

Obregón: The truth is that those who are dividing the labor movement are embedded in the trade union leadership, above all in the case of the UTC . . . who have seeded immorality in the federation and are the true enemies of the unity of the labor movement. . . .

EIR: Following the UTC plenum, what will happen with the labor movement? Will a new confederation be formed?

Obregón: We will continue to fight for the unity of trade unionism. We believe that we must turn all our efforts to this end. We are already holding very important meetings with sections of the CGT, the CTC, with certain independent sectors. We seek to create a single labor federation that can recover the force and vigor that the labor movement has lost. We believe . . . that we are going to create the largest force of the labor movement, to take on those who want to gut workers' rights and reimpose the policies of the International Monetary Fund, and those who want to open the doors to those linked to the dirty business of drug addiction.

EIR: The President-elect, in one of his speeches in the Department of Choco, said that he agreed with the idea of unity of the labor movement. Do you think that Dr. Barco is going to support this kind of movement?

Obregón: In view of these statements of his, we think that Dr. Barco will see in the unity of the labor movement a useful contribution to his government. He has said, and we hope he follows through, that he will need the popular forces of the country to make great changes in the country. And these popular forces must be unified and organized. . . . So we think that this unified labor federation will be well received both by him and by many other sectors who believe that democracy needs a strong trade union movement. . . .

EIR: There has been tremendous pressure by the business sector to reform the labor code so as to eliminate many gains. . . . How do you think Dr. Barco will deal with this kind of pressure? Will he be influenced by it?

Obregón: We will have to wait and see what position the President of the Republic takes. We hope that he will not yield to the pressure of the economic associations. That is why we are organizing. . . .

EIR: Do you think that behind the pressure to reform labor legislation are supranational institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which in other countries like Panama and Argentina have pushed for labor reforms?

Obregón: Yes, undoubtedly behind all this is, especially, the IMF. That is why we are insisting on the strengthening of the labor movement, because we will have to apply strong pressure of our own so that what the IMF wants to impose—which would put an end to the workers by denying them their rights—is not complied with.

Britain sees more

by Mark Burdman

Following the Aug. 3-5 "mini-summit" on South Africa of the seven Commonwealth nations in London, the British Broadcasting Corporation on Aug. 6 proclaimed that there was a state of "war" between British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the Commonwealth.

The BBC description is appropriate, even if Mrs. Thatcher avoided fist-fights with her Commonwealth interlocutors. Tactically, Mrs. Thatcher chose instead to make a positive use of the time-honored British method of deft diplomatic verbal obfuscation: She will "not stand in the way" of European Economic Community sanctions, a negative formulation of non-intention. She will encourage a "voluntary ban" on tourism to South Africa, a non-legally binding, meaningless formulation. And there will be no "new investments" in South Africa, again, a non-policy, since there have been no new investments in South Africa in any case for many months.

In substance, she held the line against sanctions. And, in taking on the Commonwealth, in her own manner, Mrs. Thatcher was engaged in combat with the international institution that is Her Majesty's most prized possession.

The real issue

What transpired in London from Aug. 3-5, then, is only one significant battle in a war for much larger stakes. The fate of South Africa is critical, because it has become the front-line in Soviet-led attempts to undermine the economy and strategic position of the West.

But in British terms, what is fundamental, is the further escalation of the "Palacegate" scandal, provoked by the House of Windsor's extraordinary and illicit (by British political-constitutional standards) mid-July declaration of war against 10 Downing Street. Through "leaks" against Mrs. Thatcher, emanating from the Palace, and appearing in the July 20 London *Sunday Times*, it became known that the Queen was extremely displeased with her prime minister on a whole range of issues, from sanctions against South Africa, which the Queen favors, to the use of British airfields for the U.S.

'Palacegate' fights

raids on Libya last spring, which the Queen opposed.

