many times. I haven't always yet found a receptive audience that is satisfied with my answer. But, I'm convinced that what happened under Operation Desert Fox for some of the reasons that I said did shake the foundation of the regime. . . .

"He [Saddam Hussein] was dramatically shocked when this happened, and he has never actually recovered. But, he never thought, the truth is that all the way through 1997 and 1998, he tempted us. He provoked us. He mocked us. But, he never actually thought it would happen. Well, it did happen. And, our response has shaken his own self-confidence perhaps significantly.

"I think also it had some impact on the Republican Guard. I think that is very important, because you'll find that those people who are the heart of the regime cannot maintain a detailed formation in the south.

"If you look at the reaction to what has happened after, there is more evidence to suggest fear and discontent. How deep that is, among other things, we don't know. We don't have the intelligence for that kind of analysis. That's true here in the U.S. as well. It seems that the Shi'a community is becoming more and more restless, and representing a real threat to Iraq.

"After all, the majority of the population and the majority of the armed forces — though not the majority of the Republican Guard — are Shi'ite, so there is discontent in the army. So, there are a lot of signs that show that there are growing internal dissensions. . . .

"I just have one final comment to make. I think the no-fly zones have been quite instrumental in helping to shake Saddam Hussein a good deal further in terms of his grasp and his grip on the issues. How can this happen? He tried to provoke. He's provoked only in the way in which he is the loser. We are chipping away at his ability to defend himself and also the heart of the armed forces. I think that the events there will weaken his hold, and I think there is again a huge showdown in the south.

"As I said in my final comment [in my speech], we have entered the final chapter, beginning with Operation Desert Fox."

Since the intensive aircraft and cruise missile attack in mid-December 1998 known as Operation Desert Fox, as *EIR* has reported, the Principals Committee has boxed President Clinton, who was under threat of impeachment conviction, into accepting a policy whereby the United States and Great Britain have dropped more bombs on Iraq than during the entirety of the four-day barrage during mid-December.

Why does Foreign Minister Fatchett believe this is the "final chapter" for Saddam Hussein, when, in response to questions, Fatchett lied at CSIS that he did not find Iraqi opposition forces useful for military purposes? The truth is that Fatchett has been the British anchor in recruiting Iraqi

opposition forces, which under the "Shelton Doctrine," would be used to establish an Iraqi puppet government, and would be supported, in a planned insurrection against Saddam Hussein, by U.S. and U.K. special forces combined with air power.

As early as Nov. 11, 1998, Fatchett had admitted, according to statements on the FCO's website, that he had been meeting with members of the Iraqi opposition to form such an alternative puppet government: "This is part of a regular program of meetings that I have been having with opposition figures from Iraq. It is important to maintain that contact. What we are trying to do is to ensure that there is a united political voice showing that there could be a different Iraq, a more open, more pluralistic, more democratic Iraq. I don't think there is anybody around who would not see that as a positive step forward."

At the CSIS meeting, Fatchett admitted that it had been through such British intelligence influence, that the U.K. had succeeded for the first time in achieving collaboration against Saddam Hussein: "You talked about the Kurds. Let me say to you and the people in the room, thanks to the U.S. and U.K., that Saddam Hussein's brief does not run to the north. We have worked hard with two Kurdish organizations to try to get some understanding between them. That's always fragile. But, it's lasted. Barzani and Talabani came over here [to Washington] and came to London. We encouraged them to work together. How long that relationship will last, I will not speculate. But, they are living together and working together, and this makes different conditions."

British terrorist controller Lord Eric Avebury, whom Fatchett praised for his "human rights" activism, recently told a Washington-based reporter that the FCO has "opened official negotiations with the Shi'a Islamicists in southern Iraq" for the ultimate purpose of using them in an armed insurrection against Saddam Hussein. Fatchett denied this, under questioning at CSIS.

The strategic reality underlying all these shenanigans is, as Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. warned in a Jan. 8, *EIR* article, "Why General Shelton Must Retire Now": "A new such British and U.S. attack on Iraq of the sort I have described, or anything similar to it, would unleash a chain-reaction of much worse effects than the December bombings, not only within, but far beyond the Middle East theater. Such a chain-reaction would be an incalculable disaster for the United States, a catastrophe in our strategic position in the world, from which it were likely that our republic might never recover."

