

# International Intelligence

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## **Book charges Chirac made dirty arms sales to Iran**

According to a new book *The Mitterrand Decade*, the late French President's premier, Jacques Chirac, and his interior minister, Charles Pasqua, were involved in arms-for-hostages sales to Iran and the Afghansi, in the 1980s. The authors, two journalists with Agence France Presse, report a May 30, 1988 memo by Gilles Menage, then director of the Mitterrand Presidential cabinet, about his meeting at the Elysée with the "French Oliver North," Jean-Charles Marchiani, an intimate of Pasqua's, whom the latter used for special operations.

In Menage's memo, Marchiani is reported giving the details of what was negotiated, in exchange for the release of French hostages in Iran. Among the deals worked out, according to the summary in *Le Monde*, was "the delivery of weapons to the Afghan resistance, and of spare parts for Iran."

Although media reports are clearly self-serving, the fact that the story is coming out now (and perhaps coincidentally with the *San Jose Mercury News* exposé of the George Bush-Oliver North drug deals with the Colombian cartels) could be quite damaging to Chirac. It could also hurt Pasqua, at a time when he is shamelessly trying to make a political comeback, even eyeing the post of prime minister should current Premier Alain Juppé fall, which increasingly appears likely.

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## **Dismissal rocks coalition government in Poland**

On Sept. 4, Foreign Trade Minister Jacek Buchacz, of the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), was fired by Prime Minister Wladzimierz Cimoszewicz, who is allied with the former communists, now the Social Democratic Party (SLD), over what the government said was a blurring of private and public interests in granting of export guarantees. The dismissal coincided with the two coalition parties' brawl over cabinet posts during a ministerial reorganization due this year.

PSL leader and former Prime Minister

Waldemar Pawlak demanded a full explanation for Buchacz's dismissal, saying that reasons so far published by the prime minister were inadequate.

The PSL on Sept. 6 denounced the abrupt sacking of Buchacz. Some deputies said that the ouster was meant to provoke the collapse of the government, the dissolution of the Parliament, and to force early elections for Parliament in the spring (they are currently set to take place in October 1997). The SLD is said to be worried that, by October, their neo-liberal economic policies will have so damaged the economy that they cannot retain their hold in Parliament.

Despite the fact that the PSL is a coalition partner, it often opposes SLD's economic policies, especially privatization and extreme free market reforms. Many PSL deputies consider themselves more in the opposition than on the government side, but think their party is too weak now to go independent and win early elections.

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## **New Romanian turmoil bodes ill for E. Europe**

A new crisis for eastern Europe is brewing following the collapse of Romania's coalition government on Sept. 2. Romania had been ruled by a coalition of President Ion Iliescu's Party of Social Democracy (PDSR—the former communists) and the ultra-nationalist, fascistoid Party of National Unity (PUNR), headed by Gheorghe Funar. Funar, who is mayor of Klausenburg in Transylvania, is a rabidly anti-Hungarian chauvinist, in this area where 1.6 million Hungarians live. The trigger for Funar's break, was the planned signing of the Basic Treaty between Romania and Hungary concerning the rights of Romania's Hungarian minority.

Underlying the fireworks is the fact that elections for President and Parliament are set for Nov. 3, and the PUNR stands to gain from the drop in living standards, brought about by the International Monetary Fund's stranglehold over the economy. PUNR and other chauvinist parties are presenting themselves as the radical-populist alternative by accusing the government of selling out to the

Hungarians. Needless to say, the rise of such fascists in Romania would ignite bitter, new tensions with neighboring Hungary.

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## **Netanyahu-Arafat meeting wins Israelis' approval**

According to an opinion poll conducted by Israel's largest daily *Yediot Aharonot*, 82% of those polled thought the meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat was the "correct thing to do." A poll by *Maariv*, the other leading daily, came up with 78.3%. Netanyahu's Sept. 3 meeting with Arafat was said to have been a precondition for a meeting with President Clinton the following week.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu came under pressure at the meeting of the Likud party central committee on Sept. 6, at which he was heckled by right-wing supporters of Ariel Sharon, who was cheered. Both Sharon and cabinet minister Benjamin Zev Begin criticized any idea of a meeting between Netanyahu and Arafat. Nonetheless, Netanyahu declared, "On the principles of continuing this [peace] process according to our understanding and in the way we are steering it, all cabinet ministers will have to accept it, or they will not be ministers."

Still, Netanyahu reiterated his opposition to a Palestinian state, which he said would never be allowed.

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## **Glazyev forms 'Truth and Order' political bloc**

Sergei Glazyev, economic security adviser to Russian Security Council chief Aleksandr Lebed, and Dmitri Rogozin, held a press conference on Sept. 5 to detail the program of their newly founded "Truth and Order" political bloc, which they co-chair. Others present were Yuri Popov of "Honor and Motherland," which is joining the bloc, as well as Dmitri Galagan and Svetlana Migulya of the Democratic Party of Russia, from which Glazyev resigned his official posts when he was appointed to the Security Council. The new bloc "is an organization that will give

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support to the activities of Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed," and would "take part in the elections of heads of the administration and the legislative assemblies."

