

International Intelligence

Queen to address Commonwealth heads

"For the first time, The Queen will be addressing the opening session of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, which takes place this October in Edinburgh," according to the Aug. 5 London *Times*. "Though she has always attended the biannual CHOGM in a ceremonial capacity, she has never spoken formally to the massed ranks of government heads. It has always been left to be too political an event for her further involvement." Britain's Queen Elizabeth is the head of state of many of the Commonwealth countries, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Mauritius, and others. The *Times* cites as the major reason for the Queen's decision, that "she is said to feel that the Commonwealth has lost its footing in recent years. An opening speech at the city's conference center would be an ideal opportunity for her to give the organization a boost in front of the massed media.

"She is being encouraged in this by the [Tony Blair] government, which feels the Commonwealth was under-used and underplayed by the Tories."

In fact, the renewed impetus to build up the Commonwealth has been to reestablish the preeminence of the British Empire, crushing the nation-state altogether, in the face of a global economic collapse.

Blair and Prodi cozy up against France, Germany

On arriving in Italy for a ten-day vacation in Tuscany, British Prime Minister Tony Blair met his counterpart, Romano Prodi, early this month. The *Daily Telegraph* reported on Aug. 4, that "The Italian prime minister told Mr. Blair that Britain and Italy had a common interest in counteracting the weight of Germany and France in Europe." Prodi urged Blair to join Italy in a common platform for a "soft" Maastricht, as opposed to the "hard" one pushed by Bonn.

Accounts of a Prodi-Blair political love

affair are credible. Prodi is, like many members of Blair's cabinet, a product of the London School of Economics. In addition, Prodi has been a collaborator and a friend of British agent George Soros. According to the Italian business daily *Il Sole 24 Ore* of Aug. 4, Prodi discussed other issues of common policy with Britain, taking as an example the recently concluded merger between the Italian defense firm Finmeccanica and the British GE-Marconi company. They also discussed the Balkans. Blair praised Italy's achievement of "political stability" and its economic "prosperity."

Rokhlin: Russian defense industry barely alive

Russia's crucial defense industry is hardly alive, the chairman of the Duma's (parliament) defense committee, Lev Rokhlin, told a Moscow press conference on Aug. 4. Rokhlin criticized the so-called reforms in the Army, stating that most vital defense enterprises are idle, including armor producers and steel mills producing for weapon systems, big defense plants in Tula, and artillery shell producers. He also criticized privatization being carried out under the supervision of First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais.

Referring to the imposed ratio of the budget deficit to the GNP, Rokhlin demanded to know: "Where has this figure of 3.5% come from? . . . This figure is demanded by the International Monetary Fund. It is proceeding not from economic substantiations, but from what is demanded by the International Monetary Fund. The President announced this figure proceeding from what the IMF wants. We really do not like this."

There is no hope that the situation will change under the present leadership, because, he said "the country is being plundered. Foreign newspapers and magazines are full of reports of money flowing out of the country, 10 billion, 20 billion." Rokhlin also pointed to the country's high infant mortality ("one newborn for every two dead"), and the fact that the population of Russia is shrinking by 1.5 million a year.

"This is tantamount to genocide of the people. During the five years of the Great Patriotic War [World War II], Germany lost roughly a similar number of people."

Rokhlin compared the situations of Russia and China, noting that "China is growing at 13%, and we are declining at the same rate."

Terrorist congress held against 'neo-liberalism'

Coinciding with the mobilization by Spain's Basque separatist ETA/Herri Batasuna gang to recoup its influence, some 2,500 representatives from similar separatist, integrist, and terrorist outfits from all over the world gathered in Madrid for the "Second Alternative Summit against Neo-Liberalism." The phony opposition to neo-liberal economics (properly identified with the free-trade depredations of Thatcherism), was launched by Mexico's Zapatista National Liberation Army in 1994. Despite the posturing, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the head of the political wing of the Zapatista machine, and now Mexico City's mayor-elect, has said he supports paying off Mexico's debt to the International Monetary Fund.

Two hooded Zapatistas, named Dalia and Felipe, read a message to the conference from Subcommander Marcos, asserting that the dialogue with the Mexican government was at a standstill. Later, "Felipe" told a press conference how important it was for the representatives of oppressed peoples to share their ideas with each other.

