

International Intelligence

Pope renews his promise to visit Iraq

"Iraq awaits the Pope with joy," Roberto Formigoni told Milan's Catholic daily *Avvenire* of May 20, after returning from Iraq. The Holy Father reiterated his desire to go ahead with the visit, during a May 14 meeting with Patriarch Raphael I Bidawid, head of the Chaldean Church, a Catholic rite based in Baghdad. The Pope had earlier said that he hopes to mark the Jubilee with a visit to Ur, the birthplace of Abraham.

Formigoni, president of the Lombardy Region, had just returned from an official visit to Iraq, where he reviewed the effects of the embargo. "Eight years after the imposition of the embargo, and particularly considering the fact that Iraq substantially complied with UN requests, this embargo has been revealed as cruelty to the population," he said. Formigoni returned with a clear message, writes *Avvenire*: "Let's stop the policy of economic sanctions, it is inhuman and a political failure." He told the daily: "It is unacceptable that the UN maintains this situation despite the fact that it is evident that the chief inspector, Richard Butler, produced a fake report in total disagreement with the other inspectors, who said that Baghdad had complied with the Security Council requests." Formigoni also told the daily that Christians worship freely in Iraq; "I met many people among the Christians, who asked me about the possible visit of the Pope. They all know about the Pope's desire to visit Iraq and await him with joy."

India and Uzbekistan seek regular dialogue

India and Uzbekistan have decided to begin a regular political dialogue between their foreign ministers, increase the economic content of their ties, and conduct trade through a transit corridor across Iran. "A number of decisions of a long-term nature were taken today," said Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh on May 20. Singh met in Tashkent with Uzbekistan President Islam

Karimov.

According to senior Foreign Office officials, the two leaders held discussions on Afghanistan and its regional implications. Speaking to media later, Singh expressed confidence that India's voice will now be heard in the UN-sponsored Afghan peace process. Heretofore, the UN had designated a "six plus two" body—the United States, Russia, and Afghanistan's neighbors, China, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, and Pakistan—to bring about a lasting peace in the strife-torn nation. India, which is an interested party, but does not border Afghanistan, has not been directly included in the UN peace process.

Canada fronts for Soros drug legalization push

A staffer with the Canadian Foundation for Latin America (FOCAL), a government-sponsored non-governmental organization, said on May 20 that the Canadian Foreign Ministry is engaged in determined diplomacy, to get the nations of the Americas to address the drug plague from "the human security perspective," rather than from a simple law enforcement approach. Canada seeks a "more holistic approach," focussing on health, education, trade, and alternative development, FOCAL's Martin Roy told *Resumen Ejecutivo de EIR*.

This is, of course, the unalloyed line of drug legalization godfather George Soros. In 1997, FOCAL published a call for Canada to team up with Ibero-American nations against the United States, and ram through drug legalization. It now claims that the call was just the author's opinion, and that FOCAL is "not sure" that legalization "is viable at this stage in the hemispheric context."

So, Ottawa is concentrating on the establishment of a "Foreign Minister Dialogue Group on Drugs," which would adopt the "human security" approach, which it hopes might be accepted at the June 1999 General Assembly of the Organization of American States. In March 1999, Canada sponsored a meeting in Costa Rica with government representatives and "civic society"; 30 coun-

tries sent representatives, mostly at the level of deputy foreign minister.

The Canadians, however, are not meeting with an enthusiastic response to their Foreign Ministers Dialogue proposal, Roy reported, from either the Ibero-Americans or the U.S. administration. The latter is "quite reluctant," skeptical, but willing to give Canada a chance to raise it, he said.

Election campaigning takes off in Indonesia

EIR has received a first-hand report from Jakarta of the opening of the legislative election campaign in Indonesia's capital on May 19. Our source says that nearly every street in the sprawling city of 12 million people is bedecked with the banners and posters of the 48 parties that met registration criteria for the June 7 general elections. In Jakarta, as in every other city in Indonesia—the fourth most populous country in the world, with the largest Islamic constituency—major boulevards were lined with people, along a route where campaign trucks for all the parties paraded.

CNN focussed coverage on incidents against the ruling Golkar party, in which a mob, likely whipped up by provocateurs, attacked Golkar campaign trucks, and burned its banners and posters. Aside from this incident (which included Golkar opponents refusing candies handed out by party activists, and shouting "Golkar is corrupt!"), he describes the festive atmosphere as being like a hundred 4th of July parades going on at once. Hundreds of thousands of people gather in small groups from the neighborhoods, sporting their party's colors and symbols. All are eagerly, if somewhat anxiously, awaiting the outcome of the election.

