

International Intelligence

Soros foundation closes its Belarus operation

The director of the Washington, D.C. office of George Soros's Open Society Institute, John Fox, announced at a press conference in Minsk, Belarus, on Sept. 3, that the group was terminating its operations in Belarus—the first time this has happened in a former communist country. "The Belarussian authorities have distinguished themselves by forcing us to close," he charged.

In reality, the foundation pulled out because of fear of the legal consequences of an investigation by the government and the tax police, on its subversive activities in Belarus. The foundation has been working with particular enthusiasm on destabilizing Belarus and, according to its usual *modus operandi*, on creating a fifth column in the country, financing any force that could be used against the sovereignty of the country.

On March 10, Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenko issued a decree restricting the tax-exempt status of the foundation. On March 16, the director of the foundation, Peter Byrne, was arrested because of his destabilizing activities, and expelled from the country. On March 18, the President announced an investigation into the many non-governmental organizations that have descended on Belarus like locusts. On March 19, police arrived at the foundation offices with a search warrant. A vast investigation was launched, resulting in the discovery of tax and hard currency violations, as well as criminal activities.

The foundation's bank accounts have been frozen, and it has been ordered to pay \$3 million in back taxes. On Sept. 1, staff members were questioned in connection with a criminal investigation.

Foreign Minister Ivan Antonovich told state television that the foundation's decision to pull out meant that someone apparently wanted to provoke "a sensational reaction of a political character." Antonovich said that the Soros group would not get out of paying its taxes by closing down and making "political statements, including quite negative ones, about us."

The President's press spokesman called the Institute "a bit strange" and "probably not important enough for the President to comment on."

The financial and criminal investigation of the Soros gang by the Belarus authorities closely resembles one launched by the Croatian authorities last year.

Iran calls for action to stop Algerian war

Following the massacre of 100-300 civilians in Algeria at the end of August, government officials and press in Iran have appealed for action. Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi "condemned the recent massacre of civilians in Algeria and called on the international community to deal with the 'unprecedented crimes,' perpetrated against innocent civilians," according to an IRNA dispatch.

Several English-language dailies in Iran characterized the situation in Algeria in unusually drastic terms. *Iran News* wrote that, "if the situation is not brought under control, [the] existence of the entire Algerian nation will be endangered," according to IRNA. The *Iran Daily* "believed that the Algerian genocide needs to be stopped immediately before it is too late."

As for proposed courses of action, the *Iran News* urged the council of ministers to meet, to deal with the situation, and a delegation of the Organization of Islamic Conference to travel to Algeria, to contact all parties, in search of a mediated solution. All the papers have emphasized the need for Algerian President Zeroual to accept a dialogue with all political forces, including the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Over the past five years, there has developed in Algeria a polarization of society, between so-called Islamic terrorist gangs (manipulated by military security services), civilian militias (armed by the government), and local, feudal criminal organizations committed to the law of vendetta. British-controlled mercenary and related military operations, such as Defense Services Ltd.,

Executive Outcomes, and others documented in *EIR*'s recent report on the "Invisible Empire," are an integral part of the managed civil war which has wracked the country since 1992.

Pope quotes Petrarch on the unity of Italy

On Sept. 4, Pope John Paul II, while receiving the new Italian ambassador to the Vatican, Alberto Leoncini Bartoli, opened his welcoming speech quoting from Petrarch, where the poet defines Italy as the "beautiful country, traversed by the Apennine mountains and surrounded by the sea and the Alps." Observers and media underlined that these are the current borders of Italy, and that therefore the Pope's statement was an implicit polemic against Umberto Bossi's separatist Northern League. The League recently attacked the Pope, whom the League considers "guilty" of having stopped Bossi's return to the national government.

The Pope also lamented the low birthrate in Italy, one of the lowest in the world, saying that such a situation "seriously jeopardizes the hope of a country toward a future." He also appealed to the Italian government and political forces, particularly on the need to create jobs for youth.

British shenanigans in Bosnia reported

According to a report in the Croatian daily *Vecernji List* of July 14, the British Ministry for Overseas Development provided financial backing to Bosnian Serb war criminal Simo Drljaca, before he was killed by British Special Air Services (SAS) troops early in July.

The report said that he had been receiving British government assistance, slated for reconstruction. The Ministry for Overseas Development confirmed that the money from the reconstruction fund was paid out to a firm called Komgrad, which Drljaca ran,

INDIAN Minister of State for External Affairs Salim Iqbal Shervani concluded a two-day visit to Iran on Sept. 8. In meetings with Iran's new President, the foreign minister, and other high-ranking officials, Shervani discussed bilateral relations and recent regional developments. He delivered a message from Prime Minister Gujral to President Khatami.

