

pressed evidence could now become available.

On April 3, at a conference in Sofia, a spokesman for the new Bulgarian President, Zehlyu Zhelev, and Prof. Allen Weinstein of the Washington-based Center for Democracy, announced the "creation of a Center for Democracy-organized international commission which will examine the 1981 assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II." Weinstein will be given all the support he needs by the Bulgarian authorities. Already he has received 36,000 documents. Weinstein is one of the founders of the National Endowment for Democracy, and many of the top CFD directors are closely intertwined with Project Democracy, under whose auspices Oliver North conducted his Iran-Contras shenanigans.

The initiative to let a private organization, sponsored by people close to a specific part of the Anglo-American elite, play the role of judges, while there is still an open investigation in Italy, cannot be considered totally proper.

At the same time, a number of Catholic representatives came out with surprisingly bold statements, showing no intention to give up on the search for the truth. A magazine considered very close to the Pope, *Il Sabato*, wrote in its May 11 issue, under the title, "1981, Too Soon for Yalta. The Pope Wanted to Anticipate '89. For This They Stopped Him?": "The strict official 'no comment' does not mean that in the Vatican certain moral certainties have not been reached long since, concerning the many mysteries surrounding the attempt. Nobody in the sacred rooms thinks that Ali Agca acted as a lone madman. The hypothesis of the international conspiracy plotted by an international organization of professionals is decidedly considered the most plausible. But on the Bulgarian Connection, opinions seem to diverge. . . . The difficulties found in the search for the truth induced some churchmen to think about a possible complicity of the other superpower in the management of the attempt. At least *post factum*, in concealing the truth."

One week earlier, the Papal Nuncio in Sofia, Msgr. Mario Rizzi, stated: "I never believed that the Bulgarian authorities were responsible for the attempt." And Cardinal Edouard Gagnon, one of the cardinals who knows best the Roman Curia: "At a certain point, one had the impression that the confusion over the investigations was deliberate, was wanted by both sides." And Cardinal Silvio Oddi: "It was not in the plans of that time to find the culprits. Nobody was interested in changing the equilibrium reached in the relationships between the two superpowers." In 1982, Cardinal Oddi had received a letter from Agca.

*Il Sabato* quoted an anonymous source: The Pope had become "a destabilizing element both for the East and the West." And concluded: "For the love of his nation and of truth, the Slavic Pope dreamed in the dramatic Polish summer of 1980 to be able to challenge the order of Yalta. Nine years earlier than the plans of those who really decide the shifts of world politics. Too many also for a pope."

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## Interview: Dr. A. Rob Moodie

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# Harvard Study Team reports devastation in postwar Iraq

*Dr. A. Rob Moodie, a medical doctor, was part of the Harvard Study Team whose eyewitness account, Public Health in Iraq after the Gulf War, has shaken the American public since its publication on May 22.*

*An Australian, Dr. Moodie is working toward a Masters of Public Health which he expects to get in 1991 from the Harvard University School of Public Health. He has served as medical officer for Save the Children Fund in Gedaref, eastern Sudan, 1979-80; medical coordinator, Médecins Sans Frontières, in Wad Kowli, Sudan, 1985; and senior medical officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia, 1985-88.*

*The interview excerpted here was conducted by Mariana Wertz on June 18.*

**EIR:** Your report was addressed to United Nations Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar. Has he responded yet?

**Moodie:** Not as yet, as I understand, although several of the ambassadors to the U.N. have.

**EIR:** Can you go into any detail on the responses?

**Moodie:** Not other than to say that we're meeting with several of them about the issues.

**EIR:** What about the U.S. Congress?

**Moodie:** We have had meetings with staff people. We didn't actually write to them. We did write to the State Department, to [chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] Colin Powell and to Secretary [of State James] Baker. They haven't yet responded, although we've written again to the State Department.

At the U.S. Congress we've been working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

**EIR:** Do you expect there may be some hearings on the question of the sanctions?

**Moodie:** I don't know whether on the question of the sanctions, but certainly on the question of the health situation in Iraq, which is what we're interested in.

