

## U.S. sanctions against Sudan further British aims

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

The announcement on Nov. 4, that the United States government would impose “sweeping new economic sanctions” against the government of Sudan, is one more glaring example of the problem with Washington’s foreign policy. In Lyndon LaRouche’s in-depth analysis of the phenomenon (see *EIR*, Oct. 24, 1997, “Where Is U.S. Foreign Policy Going!”), he laid it out in black and white: “Any person who claims, that the United States government has a specific policy toward any part of the world . . . doesn’t know what he is talking about. In most leading areas of foreign policy, for example, the Clinton administration has at least two, mutually contradictory policies at the same time.” Further on, he explained: “The Clinton administration’s impulse for negotiating compromises with two or more mutually irreconcilable policies, simultaneously, has locked the U.S.A., for the moment, into a ‘yes . . . but’ policy toward almost every corner of the globe.”

The case of Sudan could provide the proverbial textbook example. For while Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was informing the press of the Executive Order to this effect, moves initiated earlier, to reestablish a normal diplomatic presence for the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, which had moved out in January 1996, were reportedly continuing.

The devastating contradictions in the policy/no-policy toward Sudan, were evident in the State Department briefing held by James Rubin, where Albright made the announcement. The secretary of state announced that the new sanctions were in response to Sudan’s alleged “continued sponsorship of international terror, its effort to destabilize neighboring countries, and its abysmal record on human rights, including religious persecution.” The Executive Order, she said, would block Sudanese government assets in the United States, prohibit U.S. trade with Sudan, as well as most financial transactions between the two countries. Albright reiterated that the steps had been taken “because the government of Sudan has

failed to respond to repeated expressions of concern or to the imposition of lesser sanctions. Instead, it has earned international condemnation by persisting in its objectionable policies, causing us to conclude that more dramatic action is required.” She concluded with assurances that the measures would not harm civilians, as “humanitarian assistance to the victims of Sudan’s civil war” would continue. Finally, she said, “The purpose of the sanctions is to deprive the regime in Khartoum of the financial and material benefits of U.S. trade and investment, including investment in Sudan’s petroleum sector. To ensure flexibility, the administration will consider issuing licenses on a case-by-case basis for activities that are in the U.S. interest.”

### Pressure from Congress

As it emerged in the question-and-answer portion of the briefing, the main impetus behind the Executive Order seems to have been the pressure exerted by the U.S. Congress, rather than by any of the actions attributed to Sudan. In response to a question, as to whether this measure would render Congressional action superfluous, Rubin answered that consultations with Congress had taken place just prior to the decision. Furthermore, he said, “We tend not to, as a matter of practice, support sanctions put in place by Capitol Hill because of the fact that they normally lack flexibility.” He said he hoped that Congress would not find further sanctions necessary.

And, in the discussion on the response of U.S. allies in the region, as well as within the United Nations, Rubin admitted, “Obviously, we have not achieved the kind of unanimous and widespread support in the United Nations for a toughened stance against Sudan.” He added, “We haven’t received as much support as we would like.” The U.S. unilateral decision, he said, he hoped would be a “harbinger of additional action by other countries.”

In short, since the UN was split on further sanctions, and the U.S. Congress was about to pass vicious sanctions, it was decided to strike a compromise: "Sanctions? Yes . . . but."

The actual effect of the sanctions announced, will be very limited. As Rubin himself acknowledged, the total volume of trade between the two, is only \$70 million, of which \$50 million is U.S. exports. The U.S. imports from Sudan are mainly gum arabic. There are 63 American companies which import over one-fourth of Sudan's gum arabic production, of which it is nearly the exclusive producer. Sudan exports up to 90% of the world's gum arabic, which is used in the production of soft drinks, candy, some inks, and pharmaceuticals products. Now, these companies, which in fact had raised loud protests against proposed Congressional action, will be forced to purchase their product through middlemen, paying, obviously, a higher price. Or, as Rubin indicated, this would be one area in which "flexibility" would be shown, and "in certain specific commodities," precisely these firms would be licensed to continue trade.

From the Sudanese side, the ban on U.S. investments will not be of consequence, particularly in the oil sector which was singled out as a target by Albright. In fact, there are Malaysian, Chinese, Russian, Canadian, and French companies which have already contracted for developing the sector, including the construction of a pipeline. As for U.S. economic assistance, that was terminated in 1983, so there will be no change. Finally, the Sudanese assets in the United States which will now be frozen, do not amount to anything near the billions of dollars in assets seized from Iran and Iraq. It has been reported that, following the issuance of the Executive Order, U.S. government authorities entered a Brooklyn travel agency and seized its account with Sudan Airways, which amounted to \$15,000.

