

International Intelligence

Royal Danish Opera may drop Wagner's music

Apparently disagreeing with Mark Twain's famous description of the music of Richard Wagner—that "it is not as bad as it sounds"—the Royal Danish Opera is considering dropping Wagner's music from its program, when it performs at Skamlingsbanken, an historic site in the border area between Denmark and Germany, on April 9.

The controversy arose over Wagner's Nazi proclivities. According to journalist Elisabeth Saugman, writing in the daily *Jyllands Posten* of March 24, "Wagner and his anti-Semitic ideas, which Hitler referred to, still creates controversy around the world."

Opera Vice-Director Klas Sjoebloom said, "It is certain that we will adjust our program at Skamlingsbanken, out of concern for the place's national sanctity. We can't just go into such an area and perform Wagner, so maybe we will eliminate him, even though his opera is also a part of the Royal Theater's repertoire next season." After visiting the site, he said, "The Royal Kapel, chorus, and soloists start the concert at Skamlingsbanken at 3 o'clock, when the famous bells have played one of the traditional Danish melodies, and then we can't just go directly to the overture to Wagner's *Meistersinger*."

Kevoorkian's policies come to Kazakstan

Moscow News reported in its March 8 edition that Dr. Mukhtir Aliyev, whose son is the son-in-law of Kazakstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, has proposed "dismantling" those sentenced to death, once they had been executed, for donor organs. Aliyev, director of the Kazakstan Scientific Center for Surgery, cited the alleged "practical experience" of neighboring China in this matter. Aliyev proposed that prisoners should be "fattened up"—given a high-protein diet—and kept especially healthy if they are selected as "suitable donors."

So far, President Nazarbayev has not reacted publicly to the proposal. However, it is the President who, according to the Con-

stitution, has the right to pardon those sentenced to die. Currently in Kazakstan, however, the number of those executed grows each year.

"If a man is condemned to die in any case," Aliyev declared in an interview with a *Moskovskiy Novosti* correspondent, "then why should he not help a person who could live thanks to transplanted organs? Especially since it will be very difficult for a moneybags to get authorization through the law enforcement agencies for transplantation."

This initiative, shades of America's Jack "Dr. Death" Kevoorkian, has outraged physicians and religious and public figures. "I do not understand how such an idea could enter the mind of a physician," said Prof. Toregeldy Shormanov, the president of the Academy of Prophylactic Medicine and the director of the Nutrition Institute, and a member of the Russian and Kazakstani Academies of Medical Sciences. "If this proposal goes through, and I do not rule out such a possibility, then the physicians of Kazakstan will have to renounce the Hippocratic Oath. To say that I am shocked by Academician Aliyev's proposal is to say nothing. Today I am terrified for myself, for my near and dear, for our entire society."

Bankers demand cuts in Ibero-American military

The Circle of Montevideo, meeting in Brasilia on March 16, called for cutting "excessive" military budgets in Ibero-America, in order to fund social programs. International Monetary Fund Managing Director Michel Camdessus joined the group of former and present Ibero-American Presidents, bankers, and "intellectuals" at the Circle's third annual meeting. Set up three years ago in Montevideo by Uruguayan President Julio María Sanguinetti, the group claims to be concerned about social policy.

At this year's meeting, as Camdessus elaborated, it was agreed that only by cutting "excessive" military budgets can funds be freed up for investment in health, education, and housing. This is the same fraudulent argument put out by former World Bank president Robert McNamara. No one has yet been able to explain why, with all the slashing of defense budgets in recent years, spending on

social programs hasn't gone up.

Camdessus underscored Sanguinetti's sentiment that "just like any other *unproductive* fiscal [expenditure]," military budgets "depress private investment or reduce public expenditures which are more productive." Panamanian President Pérez Balladares, whose own defense forces were dismantled by George Bush, seconded Camdessus. Among other attendees at the closed-door session were former Colombian President Belisario Betancur, Brazil's Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enrique Iglesias of the Inter-American Development Bank, and Fernando Zumbado of the UN Development Program for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Thatcherites host leader of Chechnya

Between March 9 and 13, the "President" of the breakaway Russian republic of Chechnya, Alsam Mashadov, was in London on a visit hosted by friends of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. The firm which handled the visit was Robertson & Associates, Thatcher's public relations firm. The official host was Lord McAlpine of West Green, chairman of the Referendum Movement, created and financed by the late Jimmy Goldsmith. Lord McAlpine was chief fundraiser of the Conservative Party during the Thatcher years and is a controller of the British-steered Chechen insurgency. Another host was Conservative member of Parliament Michael Howarth, who had been Thatcher's private parliamentary secretary when she was Prime Minister. Howarth has close ties to the British armaments industry. Another host was Imran Khan, the Pakistani cricket champion who is married to Jimmy Goldsmith's daughter.