Mandela softens stance toward Nigeria's Abacha

According to the Paris daily *Le Monde* of Aug. 4, the chilly relations between South Africa's Nelson Mandela and Nigeria's Sani Abacha may be warming up. On July 31, Mandela emerged from a meeting with two envoys sent to South Africa by Abacha, to announce that relations between the countries were "very solid," and that Abacha is "my brother," with whom he, Mandela, has "cordial and harmonious" relations. Man-

CHINA AND INDIA started two days of talks in New Delhi on Aug. 4, to resolve the long-standing border dispute which led to war in 1962, officials said. It was the 10th meeting of a joint working group set up in 1988 in Beijing by then-Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

AUSTRALIA expanded its annual bilateral “security dialogues” with four new nations—China, Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines—at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum, which ended July 28.

GERMAN SUPERSPY Werner Mauss, who orchestrated kidnappings for the Colombian National Liberation Army (ELN), was released from prison, along with his wife, by a Colombian judge in late July. The two will be deported, according to the Colombia security agency, DAS. Mauss has said that he is looking forward to “assisting his [German] government” in seeking a peace pact between the Colombian government and the narco-terrorists. He added that an ELN leader is awaiting him back in Germany.

CHRIS PATTEN, the last British governor of Hongkong, is being investigated by the MI-6 intelligence agency, and could be prosecuted for leaking secret documents, reported the *Sunday Times* of London on Aug. 3. The *Sunday Times* said that the Foreign Office officials want Patten to be prosecuted under Britain’s Official Secrets Act, for allegedly leaking details of a secret deal with China over Hongkong’s future.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, Israel’s prime minister, ranted that if Palestinian President Yasser Arafat doesn’t crack down on Hamas, Israel will no longer honor the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO. Netanyahu, never a defender of the Oslo Accords, which cost his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin his life, used the excuse of early-August suicide bombings in Jerusalem for this round of sabre-rattling.

dela declared that “we will work together, to resolve the problems of the African continent.”

For the past two years, with increasing vehemence in the recent period, Mandela had been a steadfast campaigner against Abacha, to the extent that British policymakers have been counting on Mandela to lead the campaign against Nigeria, preceding the British Commonwealth summit in October. The British are promoting report after report, through the Foreign Office, Prince Philip’s Transparency International, etc., declaring Nigeria to be “the most corrupt” nation in the world.

There must be quite a fight around Nigeria policy inside South Africa, as *EIR* has received other reports—which were not covered by *Le Monde*—that Abacha’s envoys were first arrested on arrival in South Africa, and later released.

Nations join to rebuild Alexandria, Egypt library

The world-famous library at Alexandria, Egypt, which in ancient times housed hundreds of thousands of great works, is being rebuilt, near the site where the Eratosthenes, the library’s great leader, taught geometry and geography more than 2,000 years ago. Seven years ago, \$230 million for the project was pledged, mainly by Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The Egyptian government has underwritten the budget, which was first proposed by Alexandrian historian Mustafa Al-Abadi in the 1970s. “We have 400 workers from all over the world, working 24 hours a day. . . . We should be finished by the end of 1998,” said Yousri El Hakim, who heads up the construction monitoring unit. The library originally had the support of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, “but Unesco had many problems, and now it is 100% Egyptian, under the Ministry of Higher Education,” he said.

According to project manager Mohsen Zahran, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina has so far acquired 350,000 books, among them a complete microfilm record of the priceless

Arabic manuscripts in Spain’s Escorial Library donated by the Spanish royal family. The library will house up to 8 million volumes, plus hundreds of thousands of manuscripts, and is expected to become a center for research with emphasis on the civilizations of ancient Egypt, Greece, and the Eastern Mediterranean.

U.S. reportedly aiding Sudan peace effort

According to reports from *EIR*’s Sudanese sources, U.S. government officials have been intervening politically, in an attempt to promote the peace process, between Khartoum and rebel factions in the south, especially the British-Ugandan-backed insurgency of John Garang. Following the recent meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Harare, Zimbabwe, Sudan’s President Gen. Omar Hassan al Bashir stated that he would accept the principles of negotiations outlined by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as guidelines for talks with Garang’s Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). General Bashir said he would consider them guidelines, but not “binding.” Garang’s maintain that such principles must be binding.

In response to Garang’s statement, U.S. Ambassador to Sudan Timothy Carney reportedly stated that he considered the guidelines non-binding, and added that otherwise, they would constitute the terms of a treaty, not a negotiating stance. The IGAD principles are: 1) political power and wealth must be shared; 2) there must be self-determination for the south; and, 3) the state must be secular. Sudan has always accepted the first two principles, incorporating them into the April 1997 Peace Treaty with most rebel factions, but has considered the third as only basis for discussion, i.e., not “binding.”

Following the OAU meeting, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for Human Rights and Democracy Gare Smith met in Khartoum with General Bashir, gave a lecture at a strategic studies institute, and engaged in a round-table discussion, which reportedly included Ambassador Carney.