

NATO countries. The chain of command leads up to the Deputy SACEUR, who, by NATO statutes, is always a British officer. The present Deputy SACEUR is Gen. Sir Rupert Smith, who had been the commander of the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia. The British component of the Bosnian peacekeeping force was notorious for feeding preemptive information about planned UN military deployments to the Serbian forces, thus abetting some of the very "ethnic cleansing" that they were deployed to prevent. So, the idea that General Smith is the chief operations officer for the current NATO operation in Kosovo demands special attention and scrutiny, if the truth is to be revealed about the Chinese Embassy bombing.

Well-placed U.S. intelligence sources have told *EIR* that it cannot be ruled out that British assets on the ground in Belgrade, including Serbian assets with long-standing ties to British intelligence, may have been the source of the disinformation that locked in the targetting of the Chinese Embassy. "The British are the number-one suspects," stated one source, who requested anonymity. "They have the capability on the ground, and they clearly have the motive. The United States had neither."

Several military sources completed the picture: Once the mapping coordinates of a target are verified from the on-site sources, it is a matter of procedure that specific NATO countries are given the task of planning and executing the attack. Given that 75% of all of the air sorties over Yugoslavia have been carried out by the U.S. Air Force, it was not shocking that it was apparently American fighter aircraft that dropped the three precision-guided bombs.

Washington, Bonn, Rome, Moscow pursue diplomacy

by Rainer Apel

The first direct telephone conversation between President Bill Clinton and Chinese President Jiang Zemin, on May 14, broke the ice that had been piled up between NATO and China, after the "accidental" bombing attack on the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on May 7. That telephone contact, in which Clinton assured the Chinese that there would be a thorough investigation of the bombing incident, helped to restore much, though not all, of the positive impulse for a diplomatic solution to the Kosovo conflict, which had been created by the May 6 Bonn declaration of the foreign ministers of the Group of Seven and Russia. The talks that Germany's Chancellor Gerhard Schröder had in Beijing with Chinese leaders on May 12, were also very important to mend relations between NATO and China, thereby "pulling China into the boat," as German

officials put it. But the diplomatic impulse was consolidated only with the Clinton-Jiang Zemin telephone discussion, and one cannot rule out a new British-instigated atrocity to once again undermine the fragile relationship with Beijing.

From there, the international Kosovo peace diplomacy made fast advances in the days immediately after: On May 15, the United Nations Security Council approved a joint U.S.-Russian initiative, supported by the governments of Italy and Germany, to appoint Martti Ahtisaari, the President of Finland, as special UN envoy for the Kosovo peace process. Not being a member of NATO, makes Finland acceptable to Russia and China, the two non-NATO members of the five permanent powers on the UN Security Council. And, having clashed repeatedly with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright over her destructive views on the Balkans issue, German diplomats very much welcome that Clinton has named Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott to represent the United States in the Kosovo peace talks.

Talbott is known among German diplomats as a tough negotiator, but he is also known for being a constructive mind, and Italian diplomats hold similar opinions on this issue. Furthermore, Talbott has also been designated by President Clinton to handle the sensitive joint work with Russian Balkan envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin, the longtime crony of Vice President Al Gore. In effect, President Clinton has not only iced out Secretary of State Albright from the Balkan diplomacy, but he has iced out Vice President Gore as well. This, too, is an extremely positive and important maneuver by President Clinton, which undercuts the prospects of the peace effort being sabotaged by the notorious Gore-Chernomyrdin combination, already under suspicion of having plotted the overthrow of Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov.

The redoubled U.S.-continental European effort to achieve a diplomatic solution to the Kosovo war became visible on May 18 when, after two days of Italian-German consultations in Bari, Italy, Schröder and Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema, at a joint press conference, endorsed the Ahtisaari mission. That mission is something that Talbott was involved in directly, when he met with the Finnish President and Chernomyrdin in Helsinki on the same day.

The air war must be halted

The other aspects on which the German and Italian leaders agreed, were the need for a temporary halt in the NATO air war against the Serbs, to create conditions for a rapid withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo. The cessation of air operations would be made possible, when a joint Kosovo resolution of the Security Council, with the explicit consent of Russia and China, were passed, Schröder and D'Alema said. And, they indicated, that resolution should be along the lines of the May 6 Bonn resolution of the G-8. D'Alema had published the basic outlines of this proposal already on May 16, and he had also been strengthened in his view after a conversation with Schröder on May 10, that NATO could not,

and should not be allowed to avoid, the necessity of a thorough investigation of the “accidental” bombing of China’s Embassy in Belgrade. D’Alema told Schröder that NATO would lose all confidence among the citizens of its 19 member-states and internationally, if it continued to make foul apologies for the embassy bombing, instead of really telling the public what it was that made such a catastrophe possible.