Some 200 floats crisscrossed the city in five separate parades. Golkar's floats had to drop out of the parade after they were trashed by troublemakers. The color of Megawati Sukarnoputri's PDI-Struggle, red, was prominently visible in the sea of activity. The most serious violation of campaign rules appears to be that all parties had

POPE JOHN PAUL II and Macedonian Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski met in the Vatican on May 22. "With all my heart," said the Pope, with respect to the war over Kosovo, "I again call on all responsible leaders to stop the violence and commit themselves to an open and sincere dialogue, aimed at reaching a lasting peace and co-existence." He also thanked Macedonia for "trying, courageously and generously, to reduce the suffering of the refugees."

INDIA AND FRANCE held a joint naval training exercise on the high seas off Mumbai (formerly Bombay) on May 24 at the end of a five-day goodwill visit by the French vessel *Somme*. The exercise involved the *Somme* and a patrol vessel *Sukanya*, Rear Adm. Jean-Louis Battet, commander of French Maritime Forces in the Indian Ocean, told Indian reporters on May 19.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA established military ties with China, following Defense Minister Peter Waieng's visit to China, according to the *National Online* (May 13). This is the first time a P.N.G. defense minister has visited China, Waieng said, which helped the country expand "its ties among the international military community by befriending a member of the UN Security Council."

U.K. HOME SECRETARY Jack Straw has prepared a proposal to eliminate the right of many criminal defendants to elect a trial by jury, according to Agence France Presse (May 19). The proposal would prohibit those accused of crimes in middle-ranking categories from having their cases heard by juries, as is now their right; an estimated 22,000 persons per year would be affected, most of them non-whites.

GREAT BRITAIN and Iran have reestablished diplomatic relations, announced British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook on May 18. The new British ambassador is to be Attaché Nicholas Browne; the new Iranian ambassador will be Gholamreza Ansari.

more people riding the floats than allowed.

Meanwhile, the UN rejected Indonesia's request to move the vote on East Timor's status to Saturday, Aug. 7, from Sunday, Aug. 8, to facilitate voting by the Catholic majority in the province.

Italian court recognizes Mattei death was murder

Thirty-seven years after the death of Italian industrialist Enrico Mattei, a trial is taking place whose premise is that a bomb was responsible for the crash of Mattei's plane. Prosecutor Calia indicted Mauro Ronchi on May 14 in a Pavia court for making false statements, when he testified as an eyewitness during the original investigation. That inquest had cited only one witness, Ronchi, and concluded that the crash was an accident. What Calia discovered in 1994, was that Ronchi had originally stated that he saw the plane explode over Bescapè, near Milan. In fact, more than 30 corroborating witnesses had been ignored, prompting Calia to re-open the investigation, including examining post-mortem evidence from the three crash victims, and physical evidence from the plane.

Ronchi's trial will certainly not lead to the people who ordered Mattei's assassination, but it does establish juridically the truth that Mattei was murdered. Another probe, also ongoing in Pavia, is investigating who was behind having the bomb placed aboard Mattei's plane in Catania.

Calia plans to call 170 witnesses, among them former collaborators of Mattei who are working with *EIR*. According to press reports, Calia's opening statement was very aggressive, calling on Ronchi, 78, to come clean. "Poor old man," said the prosecutor, during a recess. "I am sorry for him, but he insists on lying."

Present in the courtroom were Mattei's grandchildren Rosangela and Angelo, and pilot Bertuzzi's and journalist McHale's sons.

Mattei, who headed the state hydrocarbon company, ENI, played a major role in industrializing Italy, and extending such de-

velopment into Africa, working closely with both the Catholic Church and U.S. President John Kennedy. A 1997 bestseller *La Grande Sfida (The Great Challenge)* by Benito LiVigni, compared Mattei to Lyndon LaRouche, because both challenged the power of the oligarchy by wielding economics as a moral force (see *EIR*, May 9 and Dec. 5, 1997). LiVigni, who had been a collaborator of Mattei's, reports on British Foreign Office documents showing that London considered Mattei a threat to their interests. Mattei was killed on the eve of a trip to the United States, where he was scheduled to meet with President Kennedy.

Australia may restore relations with N. Korea

South Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil made a request of Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Trade Minister Tim Fischer that Australia restore diplomatic ties with North Korea, in order to entice it back into the international community, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald* of May 17. Reportedly, South Korea believes that reducing North Korea's isolation could reduce any chances for a second Korean war. Fischer said that the request would be considered. "This could lead to some additional steps being taken short of opening an embassy," he said, but Canberra also stressed that such a gesture would depend on Pyongyang's "good behavior," especially in the area of missile production.

Australia has announced \$4 million in food aid for North Korea, and is also participating in a project to build two state-of-the-art nuclear reactors in North Korea, in exchange for Pyongyang's promise to dismantle a suspected nuclear weapons facility.

Meanwhile, President Clinton sent former Defense Secretary William Perry to Pyongyang on May 25-26. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told Congressional hearings on May 20 that "he will explore and assess in person the views of the senior North Korean officials. He will also consult with South Korean and Japanese leaders."