

International Intelligence

Italians Boycott Phony 'Reform' Referendums

Italian voters, listening to opposition politicians and especially elder statesman, former Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, boycotted a government-backed referendum on May 21. With only one-third of the voters casting ballots, the vote fell below the 50%-plus-1 threshold required for the election to be valid. The seven propositions on the ballot, with the backing of new Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, consisted of two anti-labor de-regulations, three judiciary reforms, and two election laws. The election reforms were aimed at abolishing the last remnants of the party system, i.e., finishing the dirty job started with the politically targetted "anti-corruption" Clean Hands prosecutions.

Opposition leader Silvio Berlusconi, a former Prime Minister, is now intensifying his call for early general elections.

Andreotti gave a "victory" interview published in *Corriere della Sera* on May 22, in which he argued forcefully for a return to nation-state policies, especially those inspired by the Camaldoli Code. The Code was the founding constitution of the Christian Democratic Party (DC), taking its name from the Camaldoli monastery. It was there that the DC's founders met secretly under Fascism, to plan a postwar reconstruction, combining the dirigism of Franklin Roosevelt and the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church. Andreotti said that, had the election reforms been passed, they would have established a system where, "in the end, candidates would be decided by the most powerful men."

Colombians Revolt over FARC 'Necklacing' Murder

Shortly before international governmental representatives prepared to meet for a May 29-30 conference on drug legalization convoked by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the narco-terrorist gang ordered the "necklacing" murder of farmer Elvia Cortés Gil. On May 15, six FARC soldiers burst into the house of Mrs.

Cortés Gil at 3:30 a.m. and demanded 150 million pesos in "revolutionary taxes," which she refused. In front of her husband and four children, she was dragged outside and made to kneel, while the FARC fastened a plastic tube filled with explosives around her neck, and left, threatening, "We'll be back later for the money." A military explosives expert worked on releasing her from the "necklace" for four hours, before the pressure-release bomb exploded, killing them both and seriously wounding five other soldiers.

Several farmers in Boyaca province had also refused to pay these "taxes," and unconfirmed reports are that Cortés Gil was a leader in the broader anti-terrorist resistance which is shaping up in central Colombia.

President Andrés Pastrana, who has disgusted his nation's citizens, as he has handed over larger and larger portions of the country to the narco-terrorist drug cartel in "peace negotiations," was compelled to postpone the international drug legalization conference. Only a week before, a delegation from Spain and Norway met with the FARC to prepare the conference, to be convened in the FARC-controlled "demilitarized zone." Government delegations were to include: the Vatican, France, Switzerland, Greece, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Finland, Austria, England, Denmark, Portugal, Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, the United States, Canada, and Japan.

Some 5,000 outraged Colombians attended Cortés's funeral in Chiquinquirá, where all businesses and schools shut down in the city of 50,000. While the FARC had recently made big noises about "millionaire farmers," Elvia Cortés owned seven cows, and grew some potatoes and corn. She and her husband were community leaders who were trying to bring water and sewage improvements to the area.

Bangkok 'Nation' Blasts Colonialist Ethnologists

The May 7 issue of Thailand's daily *The Nation* published a very insightful attack by Dr. Marja Leena Heikkilä, showing how the British and French ethnologists created

racial and ethnic divisions during the colonial era, which still serve the colonial powers.

She first discusses the unique character of Thailand's policy of assimilating Chinese, Indians, Persians, hill tribes, and others into the Thai melting pot, and ascribes the country's success to its freedom from direct colonization. She continues: "Not having had the scientifically minded French ethnographers of [the French Far East School] or the pedantic British colonial servants classifying, naming, and inventing ethnic groups, is indeed a blessing. Whenever the European colonial powers arrived, whether in Asia or Africa, they sooner or later started the process of dividing and categorizing the population into different religious or ethnic groups, thus creating the very concept of ethnic minorities. The reason behind this operation may have been pure *divide et impera* spirit." She points especially at Myanmar, where the British carefully nurtured each district tribal "culture," where "such ethnicity *per se* did not exist in the old Burmese kingdoms of Pagan, Pegu, Ara, and Mandalay."

Fiji Coup Comes Amid Economic Crisis

Gunmen stormed the Fijian Parliament on May 19, overthrowing the government of Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudry, in Fiji's third political coup in 13 years. The coup took place as the country's police commissioner and the head of the army were overseas. Coup leader, ethnic Fijian businessman George Speight, the son of an opposition Member of Parliament, issued a statement saying, "I would like to announce that Fiji is currently under civilian rule, with the assistance of armed forces. . . . This country of ours currently resides in my hands." Initially, the military did not respond to the coup, but on May 20, the military and police declared their loyalty to the elected government of Chaudry.

