

British dirty hand behind Israel-Hezbollah conflict

by Dean Andromidas

Current hostilities between Israel and the Hezbollah guerrillas based in Lebanon, have thrown the Middle East into the deepest level of violence since the September 1993 signing of the Oslo Accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Hezbollah has fired hundreds of Katyusha rockets into northern Israeli settlements, while Israel has launched over 1,000 air sorties and fired over 11,000 artillery shells into southern Lebanon. An estimated 400,000 Lebanese civilians have been forced to flee their homes and head north for safety. Hundreds of people have been killed and wounded.

Unless Hezbollah ceases its rocket attacks, fighting threatens to drag on into the period of the Israeli elections on May 29. This would surely lead to a defeat of the ruling Labor Party of Shimon Peres, and bring to power the right-wing Likud party, which has already promised to reverse the peace process if it achieves power.

The proposals for a negotiated cease-fire being brokered by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, call for Syria (which is effectively an occupying force in Lebanon) to restrain Hezbollah and guarantee a cease-fire by setting up a mechanism to enforce it. Washington sources have been quoted claiming that Christopher hopes to convince both Lebanon and Syria to attend the April 22 follow-up meeting to the Sharm el Sheikh anti-terrorism conference, to be held in Luxembourg. As of this writing, the proposal has not been taken up by any of the antagonists, including Israel.

The decisive flaw in Christopher's proposals is that they start from the fiction that Hezbollah initiated these actions *on their own* or with the prodding of Iran. They ignore the fact

that Syria, while allied to Iran, maintains 40,000 troops on Lebanese soil and *determines what happens anywhere in Lebanon*. Thus, rather than acknowledge the reality that Syria is supporting, if not initiating, these hostilities, the policy seeks to deal with Syria as an "honest broker."

London's role ignored

Even more alarming is that both the U.S. proposals and Israeli policy ignore the mountain of evidence of Britain's steering role in Arab and Jewish terrorism in the Middle East; worse, the U.S. State Department has actively suppressed this evidence. Britain, mainly through its Foreign Office "Arab Bureau," is still skillfully orchestrating the strategic environment in the area, which largely remains a "British-controlled environment." And that control is being exercised by London by steering not only terrorist groups, but also major regional players: Key for Britain's orchestrations is Syria and its President, Hafez al-Assad.

When Assad became an ally in Margaret Thatcher and George Bush's Gulf War coalition in 1990, Bush and Thatcher systematically covered up Syria's role as the center of a vast apparatus of terrorist assets. Since then, Assad's game with respect to the Middle East peace process, has been *not* to commit himself, while pretending always to be very much "interested" in peace. Thus, Assad plays a central role for the British in their strategic aim of obstructing the peace process. (See accompanying statement by U.S. Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche.)

In sum, the key to the present crisis in Lebanon is the role of British elites, in partnership with their allies in the region

and the United States: to not only destroy the peace process, but also to start a process that could very well throw the region into a conflagration, whose intensity has not been seen for a decade. Such a crisis would be aimed at destroying a central foreign policy initiative of President Bill Clinton and could become a decisive factor in his defeat in November.

Britain declares war on peace

The crisis did *not* begin with an allegedly Israeli bomb planted in a Shiite village in South Lebanon, killing one youth; it began with last year's assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Ordered from London, that assassination was carried out by a right-wing extremist with the aid of networks linked to Likud party leader Gen. Ariel Sharon, a well-known British stooge. Killing a key architect of the peace process and an ally of President Clinton, demonstrated that the British and their retainers had crossed all trip wires in their determination to destroy, once and for all, Mideast peace.

While Prime Minister Shimon Peres was able to consolidate a new government, the collapse of renewed peace negotiations with Syria, after the latter walked out, prompted Peres to call for earlier elections, in the hope that a new mandate would strengthen his ability to carry on with his policies. At the same time, considerable progress with implementing Phase II of the Oslo Accord with the Palestinians was made, including the elections for the Palestinian National Authority. The British acted swiftly: They deployed their assets in the Islamic Jihad, who launched four suicide bomb attacks in Israel, which left scores of Israelis dead and wounded.

These bombings dashed the hopes of a comfortable Labor Party victory for Peres's government, and, further, did more to revive the right-wing Likud than even the millions of dollars in financial aid from Likud's overseas patrons. Most dangerously, Sharon, a former defense minister, but more recently consigned to the backwaters of Israeli national politics, was brought back into the limelight, winning the number-two slot in the Likud election slate. If the Likud were to win the elections, Sharon would be able to pick almost any ministry he chose, including that of defense.

Significantly, the Israeli government quickly pointed to terrorist networks "based in London" as behind the orders for the suicide bombings, while PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat pointed to collusion between Palestinian extremists and the same Israeli extremists who assassinated Rabin. Yet, several weeks ago, in a public exchange with *EIR* Washington correspondent Bill Jones, State Department spokesman Nick Burns categorically rejected the idea of holding Britain responsible for recent Mideast terrorism. Despite ample evidence that London is today the world headquarters of international terrorism—including nominally Islamic terrorism associated with such groups as the Hamas military wing, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah—Burns insisted that the administration "pre-

fers" to focus attention on Iran, rather than on U.S. "ally" Britain.

Apparently getting the message that U.S. State Department would not back a move against Britain, both Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization soon ceased to vigorously pursue their accusations.

True, the Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt anti-terrorism conference was unprecedented in that both Israel and a significant number of Islamic nations sat at the same table; nonetheless, as LaRouche warned, it would fail unless it dealt directly with the threat posed by Britain. The current conflict in Lebanon is a direct result of that failure.