### The British hand

So, what is really going on?

It is no secret in London elite circles, that British intelligence has been working on a very precise timetable, to bring down the current Sudanese government. Baroness Caroline Cox, the deputy speaker of the House of Lords, and key asset of British intelligence in its war against Sudan, has been overheard muttering in the corridors of power, that "the NIF [National Islamic Front] regime must be out by the end of the year."

It is for this reason that Cox accelerated her drive, begun several years ago, to set up the overthrow of the government of Gen. Omar al Bashir. Cox has spearheaded the international campaign to impose sanctions against Sudan, with her Christian Solidarity International (CSI), a branch of British intelligence. Her allegations, that the "Muslim northern government" practices slavery against the "Christian south," and of other grave human rights violations, have been propped up by fabricated reports she has issued, during trips to areas in Sudan controlled by rebel forces of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) group.

The rationale behind the CSI's campaign for sanctions was quite explicitly of a military-strategic nature: If Sudan

could be cut off from vital imports, and from foreign exchange revenue for exports, this would weaken the government military defense effort. If, at the same time, foreign forces, such as those of Ugandan dictator Yoweri Museveni, Rwandan strongman Paul Kagame, Congo dictator Laurent Kabila, as well as those of Eritrea and Ethiopia, could be mobilized to open new fronts against Sudan, from the south and the east, there would be more chances of military gains. "Humanitarian aid" could be shipped in to the insurgent forces, to provide a further margin of logistical and military support. If, at the same time, a political puppet force were put together, in the form of the two religious sectarian parties, the DUP of Othman al Mirghani and the Umma of Sadiq al Mahdi, it could be glued to the military forces of John Garang's SPLA, and stand poised to take power as a civilian government.

This, in short, is what British intelligence has plotted and achieved over the past two years, through the good graces of Baroness Cox (see *EIR*, Jan. 24, 1997, pp. 22-45; Jan. 31, pp. 12-41; March 14, pp. 34-45; April 18, pp. 53; June 20, pp. 40-53; Sept. 26, pp. 54-60).

A monkey wrench was thrown into the operation in April 1996, when the Sudanese government succeeded in drawing up a charter of principles, for a peace treaty with the rebel forces, which peace treaty was signed one year later in April 1997. All rebel forces *except* Garang's British-backed group, have signed on to a peace agreement with the government, which, since April, has been translated into an institutional

## U.S. shoots self in foot on Sudan

London's continuing war against its former colony, Sudan, is a crucial flank of the geopolitical war against the U.S. by President Clinton's personal enemies in Britain and Canada. If Sudan were to fall, the U.S.A. would be forced to retreat from all of Africa, its tail tucked shamefully between its legs. Thus, while Clinton reacted to heavy pressure on the Sudan issue, organized by enemy (i.e., British) agents in the U.S. Congress, his tactic was gravely mistaken. One thing which the President must soon learn, is that it is never smart politics to abandon the cause of truth and justice. The steady increase of citizens out of the ranks of voters, as we see in the recent, devastating defeat the President's party suffered in the Virginia elections, reflects the disgust an aggrieved population experiences when its government—i.e., its President—lacks the strength to stand up for the principles of truth and justice. It is very tough to win any kind of war, if your troops are not confident of your principles.—*Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.*

power-sharing process.

It was to sabotage this peace process, that Cox revved up her anti-slavery campaign in the spring and summer of this year. Knowing that far-reaching economic sanctions were the precondition for reversing the military situation, Cox concentrated on the U.S. Congress. Her staunch allies in the effort have been U.S. Reps. Donald Payne (D-N.J.), Chris Smith (R-N.J.), and Frank Wolf (R-Va.), the latter two being members of her intelligence front, the CSI. Hearings in the summer were followed by hearings in September, when Cox testified in person. Also in September, the U.S. Institute for Peace hosted a two-day seminar on Sudan, whose sole purpose was to thwart ongoing peace talks and generate support in Congress for sanctions. At that meeting, National Security Council director John Prendergast lyingly presented as "U.S. government policy," the British line as articulated by Cox. He also announced a program for supplying not only "humanitarian aid," but also "development assistance" to insurgent forces in areas under their control, as per Cox's instructions.

