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[by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.](#)

May 9, 2008

In my "Sir Cedric Cesspool's Empire," I emphasized the importance of the concept of "*insight*" as key for, among other things, understanding the mechanisms of evil which characterized the most notable writings of the leading Fabian Society figure H.G. Wells. Here, I return to that notion of insight for conceptualizing the root-causes of the present plunge of world civilization, into the prospect of an immediate new dark age of mankind, a prospect caused by the role of the same standpoint of Wells in his threatening the planet as a whole, with what has now become its currently accelerating plunge toward an abyss.

In real life, one never really knows what has been done, until one knows not only why and how it was done, but is capable of replicating the formation of the concept....

In-Depth articles from EIR, Vol. 35, No. 22

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Feature

- [Science in its Essence:](#)
[On the Subject of 'Insight'](#)

Lyndon LaRouche has recently emphasized the importance of the concept of 'insight' for understanding the mechanisms of evil which characterized the most notable writings of the leading Fabian Society figure H.G. Wells. Here, LaRouche returns 'to that notion of insight for conceptualizing the root-causes of the present plunge of world civilization, into the prospect of an immediate new dark age of mankind, a prospect caused by the role of the same standpoint of Wells in his threatening the planet as a whole, with what has now become its currently accelerating plunge toward an abyss.' The solution to this crisis lies in grasping the essence of what distinguishes the human being from the beasts.

Economics

- [The End of Free Trade:](#)
[Revolt Begins Against British Policy](#)
[by Helga Zepp-LaRouche](#)

Fourteen former political leaders in Europe have signed an open letter demanding a new set of rules for the international financial system,

and calling for a 'reconsideration' the globalized economic system. Russia and other nations are also signalling that they will defend themselves against the British Empire's freetrade policies.

- **Documentation:**

- 'Putin Vows, Russia Will Become a Food Exporter,'**

- 'Egypt's Mubarak Will Take Biofoolery to FAO,'**

- 'Kirchner: Argentina Could Feed 500 Million People'**

- **Australia's CEC Issues Call on Food Crisis**

- **Posturing in the Congress:**

- Ankle-Biting the Genocidalists**

- Hearings were held to investigate the soaring prices of oil and food, but the real cause of the problem was ignored: the collapse of the global financial system.

- **NFO Leader:**

- Stop Cartel Destruction Of U.S. National Food Capacity**

- An interview with **Frank Endres**.

- **U.S. Leaders: Double World Food Production!**

- **The Shock Front Has Hit:**

- Remittances Plunge; Millions Will Starve in Mexico**

- **Luege Tamargo:**

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International

- **New Russian Leaders Turn To Economic Security, Eurasia**

- Prime Minister Putin and other members of the new governing team in Russia made dramatic presentations which point up the potential for Russia's actions to help shift the world decisively in the direction of peace through development.

- **A Victory for Lebanon and For Peace in Southwest Asia**

- **LaRouche Cites Turkish Role in Diplomacy**

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- **We Need a Dialogue for Peace Based on Ethics and Justice**

- An interview with **Dr. Mohammed Reza Khatami**.

- **Anglo-Dutch Plan To Carve Up Sudan**

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National

- **Democratic Presidential Race:**

- 'It Ain't Over Yet'**

- Hillary Clinton's continued command of the popular vote and her stated intention to stay in the fight for the nomination, coupled with the fact that the reality of this global financial and economic catastrophe will be clear to all by the time of the Democratic Convention in August, indicates that those who are counting her out, may end up being wrong.

- **LaRouche:**

- Financial Crash Will Dominate Election**

- **Will Obama Reject the Pinochet Team?**

- **Beyond Appeasement:**

The Bush Family's Funding of Hitler

Excerpted from *George Bush: The Unauthorized Biography*, by **Anton Chaitkin** and **Webster Tarpley**.

- **Canadian Polar Bears Not 'Endangered'**
- **Casualty of War:**
Has NASA Lost Its Mind?

Interviews

- **Frank Endres**

California farmer Frank Endres is one of the 33 national board members of the National Farmers Organization (NFO). He farms in Tehama County in the northernmost part of the Sacramento Valley, raising cattle, producing barley for dairy feed, and growing other crops.

- **Dr. Mohammed Reza Khatami**

Dr. Khatami, a physician and Iranian political leader, is the brother of former President Mohammed Seyyed Khatami. He was elected as a Member of Parliament from Tehran (receiving the highest number of votes ever in the city), and was, for four years, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament. He helped to establish the Mosharekat Party, after his brother won the 1997 Presidential election.

In Memoriam

- **A Westphalian Life:**
Msgr. Elias El-Hayek

U.S. Economic/Financial News

- **Low Pa. Turnpike Bid Discredits Rohatyn's Strategy**

Low Pa. Turnpike Bid Discredits Rohatyn's Strategy

May 20 (EIRNS)—Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell today attempted to accept the unacceptable, a lower-than-low-ball \$12.8 billion private bid for a 75-year lease of the Pennsylvania Turnpike—one of the nation's busiest toll roads. The paltry "winning offer" proves that fascist banker Felix Rohatyn's model of "funding" public infrastructure by selling it off to private financiers, is dead. The Rohatyn model has enthralled the Democratic Party leadership of Speaker Nancy Pelosi, blocking Lyndon LaRouche's and other proposals for an "FDR" Federal capital budget for infrastructure.

The final low-ball bid was left on the table after the forced pullout of the British imperial bank that perfected the infrastructure privatization Ponzi scheme. Macquarie Bank's Infrastructure Group withdrew its bid on May 16, due to "financing problems." One of the Spanish companies in on the final bid has been denounced by the Spanish parliament for its slave-labor practices under the fascist regime of Generalissimo Francisco Franco.

The "winning" buyout bid by Spanish toll operator Abertis Infraestructuras, Citigroup's Citi Infrastructure Investors, and Australia's Babcock & Brown, came in a full 30% below the minimum Rendell said he needed, \$18 billion, to win support for his scheme. Even at \$18 billion, the plan would have resulted in the state's giving up 45% of turnpike revenues of

nearly \$33 billion over the 75 years. As it now stands, the "winning" bid would result in Pennsylvania giving up 61% of the 75-year revenues, to get up-front cash for the remainder—if the state legislature is foolish enough to accept the deal.

That is unlikely. Of the bid, State Rep. Joseph Markosek (D), chairman of the House Transportation Committee, said, "Not even close. It doesn't appear to be the premium the Commonwealth should demand to give up control of one of its most valuable assets." State Senate Majority Leader Dominic Pileggi (R) also indicated a thumbs-down, and challenged Rendell's claim that the state could invest its pitiful toll buyout and earn 12% interest on it, in the current financial crisis.

Global Economic News

- [Netherlands Considers Going Nuclear To 'Meet CO₂ Targets'](#)
- [Japanese Internal War Over British 'Locust' Invasion](#)
- [India Moves To Strengthen Economic Relations with Bhutan](#)
- [Indian Ambassador Blames Globalization for Food Shortages](#)

Netherlands Considers Going Nuclear To 'Meet CO₂ Targets'

May 19 (EIRNS)—One of the bastions of the anti-nuclear movement in Europe, The Netherlands, is seeking "to build nuclear power plants to reduce greenhouse gas emission." Economics Minister Maria van der Hoeven said she could not envisage a nuclear-free future if the government is to meet its CO₂ targets. "We are very gas dependent and we have to do something about it," she said. "In my opinion it will be very difficult to achieve a clean energy household in 2050 without nuclear energy." She is due to present a report to Parliament next month, outlining Dutch energy options, *Financial Times* reported.

