

International Intelligence

Khmer Rouge defense may call Kissinger, Thatcher

Cambodian defense lawyer Benson Samay held a press conference on Dec. 27, where he said that he will call on former world leaders to testify, if his client, former Khmer Rouge military leader Ta Mok ("The Butcher"), is charged with genocide. According to wire reports, Samay named Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Mikhail Gorbachov, and former UN Secretaries General Javier Pérez de Cuellar and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, as people whom he might subpoena. Reports from Cambodia quote Samay as topping the list with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. The most glaring omission, however, is her mentor, Zbigniew Brzezinski.

Leading governments and the UN continued to recognize the Khmer Rouge as a legitimate participant in Cambodia's political life up to the first UN-sponsored national election in 1993, when the Khmer Rouge chose to renew the war. Prime Minister Hun Sen has repeatedly made the point that neither the UN nor leading governments recognized Cambodia's prosecution of Khmer Rouge leaders in 1979, nor was the word "genocide" allowed to appear in the Paris Peace agreement of 1991.

On Dec. 15, CBS News "60 Minutes" ran a segment on possible trials of Khmer Rouge leaders, for which correspondent Bob Simon interviewed both Prime Minister Hun Sen and U.S. State Department Ambassador at Large for War Crimes David John Scheffer, asking them both whether former U.S. officials should testify. Speaking to Scheffer, Simon repeated what Prime Minister Hun Sen had told him: "If we talk about the crime committed in Cambodia, so anyone who is involved in it, it would also include then, Nixon and Kissinger, too." Scheffer retorted: "Well, that's not really for him to determine. The actions that we took at that time [the illegal bombing, which killed up to 500,000 Cambodians] had some military necessity associated with them. . . . I think it's honorable and it's right

for the United States to still seek justice for what occurred to more than 1.5 million Cambodian victims during the late 1970s. And if we do so being subjected to criticism of hypocrisy, or what have you, frankly, at the end of the day, *I personally don't care, because what we are doing is the right thing at this time.*"

Iran's Khatami sends New Year message to Pope

Iranian President Mohammed Sayyed Khatami sent a New Year's message to Pope John Paul II, to herald the year 2000, which the Holy Father has designated a Jubilee Year. "Humanity at the threshold of the 21st century is more than ever in need of peace, freedom, justice, and security. Overcoming of bloody and sad events of the 20th century is only possible through fundamental changes in thinking and political foundations, and changing the framework of existing international relations and replacing them with new concepts such as dialogue among civilizations and, cultures. I hope by adherence to the principles of co-existence, mutual respect, dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, we will witness strengthening of principles of peace, based on justice, friendship, and mutual respect for all human beings."

Venezuelans furious at Chávez over disaster

The opposition in Venezuela continues to slam President Hugo Chávez for his mishandling of the flooding and mudslides that claimed as many as 50,000 lives over Dec. 15-16. *Siete Dias*, the Sunday edition to the Caracas daily *El Nacional*, ran a two-part article on Jan. 2-3 by Jorge Olavarria, who had originally backed Chávez's drive to create a National Assembly and write a new Constitution. Olavarria has since broken with Chávez. He writes that "the vacuum created by the egoism and stupidity of those who should have put up an opposition, was filled by those who had the preconceived in-

attention of . . . installing a Constitutional model with democratic appearances and totalitarian realities." Creating new opposition parties, he concludes, "belongs to a regime of freedom, justice, and law. Resistance is what is appropriate" when such a regime no longer exists.

Olavarria raises the question now raging throughout Venezuela: Where was Chávez on the night of Dec. 15? There is strong evidence that he was at a resort island, celebrating his triumph in the referendum for a Jacobin rewrite of the Constitution (see last week's *EIR*). He only showed up in Caracas late on Dec. 16, to address the nation at 11 p.m. about the emergency, claiming that there were only 100 dead in the mudslides, when, in fact, tens of thousands had died.

French political class hit by 'Clean Hands'

The entire French political elite is being destabilized by "corruption" scandals, similar to the "Clean Hands" operation run by Britain against Italy's political parties in 1992-93. Although most of the legal cases have been simmering for several years, they are all striking at a time when France has ceased toeing the British line in Europe. Similar ice-box scandals are being reved up in Germany (see article, p. 52, and last week's issue, p. 38). Numerous figures are facing trial or sentencing, by judges who have run amok, launching investigations on the basis of anonymous allegations.

Communist Party head Robert Hue is being tried on charges of embezzlement and fake invoicing; the entire leadership of the small Christian Democratic centrist party faces sentencing for fraud and concealing money in Switzerland; the Socialist Party of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin is being hit by two major investigations: the alleged use, in the 1970s, of the students' social security fund MNEF, as a slush fund, and the Destrade case in southern France. In the Gaullist party (RPR) of President Jacques Chirac, several National Assembly deputies have been given jail terms. There are investigations, as well, into the fraud-ridden adminis-

ALBERTO FUJIMORI, the two-term President of Peru, announced on Dec. 27 that he would run for a third term in April's elections. Fujimori's popular backing stems from his unrelenting war against narco-terrorism, although his weak point is adherence to neo-liberal economics.