During his visit, Mashadov had speaking engagements at the Royal Institute for International Affairs at Chatham House and the Royal United Services Institute. He also spoke before a group of British Islamic community leaders, organized by Imran Khan at the Royal Commonwealth Institute, and toured the British Parliament, Oxford University, and the London Stock Exchange. Mashadov, who doesn't enjoy any official diplomatic status, visited the Imperial War

PERFIDIOUS ALBION will only grant passports to former *white* colonials. Part of the preparation for the 1984 deal to return Hong Kong to China was a change of citizenship law in London, aimed at preventing Chinese from Hong Kong from moving to England on their British passports. Only the residents of Gibraltar and the Malvinas (Falklands) Islands, who are of European descent, retain full citizenship.

NELSON MANDELA told the BBC on March 29: "There is a lot that I miss in my life in prison, because there you could sit down, and stand away from yourself, and look at your track record and be able to discover the mistakes that were made." The previous week, Mandela toured Robben Island, where he had spent most of his 27 years behind bars, with the visiting President Clinton.

MONTENEGRO President Djukanovic distanced himself from the Serbian policy in Kosova, stating on March 28 that Montenegro supports a dialogue, on an equal basis and without any preconditions, for a peaceful solution to the Kosova Albanian issue. He denounced the Serbian actions in Kosova, adding that the Serbian military should withdraw and an international peace-keeping force be stationed there. Montenegro, like Macedonia, has a sizable Albanian minority.

BRITISH FOREIGN Secretary Robin Cook won high praise from *Al Quds al Arabi*, a newspaper linked to the London-based Palestinian terrorist group Hamas. In an editorial on March 18, headlined "Israeli Insolence and British Courage," the paper hailed Cook's "firm stance in confronting Israeli blackmail."

BRITISH TERRORIST controllers Lord Avery and Roger Godsiff, heads of the Friends of Kashmir in the House of Lords and House of Commons, respectively, organized a conference of "Kashmiri leaders" in London on March 29-31.

Museum, where he was saluted by the officers and men of the "honorable Artillery Company" and met the museum's chairman, Field Marshal Lord Bramall, the Lord Lieutenant of London. Last but not least, he dined with Margaret Thatcher, whose son is very much involved in oil deals in the Transcaucasus.

New Indian government on foreign policy offensive

An exchange of letters between India's new Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, confirms that efforts are under way to improve relations between the two neighboring countries. *The Hindu* reported from Islamabad on March 25. The two sides have been deadlocked over security issues relating to Kashmir, in particular.

The same newspaper reported on March 26 that Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party "may be setting the stage for a very important new phase in Sino-Indian relations." The BJP "may be uniquely positioned, say some diplomatic observers, to bury the ghost of 1962 and significantly reorder the relationship between the two largest nations of the world."

Indian President K.R. Narayanan said in his address to the joint session of Parliament on March 25, that his government "will strive for Asian solidarity and enhanced regional cooperation." In its manifestos for the last two general elections, the BJP stressed the importance of promoting Asian solidarity.

The Hindu noted, "The BJP now may not be looking at Asian solidarity in the same anti-colonial terms as the founding fathers of the Indian Republic did." However, the BJP manifesto locates it in broader references to "regional and civilizational relationships."

"Taken together with the other elements in the BJP's foreign policy, the idea of 'Asian solidarity' may in essence imply a commitment to deepen and widen India's foreign policy interaction with the major Asian powers. It might also mark a new determination to expand India's global leverage, by solidifying cooperative relations with the other Asian power centers like

China, Japan, and the ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations]."

In recent decades, there has been little use for "Asian solidarity" among Asian nations. . . . In the recent years, it is only China that has once in a while suggested the importance of Asian solidarity." But now, this could change.

Cambodia's Khmer Rouge in disarray

Notorious Khmer Rouge leaders Ta Mok ("The Butcher") and Sorbonne-trained Khieu Samphan were reported fleeing northward toward the Thai border on March 26, with a feeble Pol Pot in tow, from their Anlong Veng headquarters, after three divisions declared their defection to the government in Phnom Penh and seized control of the encampment. "It's finished in Anlong Veng," Defense Minister Tea Banh told wire services. "There are no more hard-liners there. The defectors are ready to integrate with the government."

Army Chief of Operations Gen. Chea Saron said that 1,600 Khmer Rouge fighters and about 3,000 civilians in the Anlong Veng area had defected to the government since March 24. Government troops were not involved in the clash at Anlong Veng, but were providing food and other supplies to encourage the defectors. The Khmer Rouge has been in the process of disintegrating especially since 1996, when Second Prime Minister Hun Sen, with the support of the government, secured the defection of former Khmer Rouge Foreign Minister Ieng Sary.

This latest announcement comes one week after King Norodom Sihanouk pardoned his son and former First Prime Minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, for crimes related to the latter's collusion with the Khmer Rouge hard-liners in an aborted coup attempt last July. The King's pardon clears the way for Ranariddh to return from self-imposed exile to take part in UN-sponsored elections in July. The latest defections from the Khmer Rouge further undercut destabilizing factors going into those elections, which are the precondition for resumption of foreign aid.