NELSON MANDELA wants East Timor cut off from Indonesia. "The basis of my representation to President Suharto was that autonomy should be given to the people of East Timor," Mandela said on Sept. 9, after meeting East Timor separatist leader and co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Catholic Bishop Carlos Belo.

A TOP ASSOCIATE of Tibet's Dalai Lama was murdered in August by even more fanatical factions within the Tibetan Buddhist exile community, according to Indian police. Attempts to pin the blame on China for the murder of the monk and two assistants, have fallen flat, as Indian police identified members of the Dorje Shugden Society, founded last year, as the murderers. The murdered monk had denounced the sect in the name of the Dalai Lama.

BORIS YELTSIN will not run again for President in the year 2000. Yeltsin made the statement on Sept. 2. "One has to clear the way for the young," he said. "We now have a good, friendly, and intelligent leadership team." While the Russian Constitution formally bans a third term candidacy, there has been intense discussion of at least two potential "loopholes" whereby Yeltsin could run again in the year 2000.

AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE hit a convoy of cars in which the military governor of Nigeria's Ekiti state was travelling on Sept 2. Although eight people were hurt, Lt. Col. Mohammed Bawa escaped uninjured. Eight people, including Bawa's aide-de-camp and four schoolchildren, were taken to a hospital in Ado-Ekiti, capital of the southwestern state.

"for building a village school and a cultural centre." Drljaca, besides being a war criminal, belonged to a group of corrupt Serbian entrepreneurs, which in 1992 took over a construction firm and some other companies in Prijedor, and later on "privatized" them. He was also a leader of a criminal association that was blackmailing other businessmen, threatening to burn down their properties, if construction agreements were accepted by somebody else.

According to the London *Sunday Times*, the NATO Stabilization Force (SFOR) was better received in Prijedor after Drljaca began to receive as much as 50% of all reconstruction contracts. According to the article, it was SFOR officials who were responsible for this, under the condition that he stop his threats of violence against other companies.

The affair raises the question of Britain's intelligence operations in the Balkans, which *EIR* has exposed.

Gerry Adams lays out Sinn Fein's goals

Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, told reporters at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 3, that, contrary to British Prime Minister Tony Blair's declarations, "there will be, and there should be, and there can be, a united Ireland in our lifetimes." He described the negotiations set to begin in mid-September as a "very defining and critical moment in Anglo-Irish relationships." Adams noted that Ireland is a small island, only 5 million people; "we don't have a history of imperialism, of colonialism." Because of this, he called on Americans of Irish ancestry "to intensify their efforts . . . interests, and . . . involvement" in Irish peace efforts, because "we do need others throughout the world to help us, to help the British, to encourage both governments to make the necessary progress."

The Sinn Fein president praised President Clinton, saying that he "should be commended for the way he opened the lid on all this," especially the fact that "the President

[gave] U.S. citizens their right to receive information" from Sinn Fein. Adams countered this openness to "the British government [having] tried to [marginalize] us . . . exclude us, [and] to demonize us."

Adams called for a complete demilitarization, including by British forces, and for the Unionists, led by David Trimble, to participate in the talks. He reported that many supporters of Trimble, who has not yet agreed to sit at the peace talks table with Sinn Fein, are saying that they want Trimble in the talks.

Adams was presented with a copy of *EIR*'s issue of Aug. 22, titled "Britain's 'Invisible' Empire Unleashes the Dogs of War."

Pentecostalism grows in Brazil's MST

The number of pentecostals within Brazil's Landless Movement (MST) is growing, especially at the camps established in the Pontal de Paranapanema region in São Paulo state, according to a report in the Brazilian daily *Folha de São Paulo* on Aug. 25. The Assembly of God is the predominant group among the land invaders.

According to the newspaper, this is causing concern among the MST's Catholics, who founded the group out of liberation theology's Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), and the Ecclesiastical Base Communities (CEBs). There is no conflict between the theo-libbers and evangelicals in terms of the MST's goals, however. In fact, at the Ninth Inter-Ecclesiastical Encounter, held in Maranhão in late July, which brought together over 2,000 CEB representatives, there was discussion of the need to be more open to pentecostalism, both within and outside the Catholic Church.

A poll conducted in May 1996 among MSTers in two areas of São Paulo state, showed that 9% were pentecostals, and 1% "historic" Catholics. Today, MST leaders estimate that 30% of its militants are evangelicals, a sharp contrast to the picture in the early 1990s.