The Netherlands has one working nuclear power plant of 485 MW PWR, built in 1973. It had been due to close in 2004, but the government extended its operational life until 2033. Nuclear power makes up less than 2% of the domestic electricity mix, compared with 78% in France. In 1981, a second reactor, of 54 MW capacity, was shut down when the government allowed anti-nuclear activists to make The Netherlands' energy policy decisions.

Even in the mid-1970s, it was expected that all new power stations built in The Netherlands after 1980 would be nuclear.

Japanese Internal War Over British 'Locust' Invasion

May 19 (EIRNS)—The Japanese government is reflecting the "two Japans" syndrome identified by Lyndon LaRouche, in trying to deal with the "financial locust" invasion from London. Two weeks ago, Japan denied a bid by the Children's Investment Fund (CIF), one of the most vicious of the London hedge funds, to increase their holding in a leading Japanese power company, J-Power, from 9.9% to 20%—an act fully in keeping with Japanese law. CIF didn't quit, however, and is threatening to take it to court. The Japanese government has threatened to punish CIF if it persists.

CIF, the company that earned the name "locust" for the hedge funds, is also campaigning internationally, threatening mass capital flight from Japan if it doesn't accept "market discipline." CIF director John Ho, in a *Wall Street Journal Asia* op-ed,

said that the company's real target is the historic cooperation between government and business, the "system of cross-shareholdings to fend off takeovers," and the practice of retired government officials working in the private sector. Ho writes: "Both practices had started to decline under former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Now they're back with a vengeance."

While the Japanese government of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda is aligning with Asia against the British assault, there are British-linked assets trying to change the Japanese laws, to "boost foreign direct investment." The London *Financial Times* gloats today that a "government advisory panel" called for "reforms to promote foreign takeovers of Japanese companies," and the proposals are "expected to become policy." This is typical *FT* spin; the newspaper admits, however, that there are "conflicting views within the government."

India Moves To Strengthen Economic Relations with Bhutan

May 20 (EIRNS)—As a part of India's move to engage its neighbors in closer economic ties, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, during his recent visit to Bhutan—a Himalayan nation with less than a million people, which was formerly a monarchy, and last month became the world's youngest democracy—pledged \$2.5 billion over the next five years, as part of a package of economic engagement with Bhutan, asserting that the "challenge before both countries is to evolve a model of sustainable development."

On May 17, India announced a significant move to broaden its energy basket, by pledging to import 10,000 MW of electricity by 2020 from Bhutan, a country with one of the world's largest hydropower potentials.

Referring to the proposed 30-km rail link between the border towns of Hashimara in West Bengal and Phuentsholing in Bhutan, Manmohan Singh said it would be called the Golden Jubilee Rail Line. Following his address, Singh dedicated the Tala project, built with India's assistance, to Bhutan, and laid the foundation of the 1,095-MW Punatsangchhu hydroelectric project.

Addressing Bhutan's newly elected national assembly, Singh pointed out that the Indian market offered vast opportunities for Bhutan's agriculture, industry, and service sectors. "We will work towards the further improvement of connectivity between our two countries so that our borders become the gateways for mutually beneficial undertakings," the prime minister said, before winding up his two-day visit to Thimpu, Bhutan's capital.

Indian Ambassador Blames Globalization for Food Shortages

May 22 (EIRNS)—Financial crisis, speculation, the biofuels obsession, and globalization are responsible for the world food crisis and rising oil prices—not increasing consumption in developing nations—Indian UN Ambassador Nirupam Sen said to a meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on the world food crisis, held in New York yesterday. Sen blamed the policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, which told countries to shift from food crops for the domestic population, to cash crops for export, with harmful results. The IMF/World Bank "remedy" to the crisis, to end nations' restrictions on food exports in the interest of market purism, is partly responsible for the crisis in the first place. He also stressed the effect of the crashing dollar and skyrocketing oil prices on food production and prices.

Sen attacked the "dismal" response of the international community to the crisis, including the promotion of biofuels to produce allegedly cheaper energy. In several developed countries, Sen said, land for food crops has shrunk, as it was lost to biofuels. This must be reversed, he said.

The financial crisis has fed directly into the food crisis, Sen said. "A consequence is that speculators, encouraged by the

dollar's relative decline, 'invest' in food futures to profit from the 'commodities super cycle.'" This may not have started the crisis, "but it makes it worse. Hopefully this bubble would also burst with at least a marginal beneficial effect on food prices," Sen said.

United States News Digest

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- [Grocers Wage Campaign Against Biofuels](#)
- [Daschle Stumps for Ethanol](#)
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Specter: Alternatives to Talking to Iran 'Very Bleak'

May 20 (EIRNS)—Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), during a hearing of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee today, called for a little courage, with respect to Iran, on the part of the U.S. government. At the outset of his questioning of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Specter took Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to task for announcing a policy of refusing to even talk to Iran unless it stops enriching uranium. "It seems to me that it is unrealistic to try to have discussions but to say to the opposite party, 'As a precondition to discussions we want the principal concession that we're after.'"

Specter noted that there were openings from Iran in 2001 and 2003, after the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, but "the record is pretty clear that we wasted an opportunity to respond to their initiatives." Rather than speculating, he said, it would make more sense to talk to the Iranians to try to find out what it is they need.

Gates did not disagree, especially as Specter was quoting to him from a speech Gates had given the previous week, on the need to figure out a way to develop some leverage and then talk with the Iranians. Gates instead said there is now a different government in Tehran, which is much more difficult to talk to than the previous, Khatami government was. Specter replied that "we've only got one government to deal with there, and they were receptive in 2003. I've had a chance to talk to the last three Iranian ambassadors to the UN, and I think there is an opportunity for dialogue, but I think we have to be a little courageous about it and take a chance, because the alternatives are very, very, very bleak."

Grocers Wage Campaign Against Biofuels

May 19 (EIRNS)—The Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) is beginning a feisty campaign that the *Biofuels Digest* calls an "anti-biofuels jihad." The biofuels industry is distraught, because the grocers aren't just testifying before Congress (as they did on May 6), but have hired a public relations firm to conduct a six-month campaign to "obliterate whatever intellectual justification might still exist for corn-based ethanol." A pro-biofuels blog wails that it is a "smear campaign" by

the GMA, whose companies employ some 14 million workers and generate more than \$2 trillion annually.

The *Biofuels Digest* contends that the GMA is "linked financially to John McCain and a Republican senatorial revolt on ethanol mandates." It claims that documents published in the Capitol Hill daily *Roll Call*, say the GMA "has launched a massive, global PR campaign, pledging to assemble a global center-left coalition including hiring trusted third-party experts to link ethanol mandates to global hunger, food industry job losses and inflation."

The PR firm, Glover Park, says it aims to convince lawmakers that food prices are a "now" issue that is fast reaching crisis proportions for American consumers.