As a result of these moves, the CSI agents in the Congress were preparing to put through legislation which would have satisfied Cox's demands for a full embargo. Her demand has been, consistently, that an oil and arms embargo be imposed, and that the country be totally isolated. Thus, Clinton's Executive Order. With it, the administration seems to be snipping the fingers of the CSI operatives in Congress, instead of going for the head of the beast, in London.

### **The priority of peace**

If the White House has thus snatched this foreign policy initiative out of the meddling hands of British agents in Congress, this does not mean it has elaborated an alternative, positive policy for Sudan.

On the contrary. The sanctions decision, although cosmetic, is sending precisely the wrong kinds of signals to undercut those precious few forces in the region, who are struggling to achieve peace and stability. On Oct. 28, talks were scheduled to begin in Nairobi, between representatives of the Sudanese government and of the SPLA of Garang. The talks, sponsored by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), represent the first time that Garang (who has categorically rejected the peace treaty signed by the other rebel factions) has consented to come to the negotiating table with government representatives.

The talks began one day later, on Oct. 29, ostensibly because the Kenyan foreign minister had not yet returned from the Commonwealth meeting in Edinburgh. But in fact, the postponement may have been due to a meeting which took place in Cairo, between Egyptian and Sudanese government officials. In an extraordinary development, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (the same who, according to the official line on Sudan, had been the target of Sudanese assassins two years ago) cordially received a high-level delegation from Khartoum. The Sudanese delegation was composed of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mustafa Osman Ismail, and

First Vice President Lt. Gen. al-Zubeir Mohammad Saleh. The meeting dealt with general as well as specific issues in bilateral relations, and led to the formation of committees to resolve outstanding problems. As Mustafa Osman Ismail told the weekly newspaper *Akhbar al-Youm*, the idea for the committees was born during the Cairo meeting. They talked "on the resolution of most issues discussed, and left the details to specialized quarters in both countries to implement. While I wouldn't say the problems between the two countries have been resolved, the trip of General Saleh to Egypt is an important step to the return of ties between the two countries to their natural state," Ismail said. He stressed the "eternal" nature of the bilateral relations, referring to cultural and geographical factors, and said, "if there are problems in the relationship, there is no way out but through dialogue."

For his part, Mubarak's adviser Osama el-Baz said after the Cairo talks: "We hope that this meeting will be a new endeavor to strengthen relations, because we look at Sudanese-Egyptian relations as special. . . . We hope the coming period will witness tangible progress in this respect."

President Mubarak reportedly placed emphasis in the meeting, on stability in the region. Referring to Mubarak's view, Mustafa Ismail issued a statement with rather extraordinary formulations; he said, "We have listened to the instructions and guidelines and advice of President Mubarak and found that he comprehends the problems of Sudan. We will go back to Khartoum and explain his instructions and advice to the Sudanese leadership. . . . We hope that relations will return to their natural conditions, for mutual benefit."

This is the first meeting at such a high level between the two governments since before the June 26, 1995 assassination attempt against Mubarak in Ethiopia, which was blamed on the Sudanese. Stability in the region depends very much on stability of relations between these two major nations. Because Egypt is not a member of IGAD and would not, therefore, be a participant in the peace talks, it was crucial for Mubarak to conduct such consultations to put forward his views. It is known, that, regardless of political conflict between the two governments, which was exacerbated by the British assassination plot, and despite contacts which the Cairo government has had with part of the political opposition of Sudan, Mubarak knows only too well, that a breakup of Sudan would immediately threaten the territorial integrity and independence of Egypt. Most explicitly, any secessionist moves on the part of John Garang in the south of Sudan, would threaten the free flow of the Nile waters into Egypt.

According to Sudanese sources, the visit to Egypt was supposed to be kept discreet, as per prior arrangements. However, when the delegation landed at the airport, it was greeted by press, which indicates the Egyptians wanted to make it public.

Following this refreshing development, the peace talks began in Nairobi. The Sudanese government delegation includes Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Osman Mohammed Taha; Minister for Federal Rule Ali al-Haj Mohamad; the

head of the Council for Peace, Mohamed al Khalifa; National Security Adviser Dr. Obed Mahdi, and others. The delegation also includes two former rebel leaders who have signed the peace treaty with the government, and are now functioning as leaders in the political structures in the south: Arok Thon Arok, and Dr. Riak Machar. There are representatives of all the IGAD states, and the United States was also expected to attend with the status of an observer.