D’Alema and Schröder also made clear that a solution to Kosovo could only be a diplomatic one, rather than one based on total military victory of NATO over Serbia—a victory that might still be far away. Schröder added that, for Germany, he categorically ruled out any deployment of ground forces for combat missions. This earned him very angry headlines in the British press on May 19, for example in the *Daily Telegraph*, which wrote: “Germany Joins U.S. in Veto of Ground Forces.” The London *Times* said that at the Bari press conference with D’Alema, Schröder had “crippled” the British government’s plan for a ground war against the Serbs.

“The German Chancellor’s outright dismissal of this strategy appeared to isolate Britain among the main players of the alliance,” the *Times* wrote, adding that “France and Italy are also opposed to deploying troops unless there is first a peace agreement and approval by [Serbian President Slobodan] Mr. Milosevic of an international military force in Kosovo with NATO at its core.” The *Daily Telegraph* said that Schröder’s “no” to ground forces “parallels one given to Mr. Blair by President Clinton last month. Mr. Blair tried for hours to persuade the President to endorse the possible use of ground troops if bombing fails to force Milosevic to back down. But he could not.”

For a change, the *Telegraph* coverage of President Clinton’s policy was accurate. Indeed, the American leader rebuffed Blair’s persistent efforts to win him over to a land war in the Balkans, during a lengthy White House meeting two days before the April 23-25 NATO 50th anniversary summit in Washington. Blair, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, and British Defense Secretary George Robertson had all lied through their teeth, at an April 25 press conference, when confronted by *EIR* and other news organizations about the U.S.-British rift over the ground troops issue.

Beware another British incident

For reasons all too apparent, the British hawks are getting frustrated: The bombing of the Chinese Embassy on May 7 was about to undo all of the diplomatic efforts for a cease-fire and peace talks on Kosovo, but by May 18, most of the sabotage of that diplomacy had been undone, again, by concerted action among Russia, China, Germany, Italy, and the White House (against strong resistance of the State Department and Pentagon). It cannot be ruled out that sabotage will be tried again, but the peace process has gained momentum in recent days, so that it is much more difficult to derail it. And, what certainly enrages the hawks more than the German Chancellor’s remarks as such, is the fact that the diplomacy

resembles recommendations made by Lyndon H. LaRouche at a Bonn seminar on April 21 (see *EIR*, May 7), when he called for a peace initiative by Clinton, in cooperation with Russia, China, and “at least one leading power on the European continent.”

Indeed, during May 18-20, Deputy Secretary of State Talbott, Finnish President Ahtisaari, and Russia’s Balkan envoy Chernomyrdin held marathon meetings in Helsinki. The first meeting, on the night of May 18, lasted eight hours. The next morning, the three men met for another five hours before Chernomyrdin flew off to Belgrade to meet with Milosevic. When Chernomyrdin returned to Moscow from Belgrade, Talbott was already there, awaiting further consultations.

On May 19, the political directors of the foreign ministries of the G-8 countries also met in Bonn, to draft a UN Security Council resolution, based on the May 6 G-8 communiqué which initiated the present round of diplomacy.

Documentation

Many worldwide believe bombing was deliberate

From the May 12 statement by Pennsylvania State Rep. Harold James. Representative James is the former chairman of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, and is Special Assistant to the President, National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

“I call upon President Clinton to take prompt and vigorous action against those in the NATO command structure responsible for the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, which may include court-martial proceedings. Also, on behalf of the 58,000 constituents in my Philadelphia legislative district, I wish to express the most profound condolences to the families of the innocent Chinese diplomats and journalists who were killed or injured in the NATO attack.

“I questioned the legitimacy of the NATO war in Yugoslavia from the beginning. We were told that the goal was to stop ‘ethnic cleansing’ and genocide. But why was there no action taken when the worst genocide of the post-World War II period was taking place in Central Africa, where more than 6 million Africans have died [since 1993]? . . .

“Lyndon LaRouche warned that the NATO war against Yugoslavia was really a British geopolitical manipulation of the United States into a conflict with Russia and China, in order to destroy President Clinton’s policies of cooperation and partnership with those nations. The British, he said, want to use NATO as the military arm of an Anglo-American ‘New World Order,’ to risk world war in a confrontation with Russia and China. This is exactly what seems to be happening.