The GMA began in March looking for a public relations firm, with the aim of building a "groundswell in support of freezing or reversing some provisions of the 2007 Energy Bill and for the elimination/reform of ethanol subsidies and import restrictions."

Daschle Stumps for Ethanol

May 20 (EIRNS)—Former Senate Minority Leader and Barack Obama supporter Tom Daschle defends the limitless expansion of ethanol production from corn, by claiming that it has no effect on either the cost of food, or contributing to the starvation of so-called Third World populations. In a sophisticated article, printed in the September/October 2007 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, entitled "Myth vs. Reality," The former South Dakota Senator, an Obama advisor, said, "I am convinced that just as the [food vs. fuel] crunch never came during the past 25 plus years, it will not come now." Daschle, who is a regular speaker for the ethanol producers' lobby, repeatedly makes the assertion, "corn is used mostly to feed animals, not people," willfully ignoring what most farmers know: People eat beef, chicken, and pork fed by corn. This is back-handed support for genocide.

Daschle's biofoolery was prompted by an earlier *Foreign Affairs* article written by C. Ford Runge and Benjamin Senauer, entitled, "How Biofuels Could Starve the Poor." They showed that in March 2007, corn futures were at their highest level in ten years, with the effect of corn based ethanol "starving the hungry."

Is Michael Bloomberg Losing It?

May 20 (EIRNS)—Stung by a series of setbacks to his cherished initiatives, and the LaRouche Political Action Committee's having damaged his run for the U.S. Presidency, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg is cracking up in full public view, lashing out at friend and foe alike.

In April, the New York State Assembly rejected Bloomberg's London-sponsored "congestion pricing" scheme (known in New York as the "congestion tax"), to charge cars \$8 per day for driving in Lower Manhattan during certain hours. In early May, the mayor's school reform plan, which would have allowed principals to hire and fire teaches based strictly on their students' test scores, regardless of the teacher's seniority or other qualifications, appears to have been blocked.

Bloomberg is not taking this well. The May 20 *New York Times* reports that "in recent days, ... another Michael Bloomberg has spilled into view: short tempered, scolding, even petulant." Bloomberg "is prone to outbursts of angry hyperbole, according to current and former associates, most of whom would speak only anonymously for fear of offending the mayor. They described a suddenly red-faced man who, in full view of others in the bullpen, the open workspace at City Hall, might scream, 'You're destroying my administration!' at an aide over a slip-up, or unleash a profanity-laced question about why he had botched a step in the project." The mayor began displaying such unbalanced behavior on Feb. 21, when, on a trip to Washington, D.C., he was confronted by LaRouche Youth Movement members on his support for the fascist public private

partnerships (PPP) plan to turn U.S. infrastructure over to financiers to loot. So destabilized was Bloomberg, that he failed to show up at the Feb. 24 press conference of the Building America's Future Coalition, on behalf of the PPP program, which he, himself, had called.

The May 19 neocon magazine *American Spectator*, recognizing that Bloomberg is damaged goods, weighs in with an article, "Bloom off the Rose," reporting on various scandals erupting in and around the mayor's office.

New Bloomberg Moves Are Another Assault on U.S. Media

May 19 (EIRNS)—As New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg contemplates the end of his term next year, he is considering what to do next.

Bloomberg News last week announced the signing of seasoned veteran editor Norman Pearlstine to the post of "chief content officer." Pearlstine has served as editor for *Time* magazine, for the (pre-Rupert-Murdoch) *Wall Street Journal*, and most recently as a "deal maker" for the Bush-connected Carlyle Corp. With this new talent, Bloomberg improve his image and expand his audience beyond the financial community. While the growth of Bloomberg's subscribers slowed, the number of employees has doubled since he was in office as mayor, now at 2,300 worldwide. Published reports say that Pearlstine's job will be to "energize" the reporters, and indications are that the immediate focus will be on expanding "Bloomberg TV" beyond its limited economic news reporting.

In a rousing video presentation at the time of the announcement, Bloomberg's staff witnessed an employee ripping a copy of the *New York Times* Business Section in half, to the tune of the Beatles' "Revolution."

Britain's Miliband in U.S., Decries Protectionism

May 19 (EIRNS)—While warning that a rise in protectionism could effect a disaster on the world economy on a par with the Iraq War, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband arrived in the United States this week. Not wanting to "criticize" any of the Presidential candidates, of course, he warned that Washington must remain committed to free trade "in a very fundamental way." The London *Financial Times* notes that Miliband will "meet with advisors to the Presidential rivals." Another item, that will be on the agenda, the article states, is the imperialist "league of democracies," which Miliband indicated that the Brits might join, if it were structured properly (democratically "welcoming all comers"). Without stating it directly, Miliband told the *Financial Times* that the U.S./U.K. "bridge" might be in jeopardy, since Britain was more and more looking more toward Paris and Berlin for foreign policy coordination.

Ibero-American News Digest

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- [Slave System Produces Brazil's Biofuels](#)
- [President Uribe, What About the 'Grasso Abrazo'?](#)
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Bloomberg Advisor Soderberg Threatens Argentina

May 23 (EIRNS)—Former UN Ambassador Nancy Soderberg, a foreign policy advisor to New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and co-chair of the vulture-funds' American Task Force Argentina (ATFA), visited Argentina last week to intervene on behalf of the financiers. Soderberg demanded that Argentine President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner pay the speculative vulture funds that are still holding \$20 billion in debt bonds on which Argentina defaulted in 2001.

Accompanied by ATFA co-chair Robert Shapiro, who is a founder of the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), Soderberg threatened that Argentina would face a new financial crisis, unless it showed proper respect for the financial predators she represents.

At a time when the local British Empire faction is using an agricultural producers' strike to destabilize or even topple the Fernández de Kirchner government, Soderberg charged that it was the President's policies that had caused the crisis in the first place. Had Argentina already paid off the vulture funds, she argued, it wouldn't be shut out of international capital markets, and wouldn't have to raise revenue by such other means, such as increasing taxes on soybean exports, which farmers are protesting. Moreover, according to this asset of Lazard Frères interests, Fernández is playing with fire by relying on Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez for loans, as Chávez is a "threat to democracy and stability in the region."

Soderberg demanded that Argentina commit suicide, by "entering fully the global international markets" and being "firmly rooted in the 21st-Century global economy," which is disintegrating.

Haiti: A Case Study in British Empire Genocide

May 21 (EIRNS)—The International Monetary Fund (IMF), and more recently the World Trade Organization (WTO), have destroyed Haiti's agriculture and starved its population, to the point that desperately hungry Haitians are reduced to eating "dirt cookies": biscuits made of clay, salt, and oil.

Haiti and the Caribbean are being subjected, once again, to the policies of enslavement and extermination that the British Empire practiced in its Caribbean colonies, exposed so graphically by American System economist Henry C. Carey, in his 1853 book *The Slave Trade, Domestic and Foreign*, and by German scientist Alexander von Humboldt, in his 1825 *The Island of Cuba*.

