

Tony Blair: Britain's universal fascist

by Mark Burdman

During the current showdown against Iraq, British Prime Minister Tony Blair's primary agenda has been to manipulate U.S. President Bill Clinton into a disastrous war against Iraq. British sources indicate that there is another, second agenda: that Blair finds the strident war rhetoric useful, in deflecting attention away from the global financial crisis and the devastating effects it is having on the already-ravaged British economy. It is also certain that the British Prime Minister finds a war mobilization useful, as a means of providing an atmosphere of "national unity," that can be exploited for imposing new ratchets of austerity on the British population, as Britain's economic plight worsens.

To understand Blair's motivations, it is crucial to view him as the contemporary version of J. Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour Prime Minister elected shortly before the stock market crash of 1929, and a protégé of King George V. Under the growing social and economic crisis in Britain produced by the Great Depression, and under intense pressure from Bank of England Governor Sir Montagu Norman to impose draconian austerity, MacDonald worked out with the King, the formation of a new "National Government" in 1931. This included key figures from the opposition Conservative and Liberal parties, creating a cross-party "consensus" for brutal austerity, all in direct contradiction to the "pro-working-class" polemics of the Labourites. Simultaneous with these developments in Britain, Norman, a key influence behind Nazi Economics Minister Hjalmar Schacht, and his cohorts in Germany, were architecting the infamous emergency decrees declared by Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, the which prepared the way for Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

After the National Government experiment collapsed, MacDonald was made president of the King's Privy Council, an enormously powerful position. It is an open question whether Blair, himself a member of the Queen's Privy Council, will be granted such an honor some day.

The MacDonald parallel was made by Lyndon LaRouche and *EIR* during the course of 1997, starting before Blair's May 1, 1997 landslide election victory. On Jan. 20 of this year, Labour Party parliamentarian Tony Benn, a former Labour Industry Secretary, wrote a London *Times* commentary entitled, "Is Blair a New Ramsay MacDonald?" with a subtitle about the "ominous parallels with the 1931 National Government."

Benn recalled that, in 1931, "under pressure from the Governor of the Bank of England and bankers in New York and Paris, and to meet the strict criteria required for Britain to remain on the Gold Standard, Mr. MacDonald proposed a series of drastic cuts in public expenditure," and engaged in talks with opposition leaders to win support for these cuts. Benn charged that Blair's agenda is an "echo" of the MacDonald approach, especially with its "deliberate distancing from the trade unions," and its commitment to "severe public spending cuts, which are being presented to us in the guise of 'modernizing' the welfare state." Benn warned that a revolt was brewing within the Labour Party against this MacDonald-modelled direction.

A 'New Age' variant

The 45-year-old Blair is a Ramsay MacDonald lookalike tailored for the late 1990s. He is a confirmed New Ager, who worships Rolling Stones degenerate Mick Jagger as his idol, who believes that the electric guitar is the most appropriate symbol summing up the 20th century, and who claims New Age psychologist C.G. Jung as one of the key influences on his thinking. He is a fanatical supporter of globalization and "global institutions," population control, the "Information Age," and ecologism. Typically, in a Jan. 5, 1996 speech to businessmen in Tokyo, he proclaimed that because of the "internationalization of culture, . . . in Tokyo and London, we are sharing the same rock music, the same designer clothes"; in the next breath, he exulted about the vast scope of the international capital markets.

One of Blair's so-called "New Labour" priorities has been to lower the age of consent for homosexuality; one-fourth of the males in his Cabinet are homosexuals, and his Welsh Secretary, Ron Davies, resigned in late October, following a bizarre nightly escapade that clearly involved homosexual encounters.

On ecologism, Blair has striven to put Britain in the lead of what his Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, calls "ecopolitics." Blair's first major international address as Prime Minister was on June 23, 1997, in New York, before the "Rio 2" conference, convened to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. His speech put Britain's full weight behind the "global warming" hoax. On Dec. 4, Blair sum-

moned scientists, trade unionists, and business leaders to a “green summit” at 10 Downing Street, with five members of the Cabinet in attendance. In a signed *Times* commentary that day, Blair gushed about the “excitement” generated by the Rio Earth Summit.

A Thatcherite under a Labour Party facade

Blair’s hatred for industrial society and scientific and technological progress is summed up in his favorite phrase defining his policy direction: “The Third Way.” This is a euphemism for the abandonment of traditional constituencies, labor union and otherwise, with the argument that these constituencies are not relevant to “globalization” and the “new realities of the Information Age.”

Like MacDonald before him, Blair attempts to implement policies hostile to Labour’s base constituencies, in a period of deepening economic crisis. In substance, Blair’s economics are no different than “Thatcherism”: a blend of privatization of state energy and infrastructure assets, phasing out of the welfare state, the subordination of economic and financial policy to the whims of the international bond markets, and fiscal austerity, i.e., making “fighting inflation” the highest policy priority.

Blair has repeatedly stressed his admiration for the “Thatcher legacy.” Soon after his election, he held a number of what the British press called “consultations” with Baroness Margaret Thatcher, on various policy issues. This led the May 26, 1997 London *Guardian* to editorialize that “Tony Blair’s political flirtation with Margaret Thatcher is one of his most deeply unappealing and dangerous characteristics.” The paper advised that, if Blair wants to “pick her brains, . . . he should do so with a very long spoon. . . . Mrs. Thatcher’s importance is matched only by the destructive effect of her period in office and the irrelevance of her prescriptions for the future. If there is one really serious criticism to be made of Mr. Blair, it is that he does not seem to understand what was so wrong about Thatcher.”