In response to a question, the co-chairmen remarked, "The very fact that we are in the same union brought together by support for Lebed's program speaks for itself as to who we will support in the Presidential election. We will participate in the elections to the State Duma when the time comes and we will also participate in all local elections, starting at the municipal level." Popov also reported that the idea for "Truth and Order," was Lebed's. "Truth and Order" will field 23 candidates in 53 regions in the upcoming regional elections. Popov stressed that Lebed "remains a political leader, a national leader in Russia, and therefore it is only natural that those millions of votes cast for him on June 16 should be represented in one of the political organizations to become an instrument capable of exerting influence and changing the situation in Russia for the better."

For Glazyev's views, see his article in *EIR*, May 31, 1996, pp. 48-65.

### *Queen to descend on India for its 50th anniversary*

Britain's Queen Elizabeth will make a state visit to India next year for the 50th anniversary of Indian Independence and the founding of the British Commonwealth, the *Hindustan Times* reported on Aug. 29. British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind, visiting New Delhi, noted that India's 50th year of independence coincides with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the British Commonwealth, where the Queen is head of state of most of the members.

Rifkind completed his tour on Sept. 4, which included Pakistan, India, Japan, and Mongolia. In India, Rifkind said: "The coming year is a symbolic moment for British relations with Asia. It sees transition in Hongkong, and the anniversary of independence for India and Pakistan." Sugarcoating the neo-imperial plan for keeping Asia a cheap labor and raw materials pool, Rifkind continued: "Let me underline what we in

Britain have to offer in a partnership for prosperity with India: We have a unique position in the world, active as key decision shapers in the Commonwealth, the EU, and UN; we have one of the strongest financial centers in the world; we have a modern . . . industrial base accustomed to operating globally; . . . we have a large, dynamic, and prosperous Indian community to act as a bridge between us; geographically and institutionally, we are a natural gateway to Europe and the EU, and from there to markets in OECD countries beyond."

### *Filipino Muslims sign peace accord with Manila*

Philippines President Fidel Ramos and Nur Misuari, chairman of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), signed a peace accord in Manila on Sept. 2, to put an end to a 24-year secessionist war on Mindanao, which has claimed the lives of 125,000 people in the Philippines' most resource-rich island. The ceremony was witnessed by the secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), which has played the key role in pushing the accord through to this stage.

The accord establishes an interim Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development, which will be chaired by Misuari, and will be followed in three years by a plebiscite to establish autonomous Muslim rule over 14 provinces.

At a press conference in Jakarta, Indonesia on Aug. 30, where the accord was initialed, Misuari acknowledged that he will have a "big problem" in convincing the MNLF's 30,000 guerrillas to endorse the peace. The final sticking point in the negotiations was the integration of MNLF fighters into the Philippines armed forces and police, and how to disarm those who choose not to so integrate. The MNLF is the only Muslim guerrilla group party to the accord, although the Ramos government has held preliminary talks with the second leading group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Misuari added that he looked forward to the return of some 500,000 Moro refugees from Sabah in East Malaysia.

**PRESIDENT MANDELA** has refused to "review the death penalty" and reinstate it, despite rising violent crime in South Africa. According to the *Mail & Guardian* on Sept. 6, Nelson Mandela met with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and declared afterward that "there is no way" the African National Congress will backtrack on its anti-death penalty position.

**THE COMMUNIST PARTY** challenger in the first of dozens of regional elections around Russia, to be held this fall, lost resoundingly to the incumbent in the Sept. 1 contest, in the Don region of Saratov. Gov. Dmitrii Ayatskov, won 80% of the vote, against 16% for the challenger, Anatolii Gordeev. The Communists considered the Saratov region as part of their "Red Belt," where Communist Gennadi Zyuganov received a majority in the Presidential elections.

**AFGHAN PRESIDENT** Burhanuddin Rabbani met with a six-man U.S. peace delegation led by Rep. Daniel Barden, in Kabul in early September. The delegation was seeking a modality for negotiations to end the civil war. U.S. interest in Afghanistan escalated in the last two months, after a mission to Kabul by Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel and U.S. recognition of the Kabul government.

**CDU** parliamentary leader Wolfgang Schäuble called for the Expo 2000 in Hanover to be a followup to the UN "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro. He demagogically demanded less population growth, less industrial growth, more "global competition," and hailed the information age. Schäuble is seen as a potential successor to Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

**BOTH IRISH** communities "wish for the end of violence," said Pope John Paul II on Sept. 8. "They have demonstrated that peace and reconciliation are possible if everyone has the courage to embrace the path of dialogue, mutual comprehension, respect for each other's legitimate rights, and above all, for human rights."