

International Intelligence

Militants kill Norwegian hostage in Kashmir

The Al-Faran militant outfit killed one of its hostages, Hans Christian Ostro of Norway, whom they had abducted on July 9, by beheading him, Indian press reported Aug. 15. It also threatened to kill the other four foreigners held captive by them if the state government did not concede its demand to release 21 of its militants, including some foreign mercenaries, within two days.

There has been widespread condemnation of the killing, with official and unofficial groups describing it as a "barbarian act." Pakistan issued an official statement condemning it, and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto appealed "once again for the immediate and unconditional release of the remaining hostages." Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, however, in his Independence Day speech, said that Kashmir is the only "real problem of the country today," and blamed Pakistan exclusively as "behind all acts of disruption in the state as it continues to export terrorism into India by not only training and arming militants, even financing them."

India is coming under intense pressure from the governments which have nationals still held hostage—Britain, the United States, and Germany—to arrange for the hostages' safe release.

Propaganda campaign for Quebec split from Canada

A big rally took place in the City of Alma, north of Quebec City, the most pro-separatist area in the province, on Aug. 15, according to wire reports and the Toronto *Globe and Mail*. Quebec separatist leaders urged the people to vote this fall for separation from Canada as the best way to secure their future. "Never has the refusal of Canadians to recognize Quebecers' difference been as firm," Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau told several hundred supporters. "That is why we have to tell them we exist, before engaging in a dialogue with our neighbors

on a new basis."

That means voting in a referendum, probably on Oct. 30, to become independent so Quebec can negotiate new political and economic ties with the rest of Canada, Parizeau said. He was joined on stage by Lucien Bouchard, leader of the federal separatist party, the Quebec Bloc, which has the second-largest number of seats in Canada's national Parliament; and Mario Dumont, the 25-year-old leader of the provincial Quebec Democratic Action party.

The rally was the first held jointly by the three leaders since agreeing on June 12 to adopt a common strategy for the referendum.

The Quebec separation issue and Canada's flagging economy will set the stage for very choppy Canadian financial markets over the coming weeks, said Michael Gregory, chief Canadian market analyst at Lehman Brothers Canada. The buzz on Bay Street, the Wall Street of Toronto, is that investors, particularly foreign, will want to back off until a decision has been made.

London-based sheikh accused by FIS

The London-based Sheikh Abu Qatadeh Al Falastini (the Palestinian) was accused, together with Abu Musaab Al Suri (the Syrian), by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) of "issuing *fatwas* [death sentences] for the notorious Islamic Armed Group (GIA) of Algeria, according to which he considered the killing of the wives and daughters of Algerian soldiers, police, and security personnel as a legal act according to Islamic *sharia*" (religious code). The FIS is Algeria's main opposition group.

In an interview with *Al Hayat*, published on Aug. 22, he denied being the "theorist" of the group.

"I did not issue these *fatwas* before they were announced by the leaders of the GIA," the sheikh said. He attacked the FIS, which described his religious activities as "perverted," saying that they "fathom nothing of Islamic law." He also rejected the negotiations carried out by FIS with the Algerian

regime. "They [FIS] should not deal with this regime. The rulers are apostates, and killing them is the only solution," he asserted.

Abu Qatadeh admits that he approved the killing of Christian priests on missions in Algeria. He also justified the GIA's killing of western citizens residing in Algeria, because "Algeria is a battlefield and the GIA warned all the foreigners to leave."

Liberia settlement worked out at summit

A settlement of the Liberia crisis was hammered out in a four-day summit in the Nigerian capital sponsored by Ecowas (Economic Community of West African States). The Liberian crisis was designed to destabilize western Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular. The "spin" from wire service reports of Aug. 20, is that the settlement won't last.

Nigerian Foreign Minister Tom Ikimi stated: "Under the accord, hostilities will completely cease at midnight of Aug. 26 and the [ruling] Council of State will be installed 14 days from today. A new democratic government will be installed in 12 months' time." In discussing the potential significance of the settlement for West Africa as a whole, Akimi noted: "At last there is hope for peace for Liberia, hope to end conflicts in the sub-region and hope that Ecowas will now concentrate on its aims and objectives to enhance the economic integration and advancement of the region." Nigeria has not only been the backbone of the peacekeeping force in Liberia, but Nigerian troops are also backing the government of Sierra Leone in a conflict stoked by the dissolution of Liberia.

In addition to Nigeria, the other very important player in the final settlement is Ghana, the West African country that is heading Ecowas for a second term. Ghanaian Foreign Minister Obed Asamoah added: "This constitutes the end of our efforts to bring peace to Liberia. We consider the agreement binding and enforceable on all parties. Everyone is tired of war and every-

one is tired of talks."