ISRAELI Industry and Trade Minister Ran Cohen welcomed the destruction of the shrine to Baruch Goldstein, the terrorist follower of Rabbi Meir Kahane who killed some 50 Muslims in a Hebron mosque in February 1994. Cohen, who sponsored a bill in the Knesset (Parliament) in 1998 to remove the shrine, said, "This is a very important day in the struggle over the moral image of Israeli society. . . . This monument symbolized everything that is anti-Jewish, anti-Israeli, and anti-human."

TURKMEN PRESIDENT Saparmurat Niyazov was granted unlimited powers, by a session of the Turkmen People's Forum on Dec. 27. One day earlier, the Majlis (Parliament) had declared Niyazov President for life. The parliamentarians, and members of his Turkmen Democratic Party, announced that no other political parties would be allowed until 2010.

MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD, Malaysia's Prime Minister, and his Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, were confirmed as the president and vice president of the UMNO party, by its Supreme Council on Jan. 4. The latter position had been empty since the ouster of then-Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in 1998.

AMPHETAMINE SEIZURES in the East Asia "Golden Triangle" heroin center have increased 50%, with 22 million amphetamine tablets seized in 1999. In December, 736,000 tablets were seized in Lashio, the heart of the Golden Triangle. Opium-trafficking separatist movements in Myanmar have diversified into amphetamines, which are easier to produce, and more profitable to smuggle.

tration in Paris, during Chirac's long tenure as mayor.

Both Jospin and Chirac are still riding a crest of popularity, but only because of a fictitious economic upswing, due to the selling of major French firms, mainly pension funds, to foreign—especially British and American—interests.

Bashir: Sudan needs peace at home, abroad

In his Dec. 31 speech to the nation on the eve of the anniversary of Sudan's independence, President Omar al-Bashir emphasized the importance of reconciliation and peace, both at home, and with the Arab world, Asia, Europe, and the United States. He stressed the significance of Egypt's role in mediating improved domestic relations, in the wake of his declaration of a state of emergency on Dec. 12.

Referring to the state of emergency, Bashir said that his decisions had "resulted in regional, international, and local transformations which all positively favor the country." He also listed measures that he was undertaking: "1. Strict implementation of the decisions of the Council of Ministers to alleviate tax burdens on agriculture. 2. The halting of illegal taxation collected by ministries or federal or state institutions from exports and goods in transit. 3. Strict measures at all levels of the federal government to ensure the immediate paying of wages, salaries, and pensions on time, and federal support should be used to ensure this. 4. Dealing justly with tax arrears and fees of those in the diaspora. 5. Strict measures to ensure immediate support for casualty departments of hospitals and delicate surgical operations. 6. The provision of a federal contribution to support and supply school books. 7. High priority in the new budget to social support in the areas of health, education, and drinking water in the states. 8. Coordination between relevant legal organs so as to achieve a balance between individual freedom and the achievement of a virtuous society."

The first three measures, in particular, had been the subject of controversy between

the President and then-Speaker of the Parliament Dr. Hasan al-Turabi. The two leaders were expected to formalize an agreement to set aside differences, under a reconciliation mediated by Qatar, according to a statement by Dr. Turabi printed in the *Al Rai al Yawm* newspaper on Jan. 3.

Australia's Fraser blasts NATO war

Former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser tore apart all the phony justifications for NATO's war in Kosovo, in a feature in Melbourne's *The Age* on Dec. 24. He called the Yugoslav war a "failure" and a "mistake," charging that NATO's actions were illegal, and were in fact in contravention of the very principles it pretended to enforce.

Fraser attacked the claim that the NATO action was a humanitarian war, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair's statement that it would set the pattern for NATO's actions for the next century. If that is the case, wrote Fraser, the humanitarian crisis should have diminished by the end of the war. "On that test, NATO's actions against Yugoslavia failed," he said, citing the refugee numbers (which climbed from 80,000 at the beginning of the war to over 1 million by the end), and that he personally witnessed the bombing of Serbian civilian factories, homes, hospitals, even refugee centers.

"Should NATO's condemnation of Serbia now be turned upon itself? And if that is so, who is to punish NATO? . . . Can war ever be fought for humanitarian purposes? War represents a failure of diplomacy and of reason, it encourages the basest instincts in the human race, and truth becomes the first casualty."

This denunciation comes from a very high-level figure in the Commonwealth: Fraser was Australian Prime Minister (1975-83), is a member of the Privy Council, and a Lloyd's of London Name. He is the chairman of the CARE Australia, three of whose employees—two Australians and one Serbian national—were imprisoned in Serbia during the NATO bombing.