

International Intelligence

House of Windsor sends documents to the shredder

The *Sunday Times* of London reported on June 22 that much of the personal correspondence of the Queen Mother has been destroyed, under orders from her younger daughter, Princess Margaret. Such correspondence is usually not destroyed, and is kept at the royal archives. The letters destroyed date from the last ten years. The newspaper points out that these were not simply thank-you notes, but substantive correspondence, and that the last ten years has been the most controversial for the royal family.

Although details of what was destroyed are not given, it is known that the Queen Mother corresponded with Princess Diana, whose grandmother, Lady Ruth Fermoy, was the Queen Mother's closest friend of until Lady Fermoy's death in 1993.

Among others with whom the Queen Mother corresponded were Sir Fitzroy Maclean, the Balkan expert; Lord Runcie; Lord Coggan; Lord and Lady Callaghan; and Lord and Lady Carrington.

As reported in Kitty Kelley's 1997 book *The Royals*, the Queen Mother, 97, has long been the custodian of secret family documents, including those pertaining to the House of Windsor's pro-Nazi proclivities both before and during World War II. (See Scott Thompson, "The Immorality of the House of Windsor," *EIR*, Nov. 28, 1997.)

Trial begins for mayor of Tehran

Tehran Mayor Gholamhossein Karbaschi has gone on trial in Iran's capital city, on charges of embezzlement, fraud, and mismanagement of funds. According to wire reports, Karbaschi has been very aggressive in defending himself, and lashed out at the judge, accusing him of improper questioning.

Informed observers expect that Karbaschi will be found guilty, but that the sentence (maximum ten years, a fine, and a ban

on public activities) may be mitigated. President Mohammed Seyyed Khatami has emphasized the importance of treating all citizens as equals before the law, to ensure the rule of law. As mayor, Karbaschi had reportedly granted small bonuses to those of his associates who were particularly efficient in implementing his plans for mass housing units, reorganizing city infrastructure and services, and building parks and recreation facilities for youth.

Karbaschi was arrested and detained in April, and released on bail following the intervention of the supreme authority in Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei. Karbaschi is a leading member of the Rafsanjani-Khatami political current associated with reconstruction and political reform.

Experts report effects of sanctions against Iraq

On June 12, Peter Pellet, a professor in the Department of Nutrition at the University of Massachusetts, presented evidence on the effects of the sanctions imposed on Iraq, starting with its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. He spoke at a panel discussion at the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C.

Pellet has long experience in Iraq from the mid-1960s through 1989, and has served on three UN Food and Agriculture Organization missions to Iraq since the Gulf War, the most recent in 1997. He reported that random surveys conducted on all three missions showed severe deficits in children—measured for weight for age, height for age, and weight for height—as a result of sustained undernourishment; in 1989, by contrast, the nutritional profile for children in Iraq was very close to international standards. Five times the number of adults now show signs of severe undernourishment than in Tunisia, which has a nutritional profile similar to that of the pre-Gulf War Iraqi population.

Pellet's conclusions were backed up by Raymond Janssens, head of the Middle East-North Africa desk at Unicef. Aside from reporting on increased infant, under-five, and maternal mortality rates, he

stressed that the nutritional effects of the sanctions come not only from insufficient food, but also from the totality of the destruction of the economic infrastructure; he particularly pointed to that related to public health, such as water supply, sanitation, and sewage disposal, and electricity availability, all of which play an important role in preventing the spread of infectious diseases and the ability to combat them. He reported that only 50% of people in rural areas have access to safe drinking water. The incidence of typhoid, a waterborne disease, has increased from 2,000 cases in 1991 to 27,000 cases in 1997.

In 1990, Iraq had achieved universal primary education. Now, 20% of six-year-old children don't even enter school, and there has been a general deterioration of education in the country.

Judge's sacking reopens Robert Maxwell mystery

The Spanish judge who ruled that the death of British media magnate and intelligence agent Robert Maxwell on Nov. 5, 1991 was an accident, has been fired by the Spanish government because of mental illness, the London *Guardian* reported on June 20. Judge Isabel Oliva had been put on trial twice and investigated for incompetence. Spain's highest judicial authority declared her unfit to serve on the bench because of "permanent incapacity."

Maxwell ostensibly drowned after falling off his yacht, which was in Spanish territorial waters. The investigation was handled incompetently and Oliva declared his death an accident. Her ruling had two consequences. By not declaring it a suicide, Maxwell's life insurance was paid out. And, by not declaring it murder, a possible trail to British intelligence or other intelligence authorities was neatly covered up. Maxwell was known to have been an intelligence operative working variously for the British, Israeli, and Soviet services. The collapse of his \$3 billion media empire has yet to be fully explained. It is believed that he had strong ties to the Russian mafia.

