

National News

Australian intelligence officer arrested in U.S.

An officer for Australia's Defense Intelligence Organization (DIO) was arrested by the FBI at Washington-Dulles Airport on May 15 for selling U.S. intelligence documents. The officer, Jean-Philippe Wispelaere, who had worked for the DIO in Canberra, was charged in U.S. Federal court with trying to sell more than 700 highly classified American defense documents to an FBI agent. The agent was posing as a national from an unnamed country, whose embassy Wispelaere had first approached last February in Bangkok, offering to sell the documents. The country involved immediately contacted the United States, which set up an FBI sting. According to court records, Wispelaere received \$120,000 for the documents, which he delivered to the undercover FBI agent.

Wispelaere had access to the documents through the DIO, which "had obtained them under treaties with the U.S. that grant close allies access to American military secrets," according to news reports. The United States has reportedly cut off exactly these types of intelligence exchanges with Britain, in the aftermath of the NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. It is unknown if the Wispelaere case is related to the U.S.-U.K. rift over the war policy.

Clinton orders review of launch vehicle failures

On May 19, President Clinton asked Defense Secretary William Cohen to work with Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet and Administrator Dan Goldin of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to provide an interim report, within 90 days, on the "root cause" of the unusual number of failures of space vehicle launches. In a memorandum to Secretary Cohen, the President requested recommendations on "actions required to ensure our future access to space." He also said that his

science adviser, Dr. Neal Lane, would work closely on the report.

Over the past nine months, there have been six U.S. launches that ended either in the destruction of the vehicle or the placement of both military and civilian satellites in useless orbits. This represents a failure rate of more than 10%, which is approximately double the failure rate of most launch vehicles. The failures resulted in about \$3.5 billion in losses, \$3 billion of which is government flight hardware.

Lockheed Martin has already initiated its own internal investigation into the Titan IV and Athena failures, and Boeing is convening a team of government and industry experts to look into the Delta II failures. NASA has been conducting its own review, since it has science satellites scheduled to be launched on similar vehicles.

Since the mid-1980s, when responsibility for the expendable launch vehicles was turned over completely to the vehicles' private manufacturers, there has been less government (military and NASA) oversight over the technology.

States moving for death penalty moratoria

Pennsylvania Senate Bill 952, introduced May 10 and referred to the Judiciary Committee, would impose a two-year suspension of the death penalty and create a commission to study the current law and make recommendations for amendments. Should the measure pass, Pennsylvania would be the second state to vote up such a moratorium, which was originally called for in February 1997 by the American Bar Association. A moratorium passed the Illinois House, but failed in the Senate. Bills to legalize capital punishment were also recently defeated in the Massachusetts and Michigan legislatures.

On May 20, Nebraska became the first state to approve a two-year moratorium on executions. The unicameral Senate voted 27-21 to call for a study to determine if the state's death penalty law has been applied fairly with respect to whether race, economic status, or other issues played any part

in the imposition of death sentences. Gov. Mike Johanns (R), who supports the death penalty and opposes the moratorium, has not said yet whether he will veto it.

In a related development, Virginia Gov. Jim Gilmore (R) commuted the death sentence of Calvin Eugene Swann on May 12, only hours before he was to die. This is a first for Virginia, which is vying with Texas to become the leading "death penalty state." Gilmore, who supports the death penalty and is otherwise enmeshed in a major scandal involving prison labor, was forced to commute Swann's sentence after death penalty opponents proved that he was so mentally ill that he did not know what an execution was.

DeLay tied to Marianas slave labor haven

Global Survival Network, based in Washington, D.C., released the results on May 24 of an undercover investigation of labor conditions on the island of Saipan, a U.S. Pacific territory which is part of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (C.N.M.I.). The report and the undercover videotape released with it confirm allegations of sweatshop conditions in the C.N.M.I.'s garment industry, of underpayment and nonpayment of wages, and of forced prostitution and sex slavery.

In the videotape, investigator Stephen Galster posed as a New York garment buyer, with Willie Tan, the Hong Kong businessman who owns at least three of the garment factories which employ immigrant laborers enticed by offers of high U.S. wages. The allegations charge that these immigrants work in outrageous conditions, with little or no pay, and have no recourse to redress grievances.

Tan boasted to Galster of his relationship with House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Tex.), saying that DeLay assured him that "as long as we [Republicans] are in control, they [opponents of the sweatshop system] can't even see the light at the end of the tunnel." He added in broken English: "Tom become powerful this Congress, because Tom the one who basically . . . is the peacemaker. So guaranteed next two years, no

THE 'FLINT JOURNAL' in Michigan editorialized on May 11 that "NATO Must Make Amends with China." The editorial says that Clinton's apology "must be backed up with acts that leave no doubt of sincerity. . . . A more difficult but necessary response would be to investigate relentlessly how such an error came about, and to see that those responsible are penalized. Any lesser reaction . . . would be interpreted as callous and arrogant."

