

# International Intelligence

## 'Black Legend' puffed up against Columbus

Germany's Hessen 3 television has taken the "Black Legend" media campaign against Christopher Columbus to new depths, broadcasting a three-part series, starting Jan. 5, depicting the explorer as a fraud, a mass-murderer, a swindler, and a liar.

Author Peter Milger uses ostensible 16th-century Spanish court evidence to "prove" that the architect and hero of the voyage was not Columbus, but Spain's Pinzon; blames Columbus, not only for "mass-murder" against the Arawak indigenous people, but also for the suffering of the people of Haiti today; asserts that Columbus and/or his son Hernando lied that Columbus's ship was named the *Santa Maria*; claims that Columbus committed "fraud" against the other sailors during the crossing of the Atlantic; and denies that Columbus possessed the qualities of "great integrity and courage" usually attributed to him.

The television show is part of an anti-Columbus media campaign exploding in Europe in the first days of 1992. The German magazine *Der Spiegel* and Britain's *Guardian* are among the print media that have joined the hysteria.

## Beijing covered up thousands of detainees

Asia Watch reported on Jan. 4 that there are thousands of political detainees from the 1989 Tiananmen Square revolt in Communist China who have not been previously known to the world.

The group's report, released in Hong Kong, says that Beijing never accounted for thousands of activists reported by the official media to have been detained. "There are firm grounds to believe that a large proportion of them remain, more than two years later, behind bars," the report said. "Clear supporting evidence for this view emerged only in late 1991, when Asia Watch began to learn the identities and circumstances of

several hundred previously unknown individuals, mainly workers, who are currently incarcerated in Hunan province alone on account of their involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy movement. If extrapolated to a national level, in view of the authorities' own admission that the June 1989 'turmoil' affected every province and region of China, the total of those still imprisoned since the June 1989 crackdown is likely to rise substantially." In June 1990, Asia Watch listed 1,150 detainees.

Meanwhile, Beijing's assault against dissent expanded at the end of December, with new trials and arrests. A student activist, Peng Rong, pleaded guilty to counter-revolutionary charges, when he went on trial in Beijing on Christmas Day for his role in the 1989 pro-democracy protests. Peng headed a detachment of security forces at the Tiananmen demonstrations organized to protect student leaders.

Wu Xuecan, a former editor of the official *People's Daily* newspaper, who published a mock edition of the newspaper in May 1989 calling for the dismissal of hard-line Premier Li Peng, went on trial on Jan. 4 on charges of counterrevolution.

Police arrested at least five people for planning the Dec. 24 funeral of a dissident leader.

## Did the CIA forge evidence against Libya?

Scottish Member of Parliament Tom Dalyell has charged that the CIA may have created "evidence" to make Libya take the rap for the bombing of the Pan Am aircraft over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988. The Labour parliamentarian was quoted by Reuters on Jan. 6, saying that after talking to some people who took part in the Scottish police investigation, he was convinced that some evidence had been "placed" by the Central Intelligence Agency. He did not elaborate.

Although massive evidence exists linking Syria to the bombing, the Bush administration suddenly issued indictments against two Libyans on Nov. 14, 1991. Syria, since

supporting the U.S. in the war against Iraq, has been on Washington's "good guys" list.

According to Dalyell, Libya is terrified that the U.S. and Britain will retaliate for its refusal to extradite the two Libyans. He said that a high-ranking Libyan Foreign Ministry official had telephoned him at his home near Edinburgh to express this concern. "Libya had no part in the bombing, but certain other countries in the Middle East had," Dalyell quoted Abdullah Bibas as saying. Bibas, who heads the European section at the ministry, said that even if it were to be proved that the two Libyans had been involved in planting the bomb, they could not have been the sole perpetrators.

## Serbia proclaims the 'Third Yugoslavia'

As the bloody massacres against Croatia continued, Serbian officials announced the formation of the "Third Yugoslavia" on Dec. 26, at a preliminary meeting on the subject in Belgrade. Yugoslav Kostic, a member of the Yugoslav presidency, said that this Yugoslavia will be the third after the kingdom which existed from Yugoslavia's creation in 1918, and the socialist republic set up in 1945 under Josip Broz Tito. Delegates at the Belgrade meeting appointed a committee to prepare a draft convention for a new congress.

Federal Vice President Branko Kostic, who chaired the meeting, said the presidency was drawing up a paper setting out several possible forms for the new country, in which he promised multi-party elections.

