

## Australia Dossier by Robert Barwick

### Globalists Are Behind Fiji Coup

*British and Australian assets have pulled not one, but two coups against nationalist Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry.*

In fast-moving developments in the South Pacific nation of Fiji, the Fijian Army has seized control of the country on May 29, following a coup attempt on May 19 by failed Fijian businessman George Speight. Speight and 15 gunmen had seized 50 hostages, including Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry and most of his cabinet, whom they still hold as of this writing. Speight then declared himself Prime Minister on behalf of the indigenous population of Fiji, whose rights, he charged, were being usurped by the ethnic Indian minority led by Chaudhry.

The Australian and international news media have endorsed Speight's claim, that the crisis is an ethnic conflict between indigenous Fijians and the ethnic-Indian minority, who comprise 44% of the population, whom the British colonial masters brought to Fiji in the 19th century. "Ethnic tensions" were also blamed for two coups in 1987 by Chaudhry's predecessor as Prime Minister, military strongman Sitiveni Rabuka, who seized power against "Indian domination" of the government. For the next decade, Indians were excluded from government participation, but Fiji was also shunned by the international community. In 1997, a new, multi-racial Constitution was adopted, ending Fiji's international isolation. In May 1999, Prime Minister Rabuka was defeated in a landslide by Chaudhry and his Fiji Labour Party.

Far from being oppressive and "Indian-dominated," Chaudhry's government had more native Fijian than Indian ministers, as well as overwhelming support from poor and

working class Fijians, indigenous and Indian alike. Chaudhry co-founded the Fiji Labour Party in 1985, and had been Finance Minister in 1987 before the Rabuka coups. Despite having been badly beaten physically by Rabuka's forces, he is widely admired for not fleeing Fiji after the coups, as did many other government ministers.

Like Chaudhry himself, a former head of the Trade Union Congress, both one-third of his current Cabinet and many backbenchers, were senior union officials before they entered government. The local Anglophile, "multi-racial" oligarchy (wealthy Indians and the Fijian Great Council of Chiefs, now headed by Rabuka) despised Chaudhry's policies promoting the general welfare.

Australian National University history professor Brij V. Lal, a native Fijian and an author of Fiji's 1997 Constitution, told *EIR* that most Fijians approved of Chaudhry's policies: "He was espousing old, conventional, Labour-type policies," Professor Lal said. "Protecting trade unions, rolling back structural reform [austerity] programs, talking at least about introducing a minimum wage, trying to make sure that foreign investment in Fiji came, but that it wasn't a kind of rampant capitalism—he was attempting those kinds of things. He was beginning to consolidate his position across a broad spectrum of people. And once that happened, of course, the power base of those other ethnically based parties would be threatened."

Chaudhry had scrapped the regressive 10% value added tax on cooking oil, flour, powdered milk, rice, fish, and other food essentials; had estab-

lished price controls over other basic commodities; had intervened against "downsizing" by major industries; and had started to bring clean water and electricity to rural areas.

This, Her Majesty's government and Her Australian lackeys could not tolerate. As the Melbourne May 28 *Sunday Age* admitted, the mastermind behind Speight's coup, was British Special Air Services Col. Ilisoni Ligairi, the founder of Fiji's 30-man elite Counter Revolutionary Warfare Unit (CRWU), who provided Speight his soldiers. Ligairi had been appointed to head the British, Australian, and U.S.-trained CRWU in 1987 by then-coup leader Rabuka. According to the *Sunday Age*, planning for Speight's coup took place at Rabuka's house. The Rabuka-headed Great Council of Chiefs endorsed Speight's coup.

A senior Australian counter-terrorism expert told *EIR* that the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) would also have been connected to the coup. "ASIS would have some links to them. ASIS knows everything that goes on in the South Pacific," he said.

Thus, it was no shocker that, on May 23, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, after a maidenly protest that the coup "has taken us completely by surprise," gave it Australia's approval, by declaring that Chaudhry need not be reinstated, as long as "democracy" were restored.

On May 29, the Fijian military under Commodore Frank Bainimarama, seized control of the country, to "restore order." However, the Australian and New Zealand-trained Bainimarama, like Speight, dismissed Chaudhry's government; annulled the 1997 multi-racial Constitution; announced that he would amnesty Speight; and appointed Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Fiji's former ambassador to Britain, as the new Prime Minister of the country.