Professor of English and former civil servant Wilton Sankawulo was named neutral chairman of the council and interim leader. He previously served for three years beginning 1983 as director general of (later assassinated) President Samuel Doe's cabinet, and later as a researcher at the Information Ministry. As well as teaching English, he currently works at Monrovia's Catholic Secretariat as a research officer.

The pact gives warlord Charles Taylor a place on the body.

Kissinger warns Pakistani premier

Henry Kissinger, who told Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977 that he would make him a "terrible example" for pursuing an independent nuclear program, has now reportedly warned Bhutto's daughter, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, that U.S.-Pakistani relations will be "very strained" if anything untoward happens to British financier Sir Jimmy Goldsmith's daughter Jemima, who recently married Pakistani cricket star, playboy, and possible politician Imran Khan. Or so say the London tabloids. (For the record, Bhutto's father was subsequently overthrown, framed up, and executed.)

Chinese authorities clamp down on Greenpeace

Western leaders of the pro-terrorist, "environmentalist" group Greenpeace were seized by the Chinese police within seconds as they attempted to stage an anti-nuclear-testing demonstration in Tiananmen Square in Beijing on Aug. 15. The Greenpeace leaders included Thilo Bode, the head of Greenpeace Germany and president-elect of Greenpeace International, and, reportedly, the national directors of Greenpeace in the United States, Russia, Britain, and France.

They unfurled "Stop All Nuclear Testing" banners in Tiananmen Square, accom-

panied, as ever, by their fawning entourage of reporters and television and newspaper cameramen. Within a few seconds, plainclothes police seized the banners. When the Greenpeace crew of six tried to hold up smaller banners, these were also seized immediately. Dozens of Chinese policemen were deployed to round up the Greenpeace group, and take them to a police station, where they were interrogated for hours.

Two reporters, from Germany and Switzerland, were also arrested, but later freed. The Greenpeace group was then taken to the Beijing airport, held incommunicado at a hotel, and deported to Hongkong.

According to German radio reports, Thilo Bode gave a press conference in Hongkong the next day, where he claimed that the demonstration was "a total success," claiming "we got the attention of the media."

Hashimoto may run for prime minister of Japan

Japanese Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who as finance minister in 1991 coined the term "financial AIDS" to denounce Wall Street and London financial deregulation demands on Japan, will declare for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) presidency on Aug. 21, a party spokesman said Aug. 18.

Hashimoto may be moving to run for prime minister of Japan. He has grown in popularity since he (and President Clinton) averted a trade war with the U.S. over autos in June, and is regarded as a nationalist. It was shortly after meeting with Hashimoto that French President Jacques Chirac in June denounced "financial AIDS" as the leading threat to the world economy.

LDP presidential elections are set for Sept. 22. The party, the largest in Japan's Parliament, is a partner in Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama's ruling coalition. Foreign Minister Yohei Kono's current term as LDP president expires at the end of September. Kono has also been quite cooperative with Mr. Clinton in Korea and China, but hasn't a clue about the global financial crisis.

Briefly

● **THE ARMS EMBARGO** by the U.N. against Rwanda was suspended for one year on Aug. 19, on condition that weapons were only for government use and were imported into Rwanda only through specified points. The British-backed Rwandan Patriotic Front regime in Kigali claimed that it will soon come under attack from re-armed Hutu forces.

● **MAGGIE** Thatcher, delivering the Rajiv Gandhi Golden Jubilee Memorial Lecture in New Delhi on Aug. 19, attempted to curry favor with her hosts by calling for India to have a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

● **THE BRAZILIAN** daily *Tribuna da Imprensa* on Aug. 16 published an op-ed article by Geraldo Lino, director of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement in Brazil, and frequent *EIR* author, with the headline "Food Comes First! Food Security at Risk."

● **KING HUSSEIN** of Jordan will meet King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh, according to Jordanian officials quoted in the Aug. 15 *New York Times*. This would be the first meeting of the two monarchs since the Gulf War in 1990, but the date has not been set yet.

● **KENYAN** President Daniel arap Moi, who has been lambasting Britain almost non-stop, arrived in Malaysia Aug. 14 for a four-day visit.

● **LIONEL JOSPIN**, the Socialist candidate for President of France in last spring's run-off election, criticized the government's economic policies in a speech on Aug. 20. President Chirac's electoral themes of social compassion seem to have been "thrown into the *corbeille*," he said, using a French word meaning both "waste basket" and "stock exchange."

● **A SECOND TRIAL** for corruption, against ousted ex-President Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela, could open soon, reported the Miami-based *Diario Las Américas* on Aug. 22.