**EIR:** Can you compare what you saw in Iraq with what you saw in your work in eastern Sudan?

**Moodie:** It's quite different, because the baseline you're starting from is quite different. Sudan is a much, much poorer country. Iraq actually had a functioning health care system. It had reduced its childhood mortality by half and had a health care system according to Unicef that reached 90% of the population. They had potable water for 100% of the urban population and about 87% of the rural population—very good figures. They had good vaccination programs. So the health care system was working. The GNP is much greater in Iraq. . . .

But, what we did see was the fact that, judging from what it was like beforehand, there has been a *dramatic* change since the Gulf crisis began. It's as important to compare Iraq now with what it was like before, as to compare it with Sudan, because even now in the hospitals we saw very high levels of malnutrition, which certainly reminded me of very bad situations that I've worked with in 1985 [in Sudan].

**EIR:** Can you describe the work the Red Cross or the United Nations agencies were able to do despite the sanctions?

**Moodie:** The international community and the Red Cross have done a lot of work in restoring water supply. We were impressed with their level of activity. And the same with Unicef—their level of activity in distributing food and medicine and helping. But compared to the need, what they're actually able to do is, at the moment, small. . . . In a country of 18 million people, there is needed an enormous, coordinated relief effort.

**EIR:** In the report, you indicate a tremendous increase in deaths from gastroenteritis in Iraq. . . . Could you describe what gastroenteritis does to a child?

**Moodie:** What it really means is an infection of the stomach and the intestines. That is normally a diagnosis which is made when people come in with diarrhea and vomiting with an unknown cause. The causes are viral diseases or bacterial infections or parasitic diseases.

What it does to children . . . is it produces a lot of vomiting and diarrhea, so they become dehydrated and can die from the dehydration. Cholera is an example of really dramatic gastroenteritis, [with] enormous amounts of diarrhea and vomiting that can kill people within hours.

Other forms of gastroenteritis, especially if you get them recurrently, can lead in young children, particularly because they don't eat, to their becoming malnourished as well. That's certainly one of the associations we saw in Iraq,

definitely between malnutrition and gastroenteritis.

Also when you become more malnourished, you're more likely to get another infection.

**EIR:** You paint a very bleak picture in the report. It's now mid-June, one month later, the peak period for water-borne diseases. Do you have a picture of the situation there now?

**Moodie:** From what we've gathered from talking to people—a week ago in the Unicef office in Amman—things are no better, if not worse. Even if it got no worse, it is still really bad, so it's a situation that does require an enormous response.

**EIR:** You report that only a fraction of the hospitals and community health center network survived the war. Did you see evidence of their having been bombed?

**Moodie:** What we saw was damage from allied bombing and from civilian uprisings and the repression of those uprisings. From all three sides.

**EIR:** Did you see any widespread evidence of civilian casualties?

**Moodie:** When we were there, it was two months after the bombings, and we went to children's hospitals, not surgical hospitals where you normally find war casualties. We heard stories about casualties from the uprisings and the repressions of those uprisings, but we did not see people who had been directly injured, probably because we were looking for different things. We were concentrating very much on children. So we didn't see a high level of casualties. We saw the indirect casualties. . . .

**EIR:** You're also a member of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). The IPPNW sent a spokesman to the recent press conference in Bonn of the Committee to Save the Children of Iraq, who presented a devastating picture of what was occurring in Iraq. He was joined at the press conference by Helga Zepp-LaRouche and by the secretary to Patriarch Bidawid of Baghdad, who has called for lifting of the sanctions, and stated that, no matter how much aid is put into Iraq now, unless the infrastructure is rebuilt, the medicine and food will simply spoil. Do you agree with that assessment?

**Moodie:** As I said before, we're steering clear of the political issue on this. The reason we're doing that is because our most important contribution in this whole thing is to put forward what is the picture of the health situation as we saw it in Iraq.

**EIR:** And let the public draw its own conclusions?

**Moodie:** Yes, and for other groups, like this Committee and IPPNW to be using this information to draw what conclusions they might.