THE ISRAELI government has agreed to allow Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin to return to Gaza, following a two-week fundraising trip to the Persian Gulf. The sheikh reportedly raised tens of millions of dollars for his terrorist group. The London *Daily Telegraph* chuckles that since Yassin's release from prison, Hamas has become a "state within a state" in the territory controlled by Yasser Arafat.

THE KOSOVA Liberation Army, a guerrilla group, called on June 20 for a "general mobilization" of Kosovars and "a decisive confrontation" with Serbia. On June 19, Ibrahim Rugova, a leader of a peaceful political movement for Kosovo's independence, expressed his concern at the guerrillas' activities for the first time, saying that the group should be brought "under control" of ethnic Albanian political groups.

INDONESIAN President B.J. Habibie pledged on June 20 to free imprisoned Fretilin rebel leader José Xanana Gusmao, if the world recognizes East Timor as "an integral part of Indonesia." Former colonial ruler Portugal immediately rejected the offer, as did Nobel Prize laureate, Fretilin separatist leader José Ramos Horta.

VIETNAM has declared that India, as a nuclear power, will contribute toward global and regional stability. The Vietnamese leadership told visiting Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Vasundhara Raje that it fully understood New Delhi's decision in going ahead with the tests.

ERITREA has called for an international peacekeeping force to come into the territory disputed by it and Ethiopia, Yaman Gebre Meske, adviser to Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki, said on June 14. The call for a peacekeeping force is in line with demands for such a force to intervene at various points in East Africa, coming from Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni.

The *Guardian* expects that calls for reopening the investigation could be made following this development.

Shortly before Maxwell's death, in 1991 a book was written by Seymour Hersh, titled *The Samson Option, Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy*, which charged that Maxwell had conspired with the Israeli Mossad to kidnap and silence Mordechai Vanunu, an Israeli engineer employed at the super-secret Dimona nuclear weapons plant in the Negev Desert. Vanunu had appeared in London in 1986, offering to "tell all" about the Israeli nuclear weapons program. When Maxwell's died, there was speculation that his death might have had something to do with this affair. (See Jeffrey Steinberg, "Exposé of Israeli Nuclear Arsenal Raises Urgent U.S. Policy Questions," *EIR*, Dec. 6, 1991.)

Will 'Indonesia crisis' come to Kuwait?

Kuwait may be headed for a crisis like that which destabilized Indonesia, according to an article in the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on June 9, by Cairo-based correspondent Wolfgang Koehler. Reviewing the debate in the Middle East and Persian Gulf, around the implications of the Indonesia crisis for the region's autocratic leaders, Koehler wrote that even Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is trying to assure his people that the economic situation of the country will remain stable.

Koehler pointed to the oil-rich Gulf countries as being vulnerable, given the economic crisis they are being hit with because of the falling price of oil. He cited the Deputy Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheik Sabah al Ahmad al Sabah, who warned that Indonesian-style events could hit Kuwait if the government does not act to reverse the revenue collapse and consequent budget deficits. The Iranian news service IRNA reported on June 15, that a conflict had broken out between the Kuwait parliament and the government. The parliament is demanding that the Interior Minister face questioning, regarding his apparent inability to fight crime and drug

abuse. The report says that the parliament could be dissolved and new elections could be held within two months. IRNA also noted rumors that the United States had intervened, to prevent escalation of the crisis, something which the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister flatly denied.

Saudi Arabia is also being hit hard by the oil price collapse. Both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait paid out billions of dollars during the Persian Gulf War, and are still being prevailed upon to finance the presence of U.S. troops in the region. As a result of the squeeze, inhabitants of the sheikhdoms, who are accustomed to subsidized medicine, housing, and a tax-free existence, are now being subjected to austerity measures.

Did Israel explode a nuclear bomb?

Israel's Deputy Defense Minister Silvan Shalom was asked in the Israeli Knesset (parliament) whether Israel had detonated a nuclear device in Eilat Bay, the newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported on June 18. The question was asked by Labor Party Knesset member Rafi Elul, who claimed that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had reported that such a blast took place on May 28, causing an earthquake.

Shalom at first refused to answer the question, then later issued a denial. He said, "Elul's statement is groundless and completely lacking a factual basis. Israel is a signatory of the International Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. That is a commitment Israel upholds, and it calls on other countries to join the Treaty."

An Arab Israeli source told *EIR* that the origin of the report is an Egyptian professor who claims that this was not the first such test, and that the IAEA or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization, both based in Vienna, have been investigating the allegations. The source says that the Egyptian government has taken up the issue, and will bring it up for discussion at the July 22 meeting of the Arab League.

A spokesman for the IAEA, contacted by *EIR*, denied the report.