

# International Intelligence

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## ***'Czech model' austerity regime crumbling***

The parliament of the Czech Republic on May 22 voted down a draft resolution by the opposition Social Democrats (CSSD) asking the government of Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus to recall Trade and Industry Minister Vladimir Dlouhy and Finance Minister Ivan Kocarnik. It also approved the government's harsh economic program. Meanwhile, an alternative economic program, presented the day before by the Social Democrats, was rejected by Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus—a former finance minister who put his country through the International Monetary Fund wringer.

On the same day, the Central Bank once again spent several hundred million dollars in an effort to prevent the devaluation of the Czech currency, the crown. Over May 15 and 16, the Central Bank had pumped \$2 billion into the crown, which still lost 4.2%, wreaking panic on the stock markets.

Leaders of the three coalition parties met on May 22 with President Vaclav Havel to discuss plans for government changes. Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus and his radical-liberal ODS party, whose government coalition is becoming more unstable by the day, could face the early desertion of the liberal KLD party, which would mean the final loss of a parliamentary majority, and very likely lead to a new governing coalition under the Social Democrats.

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## ***Thailand, Myanmar agree to extradite drug lord***

The most spectacular result of Thai Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh's May 16-17 state visit to Myanmar, was Myanmar's release into Thai custody of Li Yun-Chung, wanted in the United States on a 1991 indictment for the largest-ever seizure of heroin, 1,069 lbs. Li, who was caught in a joint arrest by Thailand and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration last July, was mysteriously released on bail in February, and promptly disappeared. Less than 48 hours after Li was turned over to Thai authorities over the May

17-18 weekend, the Criminal Court in Bangkok upheld his swift extradition to the U.S. The Li case is even more interesting in light of the oft-repeated attacks on Myanmar's State Law and Order Restoration Council for its alleged protection of heroin traffickers, in particular, its refusal to extradite Shan leader Khun Sa, who surrendered last year to SLORC. Thailand, too, has resisted U.S. extradition warrants, most recently for two members of parliament.

Chavalit's state visit also addressed the need to agree on border demarcation: The two countries share 2,400 km. of border, but only 58 km. along a northern stretch is marked. In addition, progress was made in establishing jurisdiction over the Thai-Burmese Friendship Bridge across the Moei River, which will open up a key link between China and the continental Southeast Asian heartland. Other issues discussed included 700,000 illegal Myanmar workers in Thailand, development of a deep seaport on the Kra Isthmus, and construction of a road linking Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam.

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## ***Turkey launches major operation against PKK***

The terrorist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) could be facing its final stand in northern Iraq as the Turkish Army has been carrying out its biggest operation ever, with the cooperation of the Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party. The operation started on May 16, when the KDP, which controls most of northern Iraq that borders Turkey and Iran, called on the Turkish Army to help clear the area of the PKK. There are almost 50,000 Turkish troops in northern Iraq, supported by aircraft and tank battalions. Turkish Army officials said that "the operation could take the whole summer." It is very likely that the PKK could be eliminated in northern Iraq, where it has established many camps, thanks to the UN control mechanism introduced after the Gulf War by George Bush and Maggie Thatcher.

The Turkish Army first sealed the Iraqi-Syrian border in the north, making it impossible for the PKK to escape to the safety of its

regional protector, Syria's President Hafez Al-Assad. Second, the Iranian Army sealed its border with Iraq (the elimination of PKK bases in Iran was a point of agreement when Turkish Prime Minister Necmetting Erbakan visited Iran last year). The third and most important factor is the full cooperation of the PDK with the Turkish Army.

So far, only the British and Syrian foreign ministries have protested the Turkish-PDK counter-terror operation.

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## ***South Africa rushes to privatize prisons***

Tender documents asking companies to bid for the financing, design, construction and operation of four new prisons, will be issued on May 21, a South African Correctional Services department spokesman said on May 19. Overseas prison and security groups such as Britain's Group Four and U.S. firms Correctional Services Corp and Wackenhut Corp., are expected to show interest in the project.

The government is looking for private firms to build two maximum-security jails, each for 1,500 prisoners, in Northern Province and the Free State, a similar-sized facility for prisoners awaiting trial in Gauteng, and a further unit for 800 youthful offenders in the Mpumalanga region.

Other private jails could follow, putting South Africa at the forefront of prison privatization, South African officials are quoted. "The whole idea is based on the assumption that government will not have the money to build the kind of [prison] facilities needed," said Correctional Services Minister Sipo Mzimela earlier this year.

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## ***Mongolian voters dump Sachs-maniac President***

In national elections May 18, Mongolia's voters overwhelmingly voted against Jeffrey Sachs's and the International Republican Institute's hand-picked "democracy" rulers of President Pansulmaagiin Ochirbat and the ruling Democratic Union Coalition. The new President is Natsagiin Bagabandi,

## Briefly

**ROMAN HERZOG**, Germany's President, who recently declared the nation-state a dead letter, was presented with Helga Zepp LaRouche's demand to debate on May 17, as he was leaving a luncheon in Pittsburgh, with Pennsylvania's Nazi-like Gov. Tom Ridge. Zepp LaRouche is running for chancellor on the Civil Rights Movement-Solidarity slate.