Fatchett has been warned

While Fatchett plays at surrogate warfare along the lines of the "Shelton Doctrine," he made clear during his speech at CSIS that even within Britain, voices have been raised that the course he is pursuing is potentially a strategic disaster: "I remember that on many occasions during and immediately

after Operation Desert Fox, I was told by the British media that the results of Operation Desert Fox would be totally against our own interest; that Saddam Hussein would be strengthened in the Arab world; that he would be strengthened domestically; and the United States and the United Kingdom would pay a heavy price to build a new diplomatic consensus on the Security Council. All of those aspects of conventional wisdom have been proven to be incorrect within a very short period of time.”

During the discussion period, Fatchett (who never once mentioned the opposition of Russia, with which he is playing at “Russian roulette”) said he has maneuvered the French, who also opposed the unilateral U.S.-U.K. military adventure, into a dialogue that has cooled their rancor.

Fatchett explained: “I had the pleasure yesterday of meeting with the French representative to the Security Council, and explaining the approach that we are taking. And, he said that they needed to move to a system that was called ‘OMV Plus.’ . . .

“Let me explain what it is. ‘Ongoing Monitoring and Verification Plus’ . . . can only work if you establish a baseline. . . . Well, the only people who can provide the baseline are UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency. They are the only ones who can contribute the information to that.

“The French accept that. But, more than that over the next stage, the French are saying that if you went to ‘OMV Plus,’ the plus would be ‘intrusive inspection.’ So, the inspectors—call them whatever you will—the ‘OMV inspectors,’ not UNSCOM actually (you’ve got to have a new name), so you can sell it on that basis.”

Moreover, Fatchett indicated that the deluge of conflicts being ignited by the U.K. and the Principals Committee, would throw members of the Security Council off balance, when asked how many “believe that the split in the Security Council is much more serious than the problems of Iraq directly.”

“We have to challenge some of the assumptions of some of the members,” he said. “I am thinking of the process that I announced that we had begun with the French, because the French are open to finding a new consensus. But, the rancor that existed when the U.S. and U.K. launched Operation Desert Fox has already dissipated, because the Security Council has started to be preoccupied by other issues—which is Kosova, which is other issues that will emerge. And, the panels form a useful form of building a new consensus, which is actually quite hopeful.”

The three panels to which Fatchett refers were set up to coopt the French, Russians, and other UN Security Council members who object to the U.S.-U.K. war and include, for example, a panel that would seek to improve the status of the Iraqi people by increasing the “oil-for-food” program, leaving the British-American-Commonwealth oligarchs a free hand to pursue their genocidal war policy.

Kosova: Blair goes for war with Moscow

by Umberto Pascali

Only three days before the March 15 re-opening of the “Kosova peace talks,” Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov stated in a press conference in the Serbian capital of Belgrade, that Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic “decisively and finally rejects any possibility of a foreign military presence or police presence in Kosova.” Ivanov added that the Russian position is that threats of NATO air strikes against Serbia are unacceptable, and that the confrontation over Kosova must be solved peacefully.

There are few doubts among Balkan observers that not just Milosevic, but—what is much more significant—Russia itself, has taken a “final and decisive” stand. In Moscow at the same time, the “foreign minister” of the Russian military, Col.-Gen. Leonid Ivashov, raised the specter of a new arms race. Rejecting the plan discussed by the United States and Japan for a Theater Missile Defense against “rogue states,” Ivashov stated: “Attempts to set up such system would spark a missile race. . . . It would undermine stability in the Far East.” The statement came while Russia’s Deputy Foreign Minister was leaving for China to discuss this issue.

Meanwhile, NATO Supreme Commander Gen. Wesley Clark used the airwaves of the British Broadcasting Corp. to warn that NATO has a “vast air armada” ready to strike Serbia. “NATO does have the capability and means to make a very devastating series of attacks against Milosevic,” he said. It was the most recent of many statements coming especially from London calling for general European rearmament and for shipping to Kosova the British Rapid Reaction Corps, waiting nearby in Macedonia. The elements for a strategic military confrontation are multiplying by the day. Never in the post-World War II Balkans has the world come so close to the brink.

