

gotá and Cundinamarca (Futraboc-CUT): "You, as we Colombians, are struggling for a life of dignity and justice. . . . But we must confront the most corrupt elements who are in the highest spheres of government, and who are ruining the lives of millions of Colombians."

France: Former Presidential candidate Jacques Chirac: "It is the tempests that . . . open opportunities for a better future. Our efforts are united across the Atlantic."

Germany: Farmers Association (VDL) president Helmut Eichinger: "The current trade and financial system based on usury and looting, has not only hit Mexico and the countries of the Third World and eastern Europe, but it has also created a precarious situation for industrialized nations such as the United States, Japan, and western Europe. Germany and the nations of the European Union are now witnessing the death of their farms, the bankruptcy of their companies, growing unemployment, and the increasing indebtedness of family households, corporations, cities, and states. . . . The Maastricht Treaty seeks to impose on the European Union, a financial policy similar to that which the IMF has been imposing on the rest of the world. . . . Let us hope that we succeed, as we seek a peaceful transition to a new, just, international economic order, following the economic and financial proposals of Lyndon LaRouche and the initiatives of the Schiller Institute, which are the only alternatives that are currently available. May your Forum bring us closer to that goal."

Peru: National Federation of Port Workers (Fentenapu) secretary general Adolfo Granados Farías: "We salute the courageous initiative you are leading in this crusade for the sovereignty and for the very life of our nations. The workers of the continent are looking, I am sure, with renewed spirit, at the the courage with which you, by defending your fatherland, defend the entire continent."

Philippines: Antonio Valdes, member, steering committee of the Katapat movement: "Greetings to our friends in Mexico. To you goes our heartfelt congratulations and sincerest hope for a successful conference. It is gratifying to know that the National Forum of Mexico has called for a worldwide movement of solidarity to denounce the regressive policies of the IMF as imposed over many countries like ours. We in the Philippines through our movement, Katapat, join you in this noble effort and endeavor to build a new nation through a sound and Christian economy."

Russia: Viktor Kuzin, head of the Russian Bureau for Human Rights Defense Without Borders: "Your meeting must develop alternatives compatible with national statehood, patriotic feelings and real justice, instead of the political corruption, influence and support of criminal money, which prevail currently."

Prof. Taras Muranivsky, president of the Moscow Schiller Institute of Science and Culture: "Greetings on behalf of the groups of parliamentarians and scholars of Russia and our Ukrainian colleagues who spoke out against the IMF policy intervention into the economy of our countries."

Investigation of Soros shifts mood in Italy

by Claudio Celani

The criminal investigation of speculator George Soros by several Italian state prosecutors, prompted by a legal brief presented by Paolo Raimondi, president of the International Civil Rights-Solidarity Movement, to state prosecutors in Milan, Rome, Naples, and Florence in October 1995, has provoked a political shift in the country and prompted one of Italy's best-known investigators, Milan State Prosecutor Francesco Greco, to open a third and most spectacular investigation.

Greco has been part of the powerful "Clean Hands" team, which has turned the Italian political system upside down in recent years. Greco's decision to enter the game has several implications, not excluding the possibility that it is an attempt at controlling the damage on the part of Soros's Italian friends. However, the opening of his investigation has dramatically shifted so-called "public opinion" against Soros, at the very moment that he is undertaking major penetration of the Italian economy on behalf of the British Empire. As a result, even from quarters where nobody would expect it, voices are being raised, to beware of Soros's "investment" operations.

An example is an article in the largest circulation weekly, the ultra-liberal *L'Espresso* magazine, on March 15. "For his debut in Italy," *L'Espresso* wrote, "Soros has chosen the least opportune moment. Just when he decided to invest his millions in an all-Italian operation," he "found himself in the center of a criminal investigation by the Milan prosecution. State Prosecutor Francesco Greco, in fact, is investigating alleged crimes which Soros is charged with having committed in September 1992, during his spectacular speculation against the pound-sterling which knocked down the Bank of England and gave him in one blow more than \$1 billion in profits. Soros not only speculated against the pound-sterling, but intervened heavily against the lira, during a monetary storm that ended up with us leaving the European Monetary System. Nobody dared to protest, nobody dared to attack Soros. Instead, many said and wrote that the Hungarian-born American businessman was a financial genius. [*L'Espresso* apparently forgot that it was one of the first to label Soros as such.] Only three years later, the International Civil Rights-Solidarity Movement led by Paolo Raimondi, presented a legal brief in court."