Up until the mid-1980s, when trade liberalization was introduced, Haiti was self-sufficient in rice production, its main staple. By the mid-1990s, the situation had changed dramatically, especially after the government signed a "structural adjustment" agreement with the IMF in 1994, which slashed the 35% tariff on rice imports to 3%, and privatized health care and other services. Haiti joined the WTO in 1996, and has continued to be victimized by it and the IMF, accumulating an unpayable foreign debt.

According to a 2004 report prepared at American University, doing the IMF's and WTO's bidding earned Haiti the top spot in the IMF's 1999 Index of Trade Restrictiveness. But it didn't prevent its people from becoming more impoverished, and the country from maintaining its status as the least-developed nation in the Western Hemisphere. Today, 80% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day, and about half live on \$1 a day or less. Yet, Haiti has the most millionaires per capita in the region!

It is also the second-largest importer of rice among Central American and Caribbean nations, importing 82% of its total rice consumption from the United States. Hundreds of thousands of rice farmers, millers, and those engaged in other

aspects of the trade were displaced by cheap imports, with no options for other employment. Those who migrated to the cities usually ended up in the "informal" sector, petty commerce, or as destitute slumdweller.

Slave System Produces Brazil's Biofuels

May 22 (EIRNS)—Biofuels cartel spokesmen hype Brazil's ability to produce ethanol—half the world's production, in fact—cheaply, and without reducing the food supply, because they make it, by and large, from sugar cane. The apparent "efficiency" comes, however, from returning Brazilian labor to the slavery of colonial plantations.

Or worse. Brazilian sociologist Francisco de Oliveira reported (May 27, 2007, *Folha de São Paulo*) that working as many as 14 hours a day, often bringing in their children to help meet the production goal, the life expectancy of cane cutters today is *less than that of colonial slaves!*

Sugar cane workers working on ethanol plantations in the Riberao Preto region of São Paulo, are today expected to cut 12 tons of sugar cane a day, double the 1980 targets, investigative reporter Raul Zibechi reported in a July 23, 2007 exposé. A majority of the workers are migrants, recruited from the impoverished North and Northeast, and from the moment they step on a bus to travel to their destination, they become debt slaves to middlemen who cover the cost of transportation, or to the "company store" from which they are forced to buy essentials.

Workers are forced to live in squalid quarters with no running water, kitchens, or toilets. Health problems are rampant, but owners in Riberao Preto have found a "technical solution" to squeeze more out of their cutters, Zibechi reports. Sugar mills now distribute a free electrolyte and vitamin supplement, normally used by athletes, which cutters drink before they go to work. It dulls the pain caused by seizures, cramps, spinal pain, etc., but in order for it to be effective in the long term, its dosage must be increased every month.

President Uribe, What About the 'Grasso Abrazo'?

May 20 (EIRNS)—Amidst the charges and counter-charges over which government in South America is more penetrated by the drug trade, which played footsie more with Colombia's narco-terrorist FARC—all of which is blowing up the region on London's behalf—the head of the Lyndon LaRouche Association of Colombia, Maximiliano Londoño, issued a statement today challenging Colombian President Alvaro Uribe to reveal the "hard" stuff found on the computers seized in the March 1 raid in which the FARC's chief of finances, Raul Reyes, was killed. Londoño's statement begins: "Now that Interpol has certified the authenticity of the files on the computer hard discs of the FARC's Rafael Reyes, and now that Colombia's Defense Ministry has included in the chronology of Reyes' activities, the meeting that he held in June 1999 in the jungles of Caguan with Richard Grasso, at the time, president of the N.Y. Stock Exchange, it is urgent that Colombian President Alvaro Uribe himself make known to the world the details of that infamous meeting, so that the whole truth on the links between Anglo-Dutch high finance and the FARC's narco-terrorist activities be fully revealed.

"The infamous Grasso-Reyes embrace [the 'Grasso Abrazo'] is the biggest hidden elephant on Reyes' computer hard discs. What is the fear that this information be made public? If one truly wants to eliminate the drug trade and not merely clean it up by changing the executives on the payroll or sacrificing a few kingpins while keeping the cultivation, production, and marketing of the drugs intact, as has generally been done so far in Colombia during most of the so-called war on drugs, then it is essential that President Uribe and his defense minister reveal the ties of the FARC to Wall Street and the City of London," Londoño stated.

Londoño urged the next government in Washington, to recognize that today's opium wars run by the British must be defeated by transforming the present "Plan Colombia" aid program, into a great Marshall Plan, helping to industrialize Colombia, mechanize its agriculture, and build the railroads and other infrastructure projects required to replace the current

domination of the drug cartels.

Will Coca Be Used for Ethanol?

May 21 (EIRNS)—Under the direction of Luis Alberto Moreno, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) has become an enforcement arm for the British "biofuels" slave project. Moreno has used his position as an executive of the Inter-American Ethanol Commission (IEC), which he founded together with former Florida governor Jeb Bush, to turn the bank into a major player among the biofuels mafia that is planning to accelerate operations in Central and South America.

Moreno has a history of doing anything to make his friends a profit.

In 1999, Moreno, then, Colombia's Ambassador to the United States, is reported to have facilitated the arrangements for the infamous June 26 jungle tête-à-tête between his reputed good friend, New York Stock Exchange chairman Richard Grasso; Grasso's sidekick, NYSE Vice President Alain Murban; and Raul Reyes, head of finances for the largest cocaine cartel in South America, the narco-terrorist FARC—the meeting cited by LaRouche Association of Colombia head Max Londoño in his statement above. Colombian Finance Minister Juan Camilo Restrepo served as "translator" for the meeting; Grasso reported that "an exchange of capital" was discussed.

Eight months later, Moreno's wife, Gabriela Febres-Cordero, a Venezuelan banker, served as "translator" for AOL founder Jim Kimsey's similar confab with the FARC's Reyes, on a similar subject.

Which brings up an interesting question: Is there a project to use the basic ingredient of cocaine, the coca plant, for ethanol? It certainly would be high octane.

Western European News Digest

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- [Prince Charles Hosts Dalai Lama](#)

London Reacts to Strategic Yekaterinburg BRIC Summit

May 18 (EIRNS)—The Rupert Murdoch-owned London *Times*, in a rug-chewing fit May 16, registered London's reaction to the economic and political alliance of the BRIC nations—Brazil, Russia, India, and China—and especially the meeting of the foreign ministers of the three Eurasian nations in Yekaterinburg, Russia on May 14, where they set out, for the first time, coordinated positions on Kosovo, Iran, Afghanistan, and the Asia-Pacific region.

The *Times* reports, "an economic and political alliance of the BRIC nations—Brazil, Russia, India, and China—is being formed today at a meeting of foreign ministers in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg.... The formal agenda may be less significant than the Kremlin's political achievement in convening a high-profile gathering of four nations with vast resources but differing interests."

The *Times* then quotes Christopher Granville, an analyst for Trusted Sources, as saying, "What is interesting is that the Russians are showing that political clubs can be formed with or without the participation of the United States."

U.S., Kosovo Dismiss Russia-China-India Call for Talks

May 18 (EIRNS)—Both the U.S. State Department and politicians in Kosovo have dismissed the joint call of the foreign ministers of Russia, China, and India, that talks should be resumed between the government of Serbia and leaders of the breakaway entity of Kosovo, according to Press Trust of India and the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network yesterday. In answer to a question from the press, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack brushed aside the statements by the three Eurasian nations made in Yekaterinburg on May 14. "I guess we have a news flash for everybody, the status of Kosovo has been resolved. It's an independent state," McCormack asserted.