Representatives of intelligence services of various nations have confirmed in private discussion the evaluation that Lyndon LaRouche issued in a July 25 release entitled, "Is Queen Elizabeth II Sinking?" What is involved in "Palacegate" is a fundamental battle over the question of East-West relations. The fact that the monarchy overplayed its hand, and via the press leaks against Mrs. Thatcher, exposed its intent to reach a "New Yalta" deal with Moscow, has begun a process that may lead irreversibly to the abdication of the Queen, and, necessarily, the entire House of Windsor, within the next few months.

In a discussion with *EIR* Aug. 7, a very senior British individual, who has been involved in important factional brawls within the British Establishment for five decades, told this correspondent, off-the-record, "Something along the lines of a cleavage on East-West issues must be involved" in the Thatcher-Buckingham Palace feud.

"Otherwise, the Palace's behavior is totally inexplicable. I was brought up to believe, that when the Queen said something in the Palace in private, it would never be repeated, publicly. When this story in the *Sunday Times* broke, it was a bit of a shock to see the Monarch's views so glibly told to the press. It would be equally shocking, to think that a press secretary could go off on his own, and just leak things that way. There's something very odd about it. The leaks must have been made on purpose, by the Palace. There's no other explanation. I don't think we've seen the end of this, by any means."

The South African battleground

For the moment, South Africa will continue to be the battleground on which "Palacegate" will be fought out.

The *Times* of London reported on Aug. 7 that a new "Thatcher-Commonwealth clash looms, this time to be played out under the auspices of the Queen herself," on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary

Association in September 1986. The issue, again, will be South Africa, with the Commonwealth escalating its demands for sanctions, and with panel sessions like, "Will the Commonwealth survive apartheid?"

Says the *Times*: "Giving the proceedings an added edge, Her Majesty will speak at the conference. On what? 'You'll just have to wait and see,' said the Palace yesterday."

In early September, the Queen's own Archbishop Runcie, head of the Church of England, will be traveling to South Africa to stir up troubled waters. Runcie, an impassioned advocate of a global, ecumenical deal with the Soviet Empire and the Russian Orthodox Church, has been conducting a dirty political war against Mrs. Thatcher on the issue of South Africa, particularly through the Church of England's Board of Social Responsibility, headed by the Bishop of Birmingham, Hugh Montefiore.

British sources inform *EIR* that should the full circumstances of Runcie's rise to the top of the Church of England ever be revealed, that alone could gravely damage the monarchy.

Another flank that the Monarchy is opening is to escalate on the issue in the United States, by activating all its assets in the U.S. Congress and in the "anti-apartheid" movements, to weaken President Reagan's support for Mrs. Thatcher. Both Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney declared that the next moves to impose sanctions will be made in Washington. Mulroney told newspapers in London that he expects to meet Reagan soon, and that, in a congressional election year, Reagan's Republican Party would be forced to support application of sanctions.

At the mini-summit itself, profound political antagonism between the Queen and Mrs. Thatcher was probably a more important dynamic than the publicly evident hypocrisy of leaders like Australia's Hawke, whose nation stands to benefit from billions of dollars of deals for its natural resources if sanctions are imposed on mineral-rich South Africa; or Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, who cries at international podiums about sanctions against South Africa, while his own nation requires emergency aid to prevent the death of millions from AIDS, locust swarms, and other catastrophes.

Perhaps the most suggestive account, is one that appeared in the pro-House of Windsor London *Guardian* Aug. 4, which read, in part:

"[Mrs. Thatcher] warned that without Britain, Commonwealth sanctions would be a paper tiger. Even though Mrs. Thatcher says she is in a 'negotiating mood,' a lunch hosted by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, India's Prime Minister, shortly before the first formal session at Marlborough House, was an uneasy affair with everybody trying to avoid a head-on collision. The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Mr. Shidrath Ramphal, emerged saying that the other six were simply not going to accept another 'teeny-weeny' concession from Mrs. Thatcher. The same uneasy mood may well have prevailed at last night's dinner with the Queen."