

International Intelligence

Will Germany's CDU commit suicide?

In response to a proposal by the Green Party of Germany to raise the price of gasoline to 5 deutschemarks per liter (close to \$10 per gallon), the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has countered with its own proposal: to raise the price to DM 4.60 per liter, or about \$9.50! The Greens want to raise gas prices to reduce greenhouse gases that cause so-called global warming.

This continues the policy the CDU has pursued while in power for over a decade, of pragmatically co-opting the environmentalist policies of the Greens. The Bavarian sister party of the CDU, the Christian Social Union, has threatened a split with the CDU over the issue. In this atmosphere, a CSU member of parliament has submitted a written inquiry to the government concerning the role of the Sun in climate change.

Zapatista supporters deported from Chiapas

Twelve foreigners running an "autonomous town" for the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) were deported from Chiapas by the Mexican government on April 12. They were arrested, put on a bus to Mexico City, and then on planes out of the country, after Chiapas state officials witnessed them leading an "autonomous town council" meeting the day before. Eight Mexicans were arrested also. The foreign group includes three Americans, two Canadian, four Spaniards, two Belgians, and one German.

The town, Taniperlas, located near the Guatemalan border in Ocosingo, a Zapatista base of operations, had been declared by the EZLN to be an "autonomous" municipality, rejecting Mexican government authority. The Zapatistas have established 32 such "autonomous towns" in Chiapas, so the press asked the Government Secretariat official, Miguel Covian, who announced the deportations last night: Is the Mexican government going to re-establish state control over the other 31 of them? His answer: "No determination has been made in that respect, because that is a decision for the state of Chiapas."

Six of the foreigners were operating in the town of Taniperlas under the cover of being "human rights observers" for the Fray Bartolome de las Casas Center, run by Bishop Samuel Ruiz. While Ruiz's outfit claims that its people, like the others, were merely there to "witness" the creation of the new "autonomous town council," the press has published pictures of them making banners for the Zapatista operation.

The 12 were the first to be expelled from Chiapas under Article 33 of the Mexican Constitution, which empowers the President to order the expulsion of any foreigner caught participating in politics. As a Government Secretariat spokesman explained: "They not only interfered in our political affairs; they tried to exercise political authority."

Krueger reports slaughter of Hutus inside Rwanda

In an interview with Kathy Lewis of the *Dallas Morning News* published on March 30, U.S. Ambassador to Botswana Robert Krueger exposed the genocide perpetrated by British-backed warlord Paul Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) against Hutus in Rwanda in 1994, and implied that mass murder was carried out in eastern Zaire in 1996-97 by the same forces. Krueger was formerly the U.S. ambassador to Burundi.

Up to now, *EIR* has been the only source that has published the story of the genocide inside Rwanda after summer 1994 by the RPF.

Krueger does not contest the myth that only the Rwandan Army of murdered President Juvenal Habyarimana was responsible for the slaughter of Tutsis and Hutus in spring-summer of 1994. However, he then reports that the Tutsis carried out a counterslaughter of revenge.

As Lewis writes, "[Krueger] said Paul Kagame and his 'Rwanda Patriotic Force' came in and drove out the Hutu army that was responsible for much of this slaughter. The Tutsis then went back, but revenge is an extremely virulent disease in Central Africa. And then began the counterslaughter of Hutus by the Tutsis in Rwanda, including the RPF forces.

"I visited countless refugee camps—every couple of weeks or so—these would be then Hutu refugees coming from Rwanda into Burundi. . . .

"They were all afraid to go home. . . . Some of them would go back and those who would go back either would never return, meaning they were killed, or some who did return would come back with stories of others, Hutus being slaughtered in their villages.

"You would have asked them when they would go back and they would tend to say, when the RPF is gone. A vast majority of these people are women and children. None in Burundi were engaged in guerrilla fighting. There were Tutsi Burundian armies in charge of all these camps. So I have no reason to believe that the unanimous statements of these people were false.' "

Palestinian Authority shuts down Reuters

The Palestinian Authority's Police department shut down the Reuters office in Gaza on April 10, and announced that the British news agency would remain closed for the next three months, the *Jerusalem Post* reported on April 12. Simultaneously, the police demanded that all Reuters reporters in Gaza henceforth sign a statement committing themselves to be "precise in their work, and determine the truth of the news."

The stated basis for the closure, was Reuters' carrying an inflammatory interview with Hamas operative Awad Awadallah the week before, threatening that Hamas "would bring sorrow into every Israeli home." Awadallah's brother, Imad, reportedly confessed on April 11 that he had been one of the assassins of Hamas military commander Mohieddin Sharif, in an internal Hamas war. Awad Awadallah said the confession was a fraud, and Israel was responsible for the murder.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's communications director, David Bar-Illan, far from being upset at the accusation that Israel had murdered Sharif, attacked the PA, telling the *Post* that the Palestinian Authority "seems to be interested in proving that it has no desire to be a democracy."