JIM HIGHTOWER, former Texas Agriculture Commissioner, blasted the economic boom myth in a local union publication in May. After pointing out that most workers, despite working two to four jobs, still can't make ends meet, Hightower polemicized: "Happy-face economic statistics are like earrings on a hog — they can't hide the ugliness."

JAMES CARVILLE, the irrepressible friend of the Clintons who advised the Israeli Labor Party election campaign, told reporters that his strategy was "just like the United States. You get out the Jewish vote." He also mused that Moses had wandered in the desert for 40 years, because he was using a CIA map.

GEN. ANTHONY ZINNI, the Commander of the U.S. Central Command, ran into *EIR* correspondent Hussein al-Nadeem, while sightseeing in Stockholm, Sweden. Nadeem briefed Zinni on the "LaRouche Doctrine," emphasizing that "only through a major economic cooperation program in the context of a new, global Marshall Plan can justice be made for the people in Iraq and the Balkans."

ALAN GREENSPAN, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, endorsed the fact that wages are being held down by "the surprising depth of worker job insecurity in the face of ever tightening labor markets," at the 35th Annual Conference on Bank Structure and Competition, hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago on May 6. creativity

problem. Now, it look like George Bush son will become next President. . . . Quite possibly. If we are Republican, we have no more problem again, so we are going to have six years." Later, Tan says that DeLay told him "if they elect me as Majority Whip, I make the schedule of the Congress, and I'm not going to put it on the schedule." DeLay was referring to legislation sponsored by Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) and backed by the Clinton administration, to impose Federal immigration and minimum wage standards on the Marianas. The islands are exempt from those Federal standards, which make it attractive to slavers.

There are many other areas where the government does have control, and we will work in those. . . . We will give no aid where there is no effective presence of control by the state."

Clinton tells Israel to dump nuclear arsenal

On April 22, President Clinton responded by letter to 35 members of Congress, who had sent him a query concerning the fate of Israeli nuclear engineer Mordechai Vanunu. Vanunu was kidnapped by the Mossad in Rome, secretly tried in Israel, and sentenced in 1986 to 18 years in prison, for revealing details about Israel's extensive nuclear weapons arsenal to the *London Times*. The letter was made public in the Jewish daily *Forward* on May 14. Clinton told the Congressmen: "I . . . share your concerns about the Israeli nuclear program. We have repeatedly urged Israel and other non-parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to adhere to the Treaty and accept comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards."

The unprecedented action by President Clinton certainly rattled some cages. Richard Perle, a former Defense Department official who has been linked to Israeli spy Jonathan Jay Pollard, called the letter "silly in every respect," and sniped, "Is Bill Clinton going to protect the Israelis the way he protected the Kosovars or the way he protected the Bosnians?" The Anti-Defamation League's Abe Foxman told *Forward*, "I can't believe the President would send such a letter. These are very sensitive issues. It is so judgmental. He comes to conclusions, about [Vanunu's] imprisonment, and the nuclear proliferation. I can't believe these are his words." Tom Neumann, the director of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), moaned, "It is very disturbing to me. It indicates a full-court press to get Israel from various different angles." Morton Klein, the head of the Zionist Organization of America, which backed Benjamin Netanyahu's reelection as Israeli Prime Minister, charged that Clinton was intervening "in the midst of an Israeli election campaign."

FARC wants U.S. to back crop substitution

A representative of White House anti-drug adviser Gen. Barry McCaffrey said that the United States will not approve any "crop substitution" plan run by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) narco-terrorists. Thomas Umberg, who was visiting Colombia on May 10, told Bogotá's *El Tiempo*: "We would first like to see their [the FARC's] good will, to commit to what they propose, abandoning the drug trade and eradicating it, but so far, this hasn't happened."

Umberg added, in what is clearly a departure from the State Department line, "It is clear that there is a connection between the guerrilla and the narcos. They themselves have admitted it. The best way to deal with the problem is destroying the link between the guerrilla and the drug trade, thereby eliminating an important source of income for the insurgency."

The United Nations is working on a plan with the Colombian government, for a crop substitution program in the so-called "demilitarized zone" which is under FARC control in the south. "Our experience with alternative development in Bolivia and Peru is that these programs can be effective as long as the government controls the zone, to be able to direct the development and make sure the benefits go to the appropriate people," said Umberg. "The government has no control over the demilitarized zone and cannot oversee it. That is why we don't support it.