Kosovo dismissed the request as having no foundation, the *Sofia Echo* reported yesterday.

Prominent Italian Expert Campaigns vs. Lisbon Treaty

May 22 (EIRNS)—A prominent Italian expert of law, Prof. Giuseppe Guarino from Rome University, has started a campaign against the European Union's Lisbon Treaty, calling for Italy not to ratify what he calls a system of "government by an organ," or "organocracy." Guarino explained his views in a public conference on "Ratifying the Lisbon Treaty?" in Florence on May 19. The event was crowded with constitutionalists and legal experts. Guarino's recommendation is: Do not ratify a treaty that violates at least two articles of the Italian Constitution: Art. 1 ("All sovereignty comes from the people"), and Art. 11 (Italy rejects any form of war and agrees to give up quotas of sovereignty in international treaties provided that the principle of reciprocity is maintained). As to Art. 11, the very fact that Britain and Denmark have been exempted from participation in the euro currency system violates the reciprocity principle. Two members of the same treaty agreement have different and unequal liberties: Britain can set its interest rates as it likes, taking advantage of other treaty members, etc.

Guarino, who was minister for industry in the first Giulio Amato government (1992-93), detailed how the new treaty dramatically increases the dictatorial powers of the EU Commission.

Guarino's speech has so far not been covered by any media. *EIR* will soon receive it and publish it in several languages.

EC Facing Anti-Lisbon Challenge from Former Green MEP

May 19 (EIRNS)—The European Commission (EC) is facing a legal challenge from Irish anti-Lisbon Treaty campaigner Patricia McKenna. The former Green Member of European Parliament (MEP) claims that the European Commission has been interfering in the Irish political process in order to secure a "Yes" vote in the scheduled June 12 referendum on the treaty.

McKenna has criticized the EC for its funding of several events in Ireland, where the majority of speakers have been in favor of the treaty. But the organizers of the campaign have said the events are part of a wider, year-long series of

"information seminars."

Fuel Prices Stoke Discontent in France

PARIS, May 20 (EIRNS)—Confronted with record-high prices of gasoline, diesel, and heating oil, the French Federation of Transport and Logistic Companies (TLF) has called on the government to establish an emergency plan, with measures applicable immediately or in the short term. TLF underlines that the price of diesel increased by 16.72% since January 2008 and by 37.64% since January 2007. Among other measures, TLF asks for lowering of tolls on highways for "clean" vehicles. The only problem is that huge sections of the French highways have been sold recently to private companies, such as the Australian operator Macquarie.

For similar reasons, French fishermen are blocking major fishing ports. The rising cost of fuel to operate their ships is driving many of them to the point of bankruptcy. To search for solutions, Michel Barnier, Minister of Agriculture and Fishing, met his respective EU counterparts yesterday.

Prince Charles Hosts Dalai Lama

May 22 (EIRNS)—The Dalai Lama met today with Prince Charles in London. Using a shovel that originally belonged to Charles' grandfather, King George VI, the Dalai Lama helped plant a tree on the grounds of one of his palaces, and then retreated inside for an hour-long "spiritual discussion."

The Lama also spoke before the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee. Prior to delivering the address, he was greeted by more than 1,000 demonstrators of ethnic Chinese origin and members of a religious order that the Lama banned in Tibet, carrying signs that read, "The Dalai Lama is neither God nor King of Tibet," "No return to serfdom," and "Dalai Lama, stop lying."

The Dalai Lama is scheduled to meet tomorrow with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, at the home of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Russia and the CIS News Digest

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Strategic Triangle on Medvedev's Agenda in China

May 22 (EIRNS)—Russian President Dmitri Medvedev's trip to China "should focus attention on the yet insufficiently explored potential of the tripartite India-Russia-China relationship," former Indian Foreign Secretary Salman Haidar wrote in an article published in the Indian magazine *The Statesman* today. Haidar said that Medvedev's trip to Kazakhstan and China closely affects India and its strategic interests. In addition, there are positive indications for the bilateral India-Russia relationship under the new Russian President, Haidar wrote.

Central Asia is a region where India has long indicated its interests, but has not sufficiently followed this up, in Haidar's view. "Now a resurgent Russia and a fast growing India are in a position to take fresh initiatives in Central Asia, in joint productive ventures including transport linkages that would make the region more accessible. It is a real prospect which can benefit all the parties involved. And the second leg of Medvedev's journey, to China, should focus attention on the yet insufficiently explored potential of the tripartite India-Russia-China relationship."

High-Technology Potential of Medvedev Visit to China

May 24 (EIRNS)—President Medvedev's May 23-24 visit to China was more than just an indication of Russia's Eurasian orientation; the visit had economic substance. On May 20, China's Deputy Foreign Minister Li Hui and Russian Ambassador to China Sergei Razov gave a press conference about the visit. Li called Medvedev "an old friend of the Chinese people.... President Medvedev is making China his first foreign visit only half a month after he took office."

The two country's relations could now move in the direction proposed by then-President Jiang Zemin, in his historic speech to Russian scientists in November 1998. Andrei Ostrofsky, deputy director of the Institute of Far East Studies of the Russian Academy of Science, told Xinhua in an interview that the Russian policy to shift and optimize its economic structure, would contribute to economic relations with China. "Russia is determined to transfer its economic drive force from natural resources to innovation, which will increase its exports of high-tech products to China and tap cooperation potential in joint research and development," Ostrofsky said. China could even help Russia as "a window or bridge" to the Pacific-Asian and Southeast Asian markets, as well as those of Central Asia, where most nations are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, he said.

Razov announced that Medvedev would be accompanied by Russia's energy and industry ministers, as well as a large delegation of entrepreneurs, and the two sides are very likely to sign an agreement on nuclear energy (see *Asia Digest*). The new Russian Energy Minister, Sergei Shmatko, was formerly head of Russia's nuclear energy export agency. Last November, Atomstroyexport had signed deals to build two more nuclear reactors at the joint Russia-China Tianwan power station project. "The cooperation in the Tianwan nuclear plant has brought many fruitful results. So I think there is great potential for further cooperation," Razov said.

Gennady Chufrin, deputy director of the Institute for World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Science, told Xinhua in an interview published May 20 that there is "a common interest between Russia and China: the development of Russia's Far East, Siberian and the neighboring China's northeastern regions, which are all rich in economic potential." In addition to their other relations, Russia and China have also carried out substantial cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Russia, Kazakhstan Agree on Long-Term Economic Cooperation

May 22 (EIRNS)—Kazakhstan has "proposed to Russia to prepare a long-term agreement on economic cooperation and integration between our countries," President Nursultan Nazarbayev told a press conference in Astana today, following his meeting with visiting Russian President Dmitri Medvedev, Kazinform reported. "This is an important document, since the level of our economic development will allow us to act in a strategically new way," Nazarbayev said. Medvedev responded

that the agreement will likely include aspects of Russia's development until 2020, and the Kazakhstan development plan until 2030, Novosti reported. He also emphasized the establishment of a Russian-Kazak company for peaceful nuclear energy cooperation, and the building of a nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan with Russia's participation. "Our plans include a transition to deeper nuclear energy integration," Medvedev said at the press conference.