The Milan prosecution in the Soros investigation has received nationwide media coverage, with the most important dailies, including *Corriere della Sera*, *Il Tempo*, and *Il Giornale*, giving credit to the International Civil Rights-Solidarity Movement as the initiator of the investigation.

The case has even received coverage internationally. In Canada, for example, *Corriere Italiano*, a weekly Italian-language newspaper, recounted the case, quoting from the legal brief, and thanked the Solidarity Movement, "which shares its economic and political ideas with the American economist, and currently Democratic candidate for President, Lyndon LaRouche," and *EIR*. "Perhaps we will be able to identify the face, just as we can a mugger, of one or more individuals who do much more substantial harm to society than we can lay at the door of safecrackers, train robbers, or bank thieves," the weekly said.

Soros 'buys Italian'

The Italian daily *Il Foglio* headlined its coverage, "Soros Mistreats the Lira but Buys Italian." It exposed Soros's most recent attempts to take over important Italian industrial assets. *Il Foglio*, although founded only recently, has already achieved recognition as an "opinion-maker" due to the fact that its editor, Giuliano Ferrara, a minister under former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, is a well-known figure.

"George Soros, the Hungarian-born American businessman who has a prominent place in the big world money game, has changed tactics: He is less interested in the Italian lira and the British pound. More in Dalmine, ENI, and Italian blue chips," the paper said.

Dalmine is a steel company formerly owned by the State conglomerate IRI, a world leader in seamless pipe used, for instance, in pipelines. It was privatized in 1995 by the Dini government, and it recently emerged that Soros has acquired 6% of the firm, and aims to acquire a 10% share. Soros's partner in Dalmine is the Italo-Argentine Rocca group. "The venture," *Il Foglio* wrote, "matured in Argentina, where both Soros and the Rocca group have large interests." As for ENI, the Italian national oil company, 15% of which was also put on the market by the Dini government, *Il Foglio* reported that "in Milan's stock exchange, there are people who swear that Soros has collected ENI stocks."

The newspaper then listed Soros's friends in Italy, starting from brokers such as Isidoro Albertini, to Romano Prodi, one of the leading candidates of the center-left bloc in the present election campaign.

Of course, in the present polarized electoral climate, there is the danger that the initiative of the International Civil Rights-Solidarity Movement is being used by this or that political faction for its own ends. Mostly, the conservative bloc has exploited the fact that Soros has many friends in the leftist bloc, such as Prodi, who publicly rewarded Soros with a *honoris causa* degree in economics last Oct. 30 in Bologna. Thus, the newspaper *Il Secolo*, organ of the

right-wing National Alliance party, used the initiative to open fire against the left. In reaction, the magazine *Il Mondo*, which has recently been reorganized and aligned with the liberal left, covered the Soros investigation in the context of other criminal investigations on alleged derivatives speculation by financial companies owned by Berlusconi, leader of the conservative bloc.

A deeper issue

But the issue is much deeper and, in a sense, independent of electoral manipulation. The International Civil Rights-Solidarity Movement initiative has broken through a wall of *omertà*, in which nobody, as *L'Espresso* hypocritically recognized, had dared to stand up and defend the national economy which was being ravaged under the name of "globalization." Now that the breach is open, other forces are moving, creating the possibility that the wave of privatizations and asset-stripping of the economy can be stopped. Also, the moment for Soros is very critical, because the investigation could jeopardize not only his investments in Italy, but other international operations as well.

One of these operations, which concerns Germany, involves an attempt to build up an international telecommunications cartel under the command of the British Empire, forcing the existing State-owned telecom companies out of the market. The initiative is called Hermes, and it is a consortium recently founded between Global Telesystems, a company jointly owned by Soros (16%), his friend Alan Slifka (17%), and British merchant banks, and Hit-Rail, a British-controlled cartel of 10 European railway companies, including Deutsche Bundesbahn. The chairman of Hit-Rail is Otto Benz, a former director of British Railways, and its base is in Nottingham, U.K.

Control for the British Empire

The aim of the consortium is to contribute to achieving total control of future world communications for the British Empire. To do so, they have to build up national telecommunications networks able to compete with existing European telecom companies, and throw them out of the market. The strategy is to build the backbone of such networks, through the national railways' communications networks, which are to be upgraded with optical fiber technologies. In the second phase, such networks built and operated by Hermes would join with similar networks built by British Telecom for other national utilities (e.g., in Italy, they are negotiating with Autostrade, the company managing the national highway system, and with ENI, which has a north-south, east-west pipeline network) and would offer their services to private firms.

The telecommunications cartel has to be seen together with the British strategy to achieve complete control of transport and energy infrastructure, to add to their existing control over strategic raw material and energy resources.