Blair has won kudos from the arch-Thatcherite Adam Smith Institute, for adopting the institute’s proposal to grant independence to the Bank of England, so that it can independently set interest rates, similar to what the Federal Reserve does in the United States. Blair recently defended Bank of England Governor Eddie George, when George provoked an outcry by saying that he was prepared to see higher rates of unemployment in the ravaged north of Britain, if that would keep inflation down in the south.

The Adam Smith Institute also applauds Blair’s moves toward implementing slave-labor welfare-to-work, or “workfare” schemes in Britain, and initiatives for privatizing pensions. The institute has worked closely with a number of New Labour influentials on “welfare reform.” Soon after Blair’s election last year, Adam Smith president Madsen Pirie exulted in an interview, that “Tony Blair is part of the Thatcherite system, he’s carrying Thatcherite views, under a Labour

Party facade.” Eighteen months after the election, Pirie said that “there are a whole raft of initiatives which the Adam Smith Institute was unsuccessful in having the previous [Conservative] government implement, which this government is promoting.”

Blair has done everything in his power to antagonize Labour’s traditional trade union base, in building “New Labour.” Already in July 1997, his government indicated its approach, by adopting a Thatcher-like, union-busting stance, when it refused to intervene in a bitter labor dispute between the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) and British Airways, a strike provoked by the firm’s draconian cost-cutting policies. Union-busting British Airways chairman Robert Ayling was a key Blair supporter during the election campaign.

Blair is also on a rampage against public sector workers. In early September, John Edmonds the head of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Britain’s national labor confederation, told the Labour-linked *New Statesman* magazine, that public sector workers were being “pushed into a corner” by Blair’s continuation of the policies that had been fine-tuned by Thatcher. This, warned Edmonds, is likely to lead to “big trouble” in Britain and to widespread disruption in public services.

Edmonds told the September annual convention of the TUC that Blair’s policies would jeopardize the jobs of 300,000 public sector workers. He demanded that the Blair government take action against the “greedy bastards” among British chief executives, rather than insist on wage cuts for Britain’s 5 million public sector workers.

Dismantling the productive sector

What remains of the British manufacturing sector is being dismantled by Blair government policies. In mid-August, Tony Benn wrote a letter to Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, charging that the Blair government has “no industrial policy,” and “is content to see more and more manufactured goods bought from abroad where wages are lower, without any thought for the future of this country and its industrial base.” He asserted that “the protection of the rich is one of the government’s main objectives.”

The British Chambers of Commerce has repeatedly warned, since July of this year, that Britain is heading for a “manufacturing meltdown.” Estimates of job losses in manufacturing between now and the end of 1999—which don’t take into account further slides in the global economic situation—range between 100,000 and 400,000. In recent weeks, a wave of layoffs has hit the auto, electronics, and, most recently, the steel sector. An estimate made in October, is that employment in manufacturing will, in the next months, drop to mid-19th-century levels.

In a Nov. 16 speech before British businessmen, Blair insisted that only “hard-headed realism” is needed to deal with the worsening economy. He committed his government

to fighting inflation at all costs, proclaiming that “economic stability is a sexy thing.”

Blair’s hit list

Meanwhile, the irony would not have escaped certain elements of the Labour Party and others in Britain, about Blair ranting against “the dictator Saddam Hussein.” Blair has demonstrated, since coming to power, that he qualifies quite well as a dictator, and is willing to use tactics that would be thought typical of the Soviet KGB.

Inside the Labour Party and among his staff at 10 Downing Street, Blair has become known as a “control freak,” intent on asserting his authority over everything he can get his hands on. Most recently, he has been attempting to veto prospective Labour candidates not to his liking, for upcoming elections to the Scottish and Welsh assemblies, as well as for mayor of London.

Repeatedly, he has tried to purge New Labour of constituency-based elements. In the lead-up to the September annual conference of the Labour Party, he and his cohorts were accused of stifling dissent within the party. At the convention, he tried to prevent several opponents of the “Third Way” from being elected to the party’s 33-member National Executive Committee (NEC). Failing that, Labour headquarters in London issued a “gag order” directive in mid-November, direct-

ing that no NEC member could talk to the media without prior consultations with the party’s central press office. Responding to this move, NEC member Liz Davies, who was voted onto the leadership body against Blair’s wishes, told the British Broadcasting Corp. that “it seems to be designed to stop the constituency members of the NEC, who were elected by ordinary Labour Party members, from speaking our mind, and we simply won’t do that.”

On Nov. 18, the London *Independent* ran a lead article, based on an internal document leaked from Labour Party headquarters, on Blair’s “secret purge” of Members of the European Parliament (MEP) who are representatives of “Old Labour,” i.e., not favorable to “New Labour”/“Third Way” policies. One Labour MEP labelled this “Blair’s hit list,” and told the *Independent*: “It is now crystal clear there is a purge.” Ken Coates, a former Labour MEP who was thrown out of the party last year, stated: “This shows the whole operation is run by control freakery. Anyone who is off message is being dumped.”

The lead article of the Nov. 13 *Independent* reported that Labour headquarters in London had set up a “dirty tricks” and spying operation targetting the opposition Liberal Democratic Party. Liberal Democratic activists charged that Blair is trying to “neuter” their party, to bring it more in line with his objectives.

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