The fighting now threatens to escalate into a new wave of international terrorism, with the Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad threatening to hit Jewish targets anywhere in the world. Even more alarming is the report of a bomb explosion in an East Jerusalem hotel on April 12, the same day that hostilities erupted in southern Lebanon. According to press reports, the bomb exploded prematurely, while an individual, holding a British passport in the name of Andrew Newman, was attempting to build it.

How Thatcher and Bush whitewashed Syria

Contrasting sharply with the principles which underlay the peace accords of 1993, the current U.S. policy is drawn from those in the State Department, who, during the administration of George Bush, were the craftsmen erecting the policies culminating in Bush and Thatcher's genocidal war against Iraq. Integral to creating the regional military alliance capable of crushing Iraq, Thatcher and Bush whitewashed Syria's role in international terrorism and narcotics trafficking, before welcoming Assad into their alliance in the Gulf war against Iraq.

The most dramatic reflection of this policy, was Bush's collusion with Thatcher in covering up Syria's involvement in the Dec. 20, 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, which blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 passengers and 11 civilians on the ground. Despite massive evidence that the bombing of Pan Am 103 was the work of Syrian-controlled, Damascus-based terrorists, the U.S. and British governments, under Bush and Thatcher, closed ranks to protect Assad. That coverup continues to this day, courtesy of "Bush league" networks inside the permanent bureaucracy at the State Department and Justice Department.

Syria's role as "honest partner" was rubberstamped in the so-called Taif Agreement signed after the Gulf war. Initiated by George Bush and the British Foreign Office, the purpose of the agreement, signed in Taif, Saudi Arabia, was ostensibly to end the civil war in Lebanon; in fact, it served to legitimize Syria's claim that Lebanon was part of its "sphere of influence," if not part of "greater Syria."

Therefore, it is highly significant that Bush was received in Damascus as a guest of honor by Assad, only days prior to

the outbreak of hostilities in southern Lebanon. Although the details of his talks with Assad have been kept secret, Bush reportedly negotiated an oil exploration deal in northern Syria for the Enron Company of Texas, to which he is linked. Moreover, according to Bush's office, the former President assured Assad that President Clinton would not be reelected. Bush was accompanied on this trip by Brent Scowcroft, his former national security adviser, and, before that, president of Kissinger Associates, Inc. Their tour took them to most of the countries of the region including Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

Prior to his tour, Bush (who had earlier been knighted by Queen Elizabeth) was in London, where the entire Gulf war leadership, including Margaret Thatcher, former British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd, and former Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, attended the First International Conference on Kuwaiti POWs and Human Rights, bankrolled by the Kuwaiti royal family.

Regional center of terrorism

The identification of Syria as a center of international terrorism and the key spoiler in the current Lebanese crisis, is not sufficient. It is well known that Syria sponsors a host of Middle East opposition and terrorist groups, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas, Islamic

Jihad, and the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), which has been leading a bloody insurgency in southeast Turkey. Nonetheless, Assad plays host at the behest of the British Arab Bureau and other foreign interests. This is illustrated, as we said above, in the coverup of the bombing of Pan Am 103. One reason for the brazen coverup of Syrian involvement was the role of Syrian drug kingpin and terrorist Mansur al-Kassar, whose drug networks at Frankfurt International Airport were implicated in planting the bomb on that Pan Am flight.

Beginning in the spring of 1986, al-Kassar was recruited to work for the Iran-Contra apparatus run by Oliver North under the command of then-Vice President George Bush. Al-Kassar was paid at least \$1.5 million by Bush's "secret, parallel government," for Soviet bloc weapons that were passed along to the Nicaraguan Contras. As part of the deal between Bush and al-Kassar, Bush loyalists inside the U.S. intelligence community sabotaged efforts by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to nail al-Kassar for his drug-dealing, as well as for his role in the Pan Am 103 bombing.

Just as the Damascus-based PFLP-GC group of Ahmed Jibril—implicated, along with al-Kassar, in the Pan Am bombing—is operationally controlled by Assad, the Hezbollah guerrillas, operating in southern Lebanon and in the Lebanese Bekaa Valley, are also run by the Syrian regime, on behalf of London's Arab Bureau.

LaRouche: State Dept. covers up British crimes

Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. issued the following statement on April 14:

Readers of the publications associated with my work as Contributing Editor for EIR News Service, will recall a recently reported comment by a U.S. State Department press spokesman. In that statement, the State Department deplored the suggestion that Middle East terrorism could be attributed to Britain, that ally with which the United States presumably has the closest sort of "special relationship."

That State Department opinion was emitted under conditions that a continuing flood of evidence shows the authorship of Middle East terrorism against Israel to originate with organizations whose headquarters are in London. The State Department opinion is that Iran, rather than London, is the source of these attacks.

Hence, since the U.S. State Department refuses to ac-

knowledge the existence of the evidence pointing to London, the State Department implicitly instructs the government of Israel to bomb Lebanon areas indicated to be concentrations of Iran-based Hezbollah.

Already, the government of Israel has found itself pressed to account for injuries which Israel's attacks have inflicted upon innocent Lebanese. Israel accuses Lebanon of being responsible, for reason of failing to have disarmed the Hezbollah. Why will Lebanon not disarm the Hezbollah? Because Syria's Hafez al-Assad will not allow the government of Lebanon to do so. In the meantime, Israel does less than nothing to stop the terrorist attacks at the source, London.

Let all the guilty assume the blame they should. As a U.S. citizen, it is my moral responsibility to blame the State Department's role in, once again, covering up for the crimes of London, just as Secretary of State Christopher has covered up for London's continuing complicity in the Serbians' genocide and other atrocities in the Balkans. After all, London's geopolitical purpose in deploying terrorism against Israel's Peace Plan, is to shoot down every foreign-policy success of U.S. President Clinton; it is therefore all-too-logical, that certain State Department circles should assist London in Britain's effort to ruin President Clinton's policies.