The Russian daily *Kommersant* on May 22 cited unnamed Kazak sources, who said Nazarbayev is committed to creating a Common Economic Space (CES) with Russia, constituting "a merger of the two economies." Astana Mayor Imangali Tasmagambetov told *Kommersant* that Kazakhstan considers the idea of economic union with Russia to be crucial. "The President has always argued to Moscow that it's pointless to tear up our economic ties; on the contrary, we should integrate more intensively."

Kazakhstan-Russia Rail Agreement

May 22—Kazak and Russian railway officials completed discussion of the long-term development of both nations' rail systems today in Moscow, Kazinform reported. The rail systems, which were integrated during the Soviet Union, are crucial links in the Eurasian Land-Bridge between China and the rest of East Asia, and Europe. Russian Transport Minister Igor Levitin and the head of the state-owned Russian Railways corporation, Vladimir Yakunin, met the head of Kazakhstan's Temir Zholy National Company, Askar Mamin, to work out details of improving long-term transportation cooperation and cross-border rail connections.

The Russian side informed the Kazak delegation of the huge Russian Railways development program, which involves investment of some 1.5 trillion rubles (\$63.3 billion) from the Russian government budget (combined with additional private investment). The focus of Russian-Kazak rail cooperation will be container transport, modernization of border-area stations, tariff arrangements in some rail sections, and joint international projects. The two nations also agreed to meet again at the 48th session of Railway Transport Council of the CIS, Baltic states, and Finland, which takes place May 29-30 in Cholpan-Ata, Kyrgyzstan.

Mongolian President: Remember Khalkyn Gol Victory

May 21 (EIRNS)—At his meeting with Russian President Medvedev in Moscow on May 16, Mongolian President Nambaryn Enkhbayar discussed Mongolia's cooperation with Russia in infrastructure and other economic development, and the upcoming 70th anniversary of the famous battle of Khalkyn Gol. Enkhbayar said he would take personal charge of the celebrations, and invited Medvedev to participate.

In July-August 1939, the Soviet Red Army and the Mongolian Army won a decisive victory over an elite Japanese force which was trying to push its way from occupied Manchuria into Mongolia. The Red Army, led by the future Marshal of the Soviet Union Georgi Zhukov, routed the Japanese, using a combined highly mobile tank and air "defensive offense." Japan never again challenged the Red Army during World War II.

Medvedev and Enkhbayar also discussed joint projects. The Kremlin said that "Russia would welcome intensified activities of Mongolia as an observer in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and active use of the possibilities of the organization to promote business cooperation with Russia, China, Kazakhstan, and other SCO members," Itar-Tass reported. The Mongolian rail system has to be modernized to allow exploitation of Mongolia's mineral wealth. "There will also be a detailed talk on the issue of joint initiatives in the mining industry in Mongolia." Russia is considering helping to construct a nuclear power plant in Mongolia.

Russians Call EU Energy Deregulation Strategy Insane

May 21 (EIRNS)—At an annual EU-Russian energy conference in Berlin yesterday, Gazprom's director for international relations, Stanislav Tsygankov, said proposals being drafted by the EU Commission to force the separation of energy production, transmission, and distribution, would sow "instability and unpredictability." "Which companies will be able to plan long-term investments under those conditions?" he asked at the conference, which was organized by Gazprom, the Russian Gas Society, and the German Council for Foreign Policy.

The EU plans have come under pressure from companies like E.ON Ruhrgas and Wintershall in Germany, Gaz de France, Eni of Italy—as well as Gazprom. These companies have forged long-term energy contracts with Gazprom to guarantee supply for new power plants, for example. In return, they have allowed Gazprom to enter the distribution sector in their countries. The companies claim that EU plans to "unbundle," or break up, these vertically integrated companies would dry up investments. That, they say, would only undermine energy security in Europe, where demand for natural gas is expected to grow 1.3% a year over the next two decades.

Jean Marie Dauger, vice president of Gaz de France, said the gas sector would require up to \$4.24 trillion between 2006 and 2030, warning that such huge investments might not be forthcoming with the Commission proposals. "The gas industry is a capital-intensive industry," he said at the conference. "It would be a real strategic error for the European gas sector if the Commission succeeds with its proposals."

Burckhard Bergmann, former chairman of E.ON Ruhrgas, said Russia already supplies 37% of Germany's gas imports and 45% of the EU's imports. "Long-term contracts are the essential link between security of supply and security of demand," said Bergmann, who is deputy chairman of the influential East Committee, which promotes German companies in Russia and eastern Europe. While the energy giants in Europe want to protect their own assets and investments, Russia is worried that its investments in Germany, Italy, and other EU countries would be affected.

Also, non-EU energy companies, like Gazprom, would be affected by the EU Commission's plans, therefore, Gazprom is trying to win support among other large energy companies in the EU.

Southwest Asia News Digest

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'Bush Intends To Attack Iran Before the End of His Term'

May 20 (EIRNS)—Israel's Army Radio reports that U.S. President George W. Bush intends to attack Iran before the end of his term, according to an official in Jerusalem. The official claimed that a senior member of the President's entourage said, during a closed meeting, that Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney were of the opinion that military action was called for.

However, the official added, "the hesitancy of Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice" was preventing the administration from launching such an attack. The official said that developments in Lebanon, where Hezbollah has the upper hand, were advancing the idea of an American attack.

In Bush's opinion, Hezbollah's show of strength was evidence of Iran's growing influence: "The disease must be treated—not its symptoms."

The *Jerusalem Post* reports that in an address to the Israeli Knesset during his visit to Israel last week, Bush said that "the President of Iran dreams of returning the Middle East to the Middle Ages."

"America stands with you in firmly opposing Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions," Bush said. "Permitting the world's leading sponsor of terror to possess the world's deadliest weapon would be an unforgivable betrayal of future generations. For the sake of peace, the world must not allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon."

Brits Keep Beating the War Drum To Attack Iran

May 21 (EIRNS)—London's International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) continues the drumbeat for an attack on Iran, in a report saying that 13 countries in the Middle East, except war-ravaged Iraq, have embarked on plans to build new nuclear power plants or to revive the existing ones [horrors!] following Iran's decision to start enriching uranium in 2006.

Mark Fitzpatrick, an IISS expert on non-proliferation and editor of the study, said: "We take it for granted that Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapon," adding that Iran could theoretically produce enough uranium for one by 2009.

"Iran's program could become a powerful regional proliferation driver, building on regional rivalry, security concerns and one-upmanship. For the time being, these considerations are contributing to a regional surge in interest in nuclear energy. The question is how to keep this interest confined to purely civilian nuclear programs," the London *Daily Telegraph* reported on May 21, quoting IISS chief executive John Chipman.

Beyond Iran, Britain is seeking regime change in Egypt. Inciting the Cheney-led neocons in the United States, the IISS claimed in its report that Egypt, which already possesses a solid grounding in nuclear technology, could be the first to build a bomb.