Jugoslav Kostic explained that the new state would consist of Serbia, with its two provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo, its ally Montenegro, and Krajina—the southern part of Croatia, which is militarily occupied by the Serbian army. He also told a war veterans' conference in Vojvodina that the presidency also "hoped" that Bosnia-Herzegovina would adhere to the Third Yugoslavia. A new Serbian republic has been proclaimed by Serbian Chetniks in Bosnia.

According to this scheme, just a nominal

amount of territory would be conceded to Croatia and Slovenia, which he branded as "traitors to their country, enabling Germany to fulfill its old dream of gaining access to the Adriatic Sea."

## **British in Hong Kong break up families**

The British colonial government in Hong Kong has forcefully split up dozens of couples and deported them to different countries, Reuters reported on Jan. 4. Mixed Chinese and Vietnamese couples, even some where the one is a Vietnamese but of Chinese descent, have been deported to their respective nations. British refugee coordinator Clinton Leeks said: "Sadly, over the years we've had to do this many times. I would put it in the dozens probably." Some couples had children, he admitted.

In related news, the colonial government said on Dec. 20 that it will scrap the death penalty, unused for 25 years. It said it feared that China could resume executions for a wide range of crimes when it takes back the British colony in 1997. Reuters reported that China's frequent public executions, highlighted by the Dec. 26 death by firing squad of three Hong Kong smugglers, seems to be changing public opinion in the colony, which once overwhelmingly backed capital punishment, legislators say.

Hong Kong's last hanging was in 1966, and although courts still frequently sentence murderers to death, the punishments are always commuted to life imprisonment.

## **Vatican cool to plan for Anglican-Catholic unity**

The Vatican has issued a cold reply to the report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), according to the Dec. 29 issue of the *National Catholic Register*, a U.S. weekly. The 12-page response to the proposals for unity was issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for

Promoting Christian Unity.

Said a Vatican official: "Finally they've come out and said the Catholic faith is non-negotiable and that we're in dialogue to help people come to where we are. I don't think it's the end of ecumenical dialogue. I just think it means we'll be working on much more honest assumptions."

The *Register* notes that although the document was released "quietly," the headline in Rome's *La Repubblica* newspaper made the point clear: "Vatican Breaks with the Anglicans." Rev. Douglas Brown, director of the Anglican Center, the official representation of the Anglican Communion in Rome, is quoted: ARCIC "may have made a mistake in asking for an official response. When that happened, it brought in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and they have a very different attitude about a lot of things."

The Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is Joseph Ratzinger.

## **Britain's Major: Third World may get nukes**

British Prime Minister John Major said on Jan. 1 in an interview to BBC radio that he was worried about the risk of independent former Soviet republics selling their nuclear weapons technology to "unstable" Third World nations. He said he saw no short-term risk of Soviet nuclear weapons falling into the wrong hands, but in the longer term there was a possibility that some of the smaller republics "might sell all or part of their nuclear weapons armory."

Especially dangerous in Major's opinion is the possibility that some of the former Soviet Union's nuclear expertise might be bought by a Third World country. "We want to see no further proliferation of nuclear weapons and a reduction of the nuclear threshold that exists at present. So, there are real worries there, and that is why we are so keen to have a full and early dialogue with all the republics."

Major did not offer to dismantle the British nuclear arsenal, however.

● **GORBACHOV** is planning to set up and head a "Gorbachov Fund" for political forecasting, the *Times* of London reported on Dec. 31. Better luck this time, Gorby.

● **TWO BRITISH** ministers, Home Affairs Secretary Kenneth Baker and Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, are arriving in India in January, to discuss the terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir and to sign an agreement for the confiscation of terrorists' property and funds abroad. There will also be an agreement signed on anti-drug cooperation.

● **ROBERT MCNAMARA** and Anatoly Dobrynin, the former Soviet ambassador to the United States, visited Cuba early in January, for meetings with Fidel Castro. The trip stemmed from a project initiated at Harvard University, which brought together U.S., Soviet, and Cuban officials to reexamine the Cuban missile crisis.

● **THE ISRAELI** Mossad and Britain's MI-6 foreign intelligence service are having increased contact, the *Sunday Times* of London reported on Jan. 5, in an article on Lebanon. According to other reports, both services are intensifying covert operations in the Balkans and the southern republics of the former U.S.S.R.

● **INDIAN** Prime Minister Narasimha Rao charged on Jan. 1 that Pakistan is waging undeclared war, using separatism to undermine Indian unity. He was speaking at the Council of National Unity conference on Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

● **BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA** may fall very soon into a Muslim-Orthodox religious war, a Muslim Croatian source believes. Over the last three months, 10,000 Serbian Chetniks arrived as army "reservists," and a series of provocations against the Croatian and Muslim populations ensued.