Economic factors seem to have contributed to the coup environment, including a threat to Fiji's textile industry, from loss of an Australian government credit facility. As

many as 8,000 export jobs were threatened in this Pacific island country of 812,000 people. This was the main economic problem facing Chaudry, a former union official who had won a stunning election victory last year. Chaudry had instituted popular reforms of a decidedly anti-International Monetary Fund nature: He had removed the duty on basic foods, slapped price controls on key consumer items, strictly regulated bank fees, and abolished the regressive consumption tax.

However, tension between the ethnic majority, which makes up 51% of the population, and the large Indian minority (44%), which includes Mahendra, has been growing. The farming leases in the crucial sugar industry are due to expire; these are 99-year leases held mostly by Indians, who lease from ethnic Fijians. Ethnic politicians and pressure groups have been calling for Indian farmers to be stripped of their rights and repatriated. Prime Minister Chaudry's efforts to find a compromise were reportedly blocked.

Serbian Opposition Appeals for Russian Help

The opposition to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic is appealing to Russia for help against the dictator's crackdown against them. Addressing a protest rally in Belgrade on May 19, Vuk Draskovic, chairman of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), the largest opposition group, said that soon, he and opposition leaders, such as Zoran Djindjic of the Democratic Party, would travel to Moscow, to seek Russian assistance in securing a peaceful transition in Serbia. "Whenever we Serbs were in difficult times, we asked Russia for help," Draskovic said. "Now we need Russia's help more than ever, and I believe that President Vladimir Putin and his government will do everything to prevent this terror."

As Draskovic was speaking, news wires reported a statement from the Russian Foreign Ministry, regarding the fact that Serbian police had beat protesters, and stormed and shut down publishing houses and radio stations. The statement voiced "se-

rious concern about the information coming from Belgrade and underline[d] that freedom of speech and a free press are an integral part of all democratic processes."

'Times' Exposes Blair Dirty Tricks vs. Press

The London *Sunday Times* of May 21 revealed that Prime Minister Tony Blair has a "New Labour" dirty tricks unit, deploying all of the British intelligence services against the media, to prevent unauthorized leaks. According to the *Times* investigative reporters, the head of the secret unit is Michael Pakenham, who chairs the Joint Intelligence Committee, which deploys MI5, MI6, and General Command Headquarters (GCHQ). "As JIC chief he is responsible for ensuring that Tony Blair and other ministers have advance warning of security threats. . . . But in reality it spends an increasing amount of its time discussing policy on gagging journalists. The committee meets on an ad hoc basis and has up to 20 members, mainly representatives of the intelligence services MI5 and MI6, the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and the Foreign Office."

One of the recent targets of the Pakenham secret committee, continues the report, is the Northern Ireland editor of the *Sunday Times*, Liam Clarke, who faces arrest by the Special Branch, for writing about a former member of a British Army Intelligence unit that engaged in illegal operations in Northern Ireland. The Army man goes by the pseudonym Martin Ingram, and he charged the Army unit with complicity in murders and their cover-ups. (As *EIR* has reported, former Army intelligence officer Colin Wallace, who was deployed in Northern Ireland in 1975, has charged that he was part of a disinformation operation that sabotaged peace efforts, and set up the ensuing 20-year bloodbath.)

The *Times*'s exposé also charged that top officials of MI6 sought to have ex-MI5 chief Dame Stella Rimington arrested under the Official Secrets Acts, for disclosures in a book that she proposed to write about her experiences as the first woman to ever head a British intelligence branch.

KASHMIRI TERRORIST groups Harkatul Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammad (Prophet Muhammad's Army), formed by Azhar Mahmood, have announced their merger. Azhar had been jailed in India, but early this year, was released in exchange for hostages seized on a hijacked Indian Airlines plane. He will head the new group.

30,000 ERITREAN refugees streamed into Sudan over three days, according to Gov. Ibrahim Mahmoud of the eastern district of Kasala. He called the situation "very tragic." "We have nothing to give these refugees. The situation is beyond our abilities. We need food and drugs," he told the May 20 daily *El Sudani el Dawli*.

JORDAN'S KING Abdullah II flew to Syria on May 21 for talks with Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, to discuss both the Middle East peace process, and an apparent "chill" in relations between their countries, supposedly related to Syria's suspended talks with Israel, which Jordan is attempting to re-initiate.

RICHARD BUTLER, the former UN weapons inspector in Iraq, has written a new book claiming that he had "credible, intelligence-based information" that former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov received payoffs from Saddam Hussein. Butler is an Australian with a British intelligence pedigree. Primakov told the *Times* that he was considering suing Butler over the false charges.

INDONESIA signed a cease-fire with the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), which Jakarta insists is *not* recognition of GAM, but a "humanitarian pause." A GAM spokesman claimed the deal included the withdrawal of Army troops and some sort of disarmament, which Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab contradicted: It is "purely an earnest effort to create peaceful conditions."