

the soap opera “suicide” account contradicts much of the evidence, and therefore, represents a willful disinformation campaign. Many things about the crash do not yet add up, and will require careful analysis by teams of American and Egyptian experts. The suicide story, one source emphasized, makes no sense. Why was the relief pilot alone in the cockpit, if indeed he was?

The source emphasized that any sophisticated hijackers today know that the cockpit of a commercial jetliner is outfitted with at least four voice recorders and numerous data recorders. Anything that happens inside the cockpit, therefore, will almost certainly be known to investigators. However, anything occurring just outside the cockpit is lost to post-crash investigators. Did terrorists somehow seize control of the cockpit? Was one of the pilots of the plane compromised by terrorists’ threats or blackmail before the flight? None of these vital questions have yet been answered, and such questions will likely not be answered, purely on the basis of analysis of the technical data gathered from the crash site.

Sanction Britain for terrorism

One thing is clear: If evidence points toward a terrorist act, Britain’s ongoing targetting of Egypt must be considered the most likely source of the downing of Flight 990. The United States has a cooperative partnership with the Mubarak government in Egypt. Apart from U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and a handful of other British stooges inside the Clinton administration, there is no U.S. interest in such a terrorist attack being carried out against an important ally.

Israel’s Prime Minister Ehud Barak has developed a close partnership with President Mubarak, in pursuit of Mideast peace. Particularly since the death of Jordan’s King Hussein, the Barak-Mubarak collaboration has been an important feature of the effort to reach a final status agreement with the Palestinian Authority, and to pursue other avenues of regional peace.

Such a Middle East peace process is, however, harshly at odds with Britain’s geostrategic objectives.

Even as the probe continues into the crash of EgyptAir Flight 990, the recent British declaration of jihad against Russia presents, once again, an opportunity for President Clinton to take a bold step against the new international terrorism: Impose sanctions on Great Britain for harboring the world’s most violent terrorists. Such an action would win the instant support of all of the governments who have been hounding Britain to end its official policy of giving aid and comfort to the world’s leading killers. Russian officials have urged a strategic partnership between Washington and Moscow, to defeat the terrorist menace. Unless such a top-down approach is taken to the very real terrorist and irregular warfare threat posed by London, it is a virtual certainty that the weeks and months ushering in the new millennium will be bloody ones.

Wahid visit improves U.S.-Indonesia ties

by William Jones

The visit of Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid to Washington on Nov. 12, appears to have helped put U.S.-Indonesian relations back on track. During the period of turmoil, in which Indonesia, the world’s fourth-most-populous nation, was rocked by the international financial crisis, combined with an attempt by British Commonwealth forces to rip the country apart along ethnic lines, U.S.-Indonesian relations had become seriously frayed. In particular, U.S. military aid to Indonesia had been suspended over the situation in East Timor, pending a resolution of the crisis. The election of Abdurrahman Wahid as President on Oct. 20, however, appeared to herald a stabilization of the political crisis and an improvement in U.S.-Indonesian relations.

Relations appear set to improve, despite the fact that the “human rights” cabal in Madeleine Albright’s State Department had exerted enough pressure on the administration for it to urge Indonesia to abandon the highly successful system of economic development fostered under President Suharto. The horrendous policy coming from the U.S. State Department, combined with the disastrous effects of the international financial crisis on the Indonesian economy, resulted in the overthrow of President Suharto, and a relatively unstable political situation for his immediate successor, B.J. Habibie. The fomenting of a gaggle of “independence movements” in various parts of that vast nation by the Commonwealth forces, is now threatening to pull the world’s most populous Muslim nation apart at the seams.

Respect for Indonesia’s territorial integrity

While President Clinton stopped short of sending U.S. troops to East Timor, a former Portuguese colony which was the first enclave to “declare its independence” from Indonesia, the United States did cut aid to the Indonesian military. It is clear, however, that the President is also concerned that Indonesia not be carved into “micro-states,” apparently aware of the disastrous implications of such a development for the entire Pacific region.

At a photo opportunity prior to his meeting with President Wahid, President Clinton was asked whether he thought that the territorial integrity of Indonesia was more important than the “self-determination of the peoples.” The President re-

plied, "Well, I don't think it has to be an either-or thing. I said, at the time when Indonesia supported giving the East Timorese a vote, that I would support that, and that having given them the vote, that the vote had to be respected. On the other hand, we support the territorial integrity of Indonesia. And I think we have to acknowledge that it's quite a challenging task to preserve a democracy so widespread and so diverse. And I hope we can be somewhat helpful to the President dealing with this challenge."

President Wahid was cautiously optimistic. He told reporters that he had come to Washington "just to make sure that we are still great friends of the United States, that we are still in good touch with you. And I think that in the future, we will meet with you more than before. So also that you know, that although there is a shift in policy, it is not at the expense of the American-Indonesian relationship."

After the hour-long meeting, Wahid said, "We talked about many problems faced by Indonesia. The most important are what we will do in East Timor, and second, whether we will be able to maintain the fair treatment in the economy in the case of the banks."

The second issue involves the close contact between the banking system and the government. On the pretext that it represents "crony capitalism," the Indonesian government has been under pressure to eliminate some of the traditional government-business ties. "I have already given the order to IBRA, the Indonesia Bank Restructuring Agency, to ensure fair treatment and rule by law, and that they [the banks] should be independent of the government," Wahid told reporters.

Wahid said that he had told President Clinton that he was taking measures to allow those who fled East Timor during the turmoil there, to return. "We'll work very hard to ensure that the citizens from our side of Timor will go freely to their places," he said. "Now, we have around 4,000 sent back to Timor. Because of this, I have ordered the Air Force to prepare those people [for their return], not by land, but by air from Kupang to Dili."

Reviving the economy

Wahid also indicated that he would be taking steps to revitalize the hard-hit Indonesian economy. When asked about his naming Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew as his economic adviser, Wahid said, "I think his role is to monitor the situation and he will provide answers about how investment in Indonesia can be encouraged and how we should act in the economic field to ensure that more investment comes."

President Wahid, who has made a special effort to establish good relations with China and India, said that he would also encourage the overseas Chinese business people, who had fled the country in droves during the recent riots, to return. "I gave a lecture on the subject at our embassy before I was elected President," Wahid said. "I got promises from them that they will go back to Indonesia, because I explained to

them it now was the time to rebuild Indonesia, and that the next government — which is now the government — would ensure that this will happen. Because of this, I am confident that Chinese capital will go back to Indonesia."

During the visit, President Clinton indicated that military aid to Indonesia would eventually be reinstated. "We're going to talk about that, and about what kinds of things that we both can do, over a period of time, to strengthen our relationships, including the issue of military-to-military ties," he said.

However, President Wahid faces a number of serious hurdles. Aceh, a province in northern Sumatra, is being subjected to agitation for a referendum on independence. While expressing his willingness to cooperate ("They are our brothers as well," Wahid said), he urged a go-slow policy. "This morning I got visitors, students from Aceh who are here in the United States, explaining to me about the demonstrations in Aceh for the referendum," he told reporters. "So I told them I will come with a proposal. So we will talk about this as well. But the problem is now that we have to do that in stages. Because we have to confirm when this referendum will take place. The second thing is, who shall organize the referendum. The first thing is to ensure that the results will be fair, and this is not easy. I think we can resolve that in the next few months. So that's why they have to be patient. The thing cannot be done just in one night."

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