The SPLA is represented by a six-man team, which does not include any members of the “political opposition” parties of Cox’s National Democratic Alliance, much to their chagrin.

Although no reports are expected to be released until the talks conclude, Ali al-Haj Mohamad expressed optimism in talking to reporters. “Sudan wants to negotiate peace,” he said. “We do not want to fight, but if we are compelled to, we are going to fight.” He stressed the importance of this meeting, as different from others years ago with the SPLA, because the government has in the meantime signed a peace treaty with other rebel factions, whose clauses should satisfy the demands of Garang. “This is important because this is the first time in the history of the conflict between North and South, and the first time in the history of the Sudan, that there is a concrete agreement,” he said. “I know it [the peace treaty] didn’t include the SPLA,” he went on. “That’s why we are going to Nairobi. But I know that agreement has actually addressed all the issues which were raised by the SPLA and which we are going to discuss. . . . If they want a united Sudan, that is fine; if they want a separation, there is a referendum; if they want

self-determination, it is there in the agreement. So, we are asking this question — what do they want?”

“We have got a model now for power-sharing,” he said. “The federal system is a formula for power-sharing, and we have got our own suggestions for that.” He said, if the other side rejected these suggestions, “they should tell us their suggestions.”

Less than a week after the talks had gotten off the ground, the news was released in Washington, that sanctions would be imposed. At about the same time, Garang’s delegation in Nairobi made known that it wanted to change the agenda of the talks. The demands put forward by them, according to unconfirmed reports in the Arabic press, were that a two-state confederation and a multi-party democracy, with the participation of Cox’s sectarian parties, should be set up. The transition period to a referendum in the south, would be cut down to two years. And most important, the SPLA delegates called for redrawing the map of the south, enlarging it considerably, by including in it, the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile province. Posing such demands, is tantamount to exploding the peace talks. Furthermore, the demand to include the Blue Nile province, means claiming control over the Nile — precisely what would destabilize Egypt immediately.

How this turnabout occurred is not yet known. But what is clear, is that the ambiguity in Washington’s position, as perceived by the interlocutors in the peace talks, can only complicate the process, and encourage Garang’s forces to balk at peace.

## Cox, the CSI, and British intelligence vs. Sudan

It is no coincidence that, just days prior to the convening of peace talks between the Sudanese government and the SPLA rebel faction of John Garang, in Nairobi, British intelligence operative Baroness Caroline Cox would mobilize her Christian Solidarity International (CSI) for a strategy session.

The conference took place in Westminster Chapel, on Oct. 25. Representatives of CSI from the U.K., Pakistan, Mexico, Romania, and other international offices were present at the conference, which had “Christian Human Rights” as its theme. In her keynote address, Cox recycled material she has presented orally and in written form over the last years. Three-fourths of her remarks dealt with Sudan, which she damned for alleged support of terrorism, slavery, ethnic cleansing, and so on. Regarding slavery, she said that the CSI had “two strategies”: one was to pay ransom, to buy slaves back out of bondage; as for the

second strategy, she did not specify. What was meant, was the CSI’s continuing strategy to overthrow the government of Khartoum. Baroness Cox showed slides of some of her 20 illegal visits to Sudan, among them pictures of herself in the company of Abdul Aziz Khaled, the commander of the British-backed “rebel” forces of the SPLA and Eritrea, in the east.

Among the participants at the CSI conference, were the following: Rev. Stuart Windsor; Dr. Mircea Ciumara, deputy prime minister of Romania and head of CSI in Romania; David Atkinson, Conservative MP, vice president for life, CSI-UK; Paul Diamont, barrister; “Mamma Lobita,” Isabella Torres, Mexico; Bishop Richard Hara; Richard O’Connor; Mervin Thomas, chairman of CSI-UK; and Dr. R.T. Kendall from the U.S., now of the U.K.

Among those who had been invited, but sent messages expressing their regret that they could not attend, were MPs: Julian Brazier, Win Griffith, Dr. Liam Fox, Maria Fyfe, Roger Gale, Lord Avebury, Lord Ashbourne, Simon Hughes, Gary Street, Don Toughie, Sir Teddy Taylor, Lord Hayhoe, and Lord Gilbert; and Members of the European Parliament: Anita Pollack, Stan Newans, Tessa Jowell, David Hallam; and the Bishop of Ely.