Diplomacy fails: a ‘collision course’

All the diplomatic discussions, all the negotiations before, during, and after the Kosova peace talks in Rambouillet, outside Paris, have ended in nothing. Rambouillet closed down in disarray, without any result on Feb. 23. British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook and French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine, the co-chairmen of the conference, prepared a final agreement draft that was given to the media with great fanfare. The only problem was, neither the Serb delegation nor the Kososvars signed the deal, and the talks were adjourned until March 15. The co-chairmen stressed that an agreement will be

found; the Kosovars were expected to sign the Cook-Védrine draft in one week.

What ensued was a split in the Kosova Liberation Army, with the hard-liners labelling Rambouillet as “treason,” because it did not give immediate independence to Kosova, and calling for an unconditional “war of liberation.” After the failure of negotiators such as U.S. Ambassador to Macedonia Christopher Hill, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright redoubled her efforts to pressure the Kosovar leaders she thought she could count on. In particular, the 29-year-old Hashim Thaci, who led the Kosovar delegation in Rambouillet, and who was praised by Albright at every public opportunity—including calling him the “Gerry Adams of Kosova.” Albright had NATO Supreme Commander Clark fly to Rambouillet for a “summit” with Thaci at a local café.

Former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole was sent to Kosova by the White House to convince Thaci and the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK) to sign the draft. Thaci promised to sign, and there was even a public announcement. “Frankly, I’m a little disgusted with the attitude of the Kosovars,” stated Dole. On the other side, Milosevic, probably feeling the general East-West confrontational mood, refused to even consider the presence of foreign troops in Kosova, and confided that he will be able to push the Russians to come to his defense. The Yugoslav Army and Milosevic’s “special police” have been ordered to “clean-up” the organized UCK resistance.

Military operations, especially along the Kosova and Macedonia border, have escalated. According to observers, tanks and heavy artillery hit selected towns and villages, creating waves of new refugees—around 4,000 within only a few days in March. The houses are looted and then torched by Milosevic’s forces. These are indeed criminal acts, and they are not undertaken at random. They conform to a precise military plan. In particular, they are designed to prepare for confrontations with the NATO troops expected to arrive from Macedonia.

Also, there were “special negotiators” who visited Milosevic, after he refused to see Ambassador Hill. Special envoy Richard Holbrooke, who brokered the Dayton Accord on Bosnia, was sent to Belgrade. On March 10, he held eight hours of talks with Milosevic, at the end of which he told the media: “We are on a collision course if things do not change, and nothing that happened here today has changed that.”

Blair’s war cry

The latest events in Kosova and Belgrade have eliminated an ambiguity that has been, at least formally, shared by all the NATO countries, i.e., that Russia was agreeing with Cook and Védrine on what to do in Kosova. Quite the contrary, the Russians have stated repeatedly their opposition to the “use of force,” and this position goes beyond the superficial explanations of the “pan-Slavic and Orthodox brotherhood” that would link Moscow and Belgrade. The Russian position, different from that taken in 1995 when NATO bombed military



British Prime Minister Tony Blair demands that Europeans restructure their defenses for deployments outside the NATO area.

targets and partially neutralized the war machine of Radovan Karadzic in Bosnia, has been prompted by strategic considerations, and above all by the role that the “new NATO,” whipped up mostly by London, is supposed to play.

In this sense, the Balkan situation is seen as an experiment for this new, British-led “globalized” military machine. A conference in London on March 8-10 celebrating the 50th anniversary of NATO (“NATO at Fifty”), gave the podium to British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who re-launched his model of a “global NATO,” to be inaugurated in the Balkans. The conference was organized by the oldest military institute in the world, as the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) calls itself, having been founded by the Duke of Wellington. It is today presided over by the Duke of Kent, the cousin of Queen Elizabeth II and the grand master of British Masonry. The RUSI boasts that the Queen is “our patron,” and quotes her saying, “I know what valuable work, in the cause of peace and security, the RUSI carries in maintaining the essential links between the Armed Forces and those who make decisions under economic and political disciplines.” Blair’s intervention was nothing less than a war-cry for Europe, under British leadership—forgetting, of course, the British role in secretly helping the Milosevic clan.

Blair lectured the Europeans on the new NATO gunboat diplomacy. “Europe’s military capabilities at this stage are modest,” he said. “Too modest. Too few allies are transforming their armed forces to cope with the security problems of the 1990s and the 21st century. To strengthen NATO and