

International Intelligence

Kofi Annan: Nigeria will free political prisoners

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan ended his visit to Nigeria on July 3, reporting that his discussions with the government of Gen. Abdusalam Abubakar had obtained a promise for the release of all political prisoners, including former Presidential candidate Mashood Abiola. Annan had met Abiola in prison earlier in the week, and Abiola evidently committed himself to relinquishing his claim to victory in the 1993 elections, and promised to cooperate with the military government. The opposition National Democratic Coalition, tied to Britain's former colonial minister Baroness Lynda Chalker, denounced Annan and Abiola.

However, on July 7, Abiola died of a sudden heart attack, while meeting with a U.S. delegation headed by Thomas Pickering. The death shocked the country, in the wake of the June 8 death of its President, Sani Abacha, also of a sudden heart attack. In order to avert speculation that Abiola might have been murdered, Pickering gave a live phone interview to National Public Radio in the United States, detailing the circumstances of Abiola's death, and praising President Abubakar for immediately authorizing Abiola's private doctor to participate in the autopsy.

Guinea-Bissau is latest victim of regional wars

The conflict in the West African country of Guinea-Bissau continued unabated as of mid-June, when the second projected round of talks between the government of President Nino Vieira and insurgent forces broke down. The fighting is between, on the one side, the government forces, backed by forces from Senegal, Guinea-Conakry, and reportedly some French forces; and on the other, the forces of Gen. Ansumane Manu of Guinea-Bissau, backed by the Senegalese separatist Movement of Casamance Democratic Forces of Senegal, and also reportedly rebels from Gambia around Koukoue Sama Sanga.

This cauldron marks yet another theater of regional warfare in Africa, alongside Angola, the Great Lakes, the Horn of Africa and Sudan, and Liberia-Sierra Leone. All of the wars in these countries involve multiple relations with opposition groups and governments in neighboring countries. The wars are a marker for the disintegration of the African countries, in the face of the International Monetary Fund austerity imposed since the early 1980s, the plummeting terms of trade, and relentless pressures from the "donor countries" for yet more austerity and privatization.

In Guinea-Bissau, the insurrection was sparked on June 7, when General Manes was accused of funneling arms to the Casamance Senegalese separatists. The Senegal government sent troops into Guinea-Bissau in order to close off a safe haven from there for the Casamance operation.

As of latest reports, the rebels had surrounded the capital, Bissau, but were, themselves, also surrounded. Inside Bissau, according to a Catholic agency based in the Vatican, the only people left are children, the elderly, and the sick, all of whom are dying of hunger. Food supply has become a huge problem in the capital, which more than 200,000 people have fled.

Book exposes 'Clean Hands' dirty tricks vs. Italy

A new book in Italy documenting that the "Clean Hands" anti-corruption inquisition was intended as an assault against the state, has sparked a parliamentary investigation. The book, *The Italian Guillotine: Operation Clean Hands and the Overthrow of Italy's First Republic*, is by Luca Mantovani, a spokesman for the Forza Italia party, and Stanton H. Burnett, a former U.S. diplomat with long experience in Italy, and a senior adviser to the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. (*EIR* has demonstrated that the "Clean Hands" operation was run by Transparency International, a project of Britain's Prince Philip. TI launches witch-hunts against sovereign governments under cover of "anti-corruption" campaigns.)

Over 100 parliamentarians have presented a parliamentary interrogation, in which they protest against the "systematic intimidation" by the Clean Hands team of anybody "who dares to voice opinions or give interviews that are unwelcome" to some of the investigating magistrates.

The book's authors, especially Burnett, are repeatedly being asked by media whether there is a comparison between the Clean Hands witch-hunt, and American special prosecutor Kenneth Starr. Burnett told Rome's *Il Messaggero* that judicial arrogance in Italy has even fewer limitations than in the United States, but agreed that the comparison is apt. Meanwhile, *EIR* has learned that Transparency International's "Source Book"—the organization's epistemological bible—devotes particular attention to the usefulness of the U.S. Office of the Independent Counsel, as a legal mechanism for destabilization.

UN reports on crimes vs. humanity in Zaire-Congo

In a June 30 cover letter, transmitting the report of the aborted UN investigation into massacres during the Zaire war, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan highlights the investigators' conclusion that the killings by Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo (AFDL) constituted crimes against humanity.

The investigative team members believe that some of the killings may constitute genocide, and they call for further investigation. "Hundreds of unarmed persons were captured and executed as a result of the attack on Mungunga camp in November 1996, and many unarmed civilians were hunted down and executed after fleeing from the attacks on this and other camps," the report states. In May 1997, hundreds of unarmed Rwandan Hutus were massacred in Mbandaka and the neighboring village of Wendji by AFDL troops, apparently under effective Rwandan Patriotic Army command.