POPE JOHN PAUL II will conduct a day-long fast on April 25, in support of famine victims in North Korea. The fast was organized by an international charity group in South Korea headed by the Roman Catholic cardinal of Seoul.

THE EGYPTIAN Department of Antiquities has announced the discovery of a 9,000-year-old settlement at Nabta Playa, in southern Egypt. So far, 18 villages have been excavated by an American archeological team. There are indications of cattle raising, as well as pottery production. The site is one of the world's oldest settlements.

THE TERRORIST group "November 17," which killed the CIA station chief in Athens in 1975, is now suspected of having launched the anti-tank rocket that hit a Citibank branch in Athens on April 8. It caused extensive damage, though no injuries. The deputy head of the Greek police, Yiannis Giorgiopoulos, declared that "all evidence points to November 17." The attack against the bank is the latest in a series of bombings against foreign companies in Athens.

MYANMAR has invited Thailand to put an end to border incursions by rival ethnic Karenni armed forces. The attacks, particularly on Karenni refugee camps on the Thai side of the border, have led Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai to threaten military retaliation. The Thai refugee camps are largely occupied by family and supporters of the Karen National Union, which has been in a state of revolt against the Myanmar government for 50 years.

PORTUGUESE Prime Minister Antonio Guterres announced on April 5 that his government would give \$6 million over three years to non-governmental organizations in its former colony, East Timor, "which did not have close ties to the Suharto government" of Indonesia. The move is seen as an attempt to destabilize the government of Indonesia, which has sovereignty over East Timor.

Thailand, Britain in 'strategic partnership'

British Prime Minister Tony Blair turned on the charm for Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, as shown by statements made by Thai Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan on April 4. The two leaders proclaimed a "special relationship" going into the 21st century, during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) in London, according to the London-based publication *The Nation* on April 5.

Surin took credit for suggesting the idea to British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, motivating it by saying that the two countries had more in common than differences between them, notably a long history of royalty and parliamentary democracy. Blair said he liked the idea: "Let's work on it," he told Surin. Surin and Robin signed the Thai-U.K. Bilateral Action Agenda on April 3.

Among the initiatives to follow, a British expert on privatization will be posted to the British Embassy in Bangkok to advise on privatization of public services and utilities. Blair expressed keen interest in providing educational opportunities, pointing out that three Thai premiers were British-educated: Seni and Kukrit Pramoj, and Anand Panyarachun—the latter having played the crucial role in setting up the Thai bubble economy.

Jordan's Shubeilat released on bail

Laith Shubeilat, the leader of the Jordanian opposition, was released on bail on April 15, following a ruling in his favor by the appeals court. His trial is continuing.

Shubeilat was arrested on Feb. 20, after having delivered a sermon in the city of Ma'an, south of Amman. Following his arrest, about 100 people staged a demonstration; security forces intervened, and one man was killed. Shubeilat was accused of having incited the unauthorized demonstration.

Reached by phone at his Amman home after his release, Shubeilat stressed that the entire case is a farce. He noted that it was rather absurd to hold him in custody, practi-

cally in isolation, for a small felony, which carries a maximum sentence of four months, or a fine. As for the trial, on which a total press blackout has been ordered in Jordan, witnesses who had been called by the prosecution apparently argued in Shubeilat's favor, as they testified that Shubeilat had explicitly called for "non-violent" actions and warned against violence. He was arrested 18 hours before any demonstrations broke out in Ma'an. Furthermore, the Ma'an elders had tried to convince the police not to intervene, but to no avail, and that led to clashes and one death.

His arrest and trial have only enhanced Shubeilat's stature among the population.

UN envoy appeals to Afghanistan's factions

Lakhdar Brahimi, the special envoy of the UN Secretary General, is appealing to the factions within Afghanistan, and especially to the neighboring countries, to mobilize the political will to put an end to the war in Afghanistan, according to a report in the Iranian newspaper *Ettela'at* on April 16.

In an interview with the Iranian news agency IRNA, Brahimi pointed to the self-interest of neighboring countries in seeking peace: The Uzbeks see problems in their own country which originate in Afghanistan; the Turkmen cannot build their pipeline due to the war; Pakistan has 3 million drug addicts and 1 million guns in Karachi, as an indirect result of the war; and so forth. Uppermost in Brahimi's remarks, was the consideration that Afghanistan has become the source of production and smuggling of narcotics, which he called "an international menace."

Brahimi said that the northern Afghan factions, as well as the insurgent Taliban, had designated representatives for talks, and now it is a question of whether these will take place or not. He emphasized the key role to be played by Iran and Pakistan, and highlighted the improvement in Saudi-Iranian relations, as a source of hope for progress on the Afghan track. It is known that Saudi Arabia has been supporting the Taliban. A change in the Saudis' stance could force the Taliban to come to terms with the other powers.