"If any country in the region were to follow Iran in developing a latent nuclear weapons capability, however, Egypt may be the most likely candidate," Chipman was quoted.

French Foreign Minister Confirms Contact with Hamas

May 20 (EIRNS)—French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner confirmed reports that France has maintained contacts with Hamas, through a former senior French diplomat who had met with Hamas officials, including Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyah and Mahmoud al-Zahar. Yves Aubin de La Messuzière, a former ambassador, had told *Le Figaro* that the senior Hamas officials reiterated the offer made by Hamas leader Khaled Meshal, that Hamas will accept the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. Meshal made this commitment to former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, whom he met last month in Damascus.

Kouchner said the meeting was private, but he did comment, "There is a need for contacts, but it is not about relations with Hamas. We must be able to talk with each other if we want to be able to play a role."

In response to this report, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack was quoted by AFP as saying, "We don't think it is wise or appropriate." Both official U.S. and European Union policy has been not to meet with Hamas officials.

Netanyahu Leads Attack on Olmert's Syria Initiative

May 23 (EIRNS)—As could be expected, Likud party chairman Benjamin Netanyahu is leading the right-wing assault against Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, over the latter's opening of talks with Syria.

"There is wide agreement from right to left that the diplomatic process cannot be used to shelter politicians in distress," Netanyahu said, claiming that Olmert is using this to cover up his legal problems, the *Jerusalem Post* reported today. "Most of the public knows the prime minister expedited the talks with Syria and set the exact time for revealing them, in order to distract from the investigations against him." He said that Syria is "an inseparable part of the axis of evil." Nonetheless, the *Post* concludes by quoting an earlier statement by Olmert, pointing out that Netanyahu himself had initiated talks with Syria when he was prime minister, sending his own moneybags, Ron Lauder, to Damascus for secret talks with then-President Hafez Assad.

Right-wing activists tried to disrupt a speech which Olmert was delivering at a ceremony of the Jewish Agency.

Is Corruption Probe a Right-Wing Move To Oust Olmert?

May 24 (EIRNS)—Is the latest criminal investigation of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert a right-wing conspiracy to oust the prime minister, because of his policy of seeking peace with Syria? According to a report in the *Jerusalem Post*, the prosecution's chief witness, U.S. fundraiser Morris Tolansky, is linked to a group of ultra-conservative rabbis who want to bring down the Olmert government.

Yehoshua Meiri, spokesman for the Council of Torah and Kabbalah Sages, told the *Post* that the rabbis met with Tolansky and gave his "halachic approval" to testify against Olmert. The approval was sought because Tolansky would be acting to harm another Jew.

While Tolansky admits having received a blessing from Rabbi Haim Kaniesky, a member of the organization, he denies that it was a "halachic approval." Tolansky belongs to a circle of Orthodox Jews who want to "liberate" the Old City of Jerusalem.

"Tolansky is a high-profile member of an orthodox circle which supports the liberation of Jerusalem, meaning the buying up of real estate in the capital," Meiri told the *Post*. "This circle formed business links with Olmert, not for the purpose of corruption, but because they supported him ideologically. But when Olmert announced during the Annapolis conference last November, that he was prepared to relinquish parts of east Jerusalem and Jewish sovereignty over the Temple Mount, Olmert's Orthodox backers felt he had betrayed them. Suddenly, they had a fifth column in their midst."

The Council of Torah and Kabbalah Sages network overlaps the "Temple Mount Faithful" fanatics who are linked to the murder of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

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China, Russia Negotiate Nuclear Agreement

May 23 (EIRNS)—China and Russia today are negotiating a \$1 billion agreement to develop a uranium enrichment facility in China, Rosatom head Sergei Kiriyenko announced today in Beijing. Kiriyenko is part of the delegation led by Russian President Dmitri Medvedev, for a two-day visit to China beginning today. "We have completed negotiations on construction of a uranium enrichment factory," Kiriyenko said. "I will not cite the worth of the total contract, but it is well over \$1 billion. This is already the fourth round in negotiations to build the uranium enrichment plant." Kiriyenko said that the agreement includes deliveries of Russian uranium over the next ten years. He added that the discussions demonstrate "the strengthening of Russian companies' presence on the Chinese market."

Brits Not Happy with U.S. Stance Toward Myanmar

May 23 (EIRNS)—U.S. State Department spokesman Tom Casey yesterday resisted media hysteria over Myanmar (e.g., "How long can the international community watch millions more die there?"), insisting that the U.S. intent is to provide as much aid as possible, that the aid is in fact getting through, and that "the fundamental point here is not to prove a political point.... This is a humanitarian disaster, and one that requires us and others to provide support, as allowed."

This calm stance has made the British very unhappy. British Foreign Secretary David Miliband is showing how angry the Brits are about losing their campaign to invade Myanmar under the guise of Tony Blair's "responsibility to protect" doctrine. Asked about the donors' conference to be held in Yangon on May 25, Miliband whined: "We are not going to allow this to become a ramp by which the regime resuscitates or reinforces its political position."

Myanmar's top general, Than Shwe, after meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for two hours yesterday, announced that he will allow foreign aid workers into the country. Although press reports claim that this is an unrestricted offer, the fact is that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), at its Singapore meeting this week, accepted Myanmar's request to coordinate all foreign aid and reconstruction funds. ASEAN chief Surin Pitsuan said that a nine-member core group—three each from Myanmar, ASEAN, and the UN—has been set up to run the "coalition of mercy."

Both the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are considering ending their ban on loans to Myanmar. There have been no World Bank loans since 1987.

Myanmar Seeks Membership in SAARC

May 20 (EIRNS)—Myanmar, a member of the ASEAN group of countries, is reportedly seeking membership in the South Asian Association of Regional Countries (SAARC), which consists of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, and the Maldives. Bangladeshi sources said that Myanmar might become the ninth member of the bloc, as India has already extended support to Myanmar's inclusion.

SAARC officials said that Myanmar's proposal might come up for discussion at the group's standing committee meeting before the next summit meeting, in Sri Lanka starting on July 27, *The New Age*, a Bangladeshi news daily, reported.

"The country may be included in the regional bloc as a member as a 'key actor' of the grouping extended its support for the move," the daily reported, in an oblique reference to India.

Myanmar's decision is perfectly in step with the kind of agricultural infrastructure development that the region needs. Myanmar is the gateway from the Indian subcontinent and southern China into Southeast Asia. Moreover, Myanmar's agro-environment is in sync with that of Bangladesh, the southern part of India's northeast, southern China, and the neighboring nations in Southeast Asia.

Myanmar, Thailand To Develop Andaman Deep Sea Port

May 21 (EIRNS)—Thai Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama and his Myanmar counterpart Nyan Win have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop Myanmar's Tavoy (Dawei) deep sea port, close to the northern tip of the Malaysian peninsula. Tavoy is located on southwestern Myanmar on the Andaman Sea. The signing took place on May 20, on the sidelines of a meeting of foreign ministers of the ASEAN member-nations, in Singapore. The meeting has been convened to arrange for the ASEAN member-nations to distribute aid to the cyclone-hit population of Myanmar. Both Thailand and Myanmar are members of the ASEAN.