In a related development, the Organization of African Unity has established a panel to investigate the causes of the 1994 geno-

PHILIPPINES President Joseph “Erap” Estrada was sworn in on June 30, in a ceremony that played heavily on the June 12, 1998 centenary of first President Emilio Aguinaldo’s declaration of independence from Spain. Estrada used the same Bible and pen as Aguinaldo had in 1898. No foreign VIP guests were invited, and Estrada was the first Filipino President to deliver his inaugural address in the national language, Tagalog.

CAMBODIA’S ELECTION campaign for the July 26 general election began on June 25, with an estimated 97% of voters registered, and 39 newly registered political parties. The three leading parties, co-Premier Hun Sen’s Cambodian People’s Party (CPP), Prince Ranariddh’s Funcinpec, and the Sam Rainsy Party, all held rallies in or near the capital of Phnom Penh on the first day.

ALGERIA will allow the UN to sponsor a mission to investigate the mass killings that have plagued the country since 1992. The mission will be led by Mario Soares, former Prime Minister of Portugal, and includes Donald Henry, former U.S. ambassador to the UN, I.K. Gujral, former Prime Minister of India, and Abdel Karim Kabariti, former Prime Minister of Jordan.

NEW ZEALAND’S cannabis “industry” in the economically depressed north is rivalling the area’s dairy industry, according to a report, “Cannabis Highs and Lows—Sustaining and Dislocating Rural Communities in Northland.” Not only are both Maori and European New Zealanders being forced into the “business,” but addiction to the drug is growing, especially among children.

EDUARD SHEVARNADZE, Georgia’s President, told the July 6 issue of *Corriere della Sera* that he may be targeted a third time for assassination. He said that the first two attempts were steered by “outside forces,” who controlled the Georgian assailants, now under detention.

cide in Rwanda. The OAU’s action comes just as the organization’s heads of state were receiving a letter from the Rally for the Return of Democracy in Rwanda (RDR), calling for a thorough investigation, and detailing the political issues behind the “ethnic” cover in the conflict (see *EIR*, July 3).

Coming weeks crucial for Indonesian peace hopes

A German economist, who is close to circles around Indonesian President B.J. Habibie, outlined three delicate areas that the country must deal with over the coming weeks, in discussions with *EIR*. They include the status of East Timor; the need to repatriate ethnic Chinese businessmen, who had fled during the rioting, and comprise a crucial part of Indonesia’s economy; and, the urgent need to import rice, which is both scarce on the world market, and for which only the International Monetary Fund is offering money, with the usual cruel conditions attached.

Underscoring the economist’s concern, is the fact that a five-page UN document outlining a proposed special status for East Timor has been leaked, while the UN is sponsoring discussions between Indonesia and Portugal, East Timor’s former colonial power. The leaking of the document was loudly denounced on July 3 by Timorese Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, 1996 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who warned that the leak could lead the UN to withdraw the proposal. Bishop Belo favors the plan, which he has discussed with President Habibie.

Did P-2’s Licio Gelli flee to Montenegro?

Italian media have discovered that Licio Gelli, the chief of the Propaganda-2 freemasonic lodge, is hiding out in either Belgrade or Montenegro. Gelli fled Italy in early June, after he was sentenced to prison in connection with the bankruptcy of the Banco Ambrosiano.

On June 26, an Italian TV reporter broadcast a photograph of Gelli in Belgrade, while the June 27 issue of *Il Sole 24 Ore* reported that its “well-informed Montenegrin sources,” said that he was actually on his way to Montenegro, where Gelli has business interests around the Montex bank. According to the business daily, Gelli started a project in 1996 to turn Montenegro into an “Adriatic Montecarlo” casino haven. Western intelligence agencies became alarmed at the prospect of “the creation of a giant center for dirty-money laundering in the heart of the Adriatic Sea.”

Gelli’s connections in Montenegro go back to 1942, when he served there as both an army officer and a Fascist Party leader.

IMF price hikes spark tribal war in Yemen

Fighting between major Yemeni tribes and the army broke out at the end of June, following riots triggered when prices for fuel and other essentials were raised in accordance with an International Monetary Fund/World Bank package. The recently appointed Prime Minister, Abdel-Karim Al-Iryani, described them as “not merely spontaneous, but planned riots aiming at threatening the stability and security of the country.”

The dominant Yemeni tribes have affiliations that encompass support from the Saudi kingdom (which has had a major role in the destabilization of Yemen, especially since the civil war in 1994), to backing from the Saudi terrorist financier Osama bin Laden.

These developments are taking place at the same time as the outbreak of fighting between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and will limit Yemen’s strategic influence in the south of the Red Sea. In 1996, the Eritrean Navy occupied two major Yemeni islands, reportedly with Israeli help, and is believed to have established intelligence bases on them.

Moreover, the not-so-spontaneous eruption in Yemen comes at the same time that Egypt and Sudan are opening up collaboration, and attempting to bring in Ethiopia, in order to undercut the regional warfare devastating Africa.