**THE ISRAELI DAILY Haaretz** has leaked a U.S. CIA study showing that Jewish settlements in the occupied territories have between a 25 and 50% vacancy rate, despite massive tax breaks and subsidized utilities, to get Jews to live there. The Netanyahu government has claimed the settlements were necessary to alleviate a housing shortage in Israel.

**FIVE MILLION** North Koreans are in immediate danger of starving to death, half of them children, the director of the World Food Program Germany, Volker Hausmann, stated in Bonn on May 23. He refuted earlier statements made by the spokesman for the German Development Ministry, Leo Kreuz, that the "stone-aged communist regime" is responsible for the disaster, rather than the huge floods that destroyed the last two harvests and the irrigation system.

**NORTHERN IRELAND** Unionists lost heavily in many races in the recent May 1 elections, including control of the Belfast government. The result, according to news accounts, "is a complete reversal of the municipal history since 1610, when Belfast was officially given town status by the British Crown."

**FORMER BBC BEIJING** correspondent James Miles has added to the "yellow peril from China" genre of literature with *The Legacy of Tiananmen: China in Disarray*. According to *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Miles asserts that China is "disunited, weak, disillusioned and wretched," and predicts its early collapse. The BBC's current bureau chief has just released *Dragon Stroke*, a "China launches World War III" fantasy.

Soviet-educated leader of the formerly communist Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). Bagabandi won with 60.8% of the vote, against 29.8% for the DUC. The new President said on May 18, after casting his vote, that he would work with all parties, but his priority was to slow down the DUC government's radical reforms which have wreaked havoc on what was already one of the world's poorest countries.

*EIR* has demonstrated how the DUC was set up as a test-tube "free-trade democracy" directly by Jeffrey Sachs and the IRI, as a flank against China, and a complement to Sachs's dirty work in Russia. But London also basked in the glory of the "Mongolian Renaissance," hailing "Ulan Bator's Love Affair with Britain" (according to a London *Times* headline), following June 1996 parliamentary elections, in which the DUC won the majority.

### **Colombian court makes 'mercy killing' legal**

The Colombian Constitutional Court, basing itself on the 1991 narco-constitution which guarantees "a free internal space in every human being where the state cannot interfere," voted to legalize the murder of terminal or grievously injured patients "who give their clear consent." The ruling was 6-3, with one dissenting justice telling the media that the majority operated under the "erroneous premise that each person is the owner of his own life." Actually, the operational premise of the vote was less philosophical than financial, as the chief magistrate of the Constitutional Court Antonio Barrera made clear in an interview on May 21: "There are a lot of people who believe that sustaining the life of the terminally ill is too costly from the economic point of view, and that applying a penalty [for committing euthanasia] is wrong."

The sentence for euthanasia was hardly stringent—three to six months for "mercy killing." However, when that was challenged by an attorney, who sought to bring the penalty for euthanasia into line with the sentences for murder, the Constitutional

Court overturned any criminal sanction against "mercy killing." This is the same court which in 1994 decriminalized possession of illegal drugs for "personal use."

On May 22, the *Miami Herald* said Colombia is "the only country in the Americas—and perhaps the world—to legalize euthanasia," and quotes Hemlock Society founder Derek Humphry saying, "It's fascinating that Colombia has made this step forward." According to the posthumously published report of Humphry's ex-wife Ann, Humphry killed his dying first wife, and his second wife's elderly (but otherwise healthy) parents.

### **Rifkind blocked probe of Milosevic's war crimes**

Former British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind blocked an international war crimes investigation into Serb President Slobodan Milosevic during the past 12 months, according to a report in the London *Observer* of May 18. The paper reports that Rifkind "vetoed an American plan to hand over intelligence intercepts collected jointly by Britain and the United States, despite a personal plea by the president of the United Nations war crimes court at The Hague."

According to the daily, British intelligence had in its possession vital telecommunications intercepts from its Cyprus monitoring station, the only one able to intercept direct telephone conversations between Milosevic and Bosnian Serb butchers Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic. Furthermore, "Rifkind also refused to change the orders of British peace-keeping troops to enable them to arrest the two wanted Bosnian Serb leaders."

The Labour Party-linked *Observer* also reports that "The Milosevic regime secretly paid £96,000 (about \$156,000) to British Conservative Party supporters via its lobbying firm, Ian Greer. Former [Tory] Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, who left government and joined the bankers NatWest Markets, also subsequently helped negotiate commercial deals with Milosevic to manage the Serbians' debt and privatize their telephone system."