Upon completion, the port will facilitate goods transportation from Europe and Southwest Asia to Thailand's Laem Chabang port, and cargoes could be easily transported to Laos and southern China from there, Noppadon said. Transportation could be reduced by more than 10 days, according to the Thai foreign minister.

The project fits very well with the West-East Economic Corridor, the Thai foreign minister explained, adding that China is also interested in building a dual rail track, with trains travelling at a speed of nearly 200 kilometers per hour. The site construction survey is expected to be completed by the end of this year, and construction is expected to take about six years, they added.

India Calls Latest WTO Text 'Totally Unacceptable'

May 20 (EIRNS)—In a move which reflects the fact that India has joined with Russia and China in resisting the British, India today said that the new World Trade Organization text, ignoring livelihood concerns in agriculture, is "totally unacceptable" and that the country will thwart rich nations' efforts to "divide and rule" (the quintessential imperial method) over developing countries on the issue of tariff cuts on industrial products under the Doha Round trade talks.

India is upset that the new proposals, released by the chairman of the negotiating group on agriculture, Crawford Falconer, have set a limit on safeguards to protect its small and marginal farmers.

India's Commerce Secretary G.K. Pillai said he felt let down, as the revised texts on agriculture and industrial goods, released on May 19, will not allow the developing countries to shield their farmers and industries from cheap imports. If

the new text is adopted, India will be allowed to designate fewer Special Products that it can protect from unrestricted imports from agro-exporting countries like the U.S., Canada, and Australia.

Logistics Network in Thailand Proposed on Kra Canal Route

May 21 (EIRNS)—A canal across the Kra Isthmus in southern Thailand, connecting the eastern Gulf of Thailand and the western Andaman Sea, and more generally eastern and western Asia by sea, cutting hundreds of miles off the current route via the Strait of Malacca, has been a dream for at least a century. *EIR* co-sponsored two conferences in Bangkok in the early 1980s on the Kra Canal, with supporters from all over Asia participating.

Beyond the great cost of such a project, many reasons have been put forward to delay or kill it. One argument has been that the canal would increase animosity between the Buddhist North of Thailand and the Muslim South.

The Thai Cabinet yesterday endorsed a Transport Ministry proposal to conduct a joint feasibility study with Dubai World, into the development of a logistics network in southern Thailand along the Kra Canal route. The utilization of a company from Muslim Dubai should help reduce political tensions in the south of Thailand.

Afghanistan: 'A Different Picture in Different Places'

May 20 (EIRNS)—Afghanistan has turned out to be an elephant which NATO, like six blind men, is still trying to identify. Last Fall, groups of Taliban fighters swarmed into every village in the Khakrez district of Kandahar province in southern Afghanistan. American forces arrived to sweep them out in January, but by April, the Taliban were back, surrounding the district center in a show of force that froze villagers in their tracks. Then the insurgents melted away again.

The question before NATO is how much longer it will take in crucial provinces, like Kandahar, to lock in tentative gains and bring real security and strong government. An equally important question is whether that can be done before the war wears down relations within the U.S.-led alliance and with the Afghan people.

"No one claims this is going to be a year of full stabilization or even declining violence, let alone an end to the conflict," said Christopher Alexander, deputy special representative for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. He added, "There is a different picture in different places," which makes it extremely difficult to gauge progress in the war and which has helped generate diverging views of the conflict among Afghan officials and their American and NATO allies."

Africa News Digest

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West African States' Hold Emergency Meet on Food Crisis

May 20 (EIRNS)—The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held an emergency meeting of their ministers of agriculture, trade, and finance yesterday in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, in an effort to come up with a comprehensive regional response to the food crisis, which has led to demonstrations and unrest in several West African nations. Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, president of the ECOWAS commission, called for urgent action to deal with the

crisis, because peace, security, and stability were threatened by the high cost and shortage of food, which will necessitate throwing IMF and World Bank dictates overboard. One member of ECOWAS, before the summit, blamed the IMF and World Bank for the inability of the ECOWAS states to produce enough food. ECOWAS indicated that the 44.4 million of West Africa's people living in abject poverty are the most vulnerable group.

Before yesterday's meeting, ECOWAS economists estimated that immediate steps to improve access to food supplies, increase food production, and build up reserve stocks could cost member-states \$11.6 billion. The emergency meeting earmarked \$100 million a year for the food crisis, and called for \$2 billion to feed the poor, and a \$4 billion investment between 2008 and 2010 to boost agricultural productivity. In the long term, member-states agreed to improve their budgetary allocation to agriculture, invest in local fertilizer production and seed multiplication, subsidize agricultural production, encourage the provision of concessionary credit to the sector, as well as provide infrastructure that will support agricultural productivity.

The speaker of the ECOWAS parliament, Mahamane Ousmane (formerly President of Niger), came down hard on the IMF and World Bank, according to an article published on May 14, before the meeting, in *Leadership*, a newspaper in Abuja. He said, "Our governments have been applying defective agriculture policies under pressure from international institutions, like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund." He added that these policies have resulted in crises that have spread across the whole of West Africa.

Anglo-Dutch Cartel Escalates Anti-Zimbabwe Campaign

May 25 (EIRNS)—The Anglo-Dutch financial cartel has continued its campaign to overthrow the Zimbabwe government. The U.S. Ambassador to Zimbabwe, James McGee, has abandoned any pretext of being a diplomat, by becoming a fervid supporter of the British-created and -backed opposition MDC party. According to a May 16 BBC broadcast, McGee charged the government with using violence against its own population, in order to enable President Robert Mugabe to win the run-off election for President against Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC. "Violence has spun out of control," McGee said. When BBC asked him if Mugabe could win as a result of violence, McGee responded: "That's exactly what the international community has to avoid." He charged that there is "no question that people are being beaten for the way they voted in the last election to ensure that they vote the right way in any run-off here." He maintained that fair elections are not possible, and called for a "force of election monitors in the country, well before the run-off, who would stay here until the results are announced." He made no mention of government assertions that the MDC was carrying out violence to provide a pretext for the kind of intervention that McGee was talking about.

Before the March 29 election results had been announced, McGee had said at an April 24 press conference in South Africa, that the United States would lift sanctions and disburse billions of dollars to Zimbabwe if a new, pro-free-trade government were to take power.

After McGee asserted that post-election violence is making a fair run-off vote impossible, Tsvangirai on May 17 added to the theatrics by announcing that he had postponed his return to Zimbabwe to begin campaigning, because an assassination plot made it too dangerous. This melodrama aside, it cannot be ruled out that the British would organize the assassination of the candidate they have been backing, and blame it on Mugabe, so as to strengthen the anti-Mugabe fervor they have already whipped up.

Zimbabwe Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa responded to the claims of violence being made by the MDC and its backers: "Whenever there is a claim of an act of politically motivated violence committed, it should be very good that we form joint teams made up of the Zanu-PF [ruling party] and MDC so that we can establish the veracity of these claims."

Mugabe, speaking at a political rally in Harare today threatened to expel McGee from the country for political interference,

which Mugabe referred to as a retread of the Rhodesian Front party of the racist minority government of Ian Smith. "I'm just waiting to see if he makes one more step wrong," said Mugabe. "He will get out."

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