

International Intelligence

Concern over pedophilia mounts in South Pacific

Concern is mounting that an increasing number of Australian pedophiles, who would usually travel to Southeast Asian countries for child sex, are now heading to the South Pacific, especially Fiji. This was the main problem raised at an Interpol conference involving more than 30 Asian countries and 100 delegates, hosted by the Australian Federal Police in Canberra in late February.

In a bid to strengthen legal ties between Australia and Fiji, following a meeting between the countries' foreign ministers, Australia's Alexander Downer and Fiji's Bernardo Vunibobo, the Fijian government enacted a law, entitled Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, to combat such cross-border crimes as pedophilia.

Fiji Police Commissioner Isikia Savua called for closer coordination: "In the past, we thought that it wouldn't come to our shores. . . . Law enforcement agencies in Southeast Asia and Australia have closed doors and cleaned up there so they [pedophiles] are looking for softer targets and that's why I believe they are coming here."

U.S. turncoats helped Kabila cover up genocide

According an article by David Aronson in the Winter issue of *World Policy Journal*, officials at the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda advised Congo dictator Laurent Kabila, to stonewall the UN investigation into the 1997 massacres of Hutu refugees from Rwanda and Burundi. Aronson's article was titled, "The Dead Help No One Living." A former Kabila booster, Aronson reported on his June 1997 trip to Kinshasa, which changed his mind on Kabila and his analysis of events in the Great Lakes region.

At the end of his article, Aronson, who is with Carnegie Endowment, notes: "But in Kigali other American officials brag that the United States provided counterinsurgency training to the Rwandan Patriotic Army [of

Rwandan strongman, Defense Minister Paul Kagame] and instructed Kabila not to cooperate with the UN investigation of the massacres." The stated policy of the Clinton administration was that Kabila should cooperate with the UN probe, and it was a key point of pressure by U.S. Ambassador to the UN Bill Richardson in his discussions with Kabila.

The source of the information on the U.S. traitors in Kigali, is testimony by Kathy Austin of Human Rights Watch before the House International Relations Committee. The nest of Kagame boosters in the U.S. Embassy in Kigali prominently features Ambassador Robert Gribben and military attaché Richard Orth. Both are closely associated with Roger Winter of the U.S. Committee on Refugees. Gribben et al. have denied Austin's report. However, they earlier denied that the Rwandan army was ever in eastern Zaire—a denial they have now retracted; and in November in Washington, they denied that there are any Rwandan troops remaining in Congo—in contrast to the stark reality.

Iran and Saudi Arabia healing longtime rift

A new step was taken in healing estranged relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, with the ten-day visit of former Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani, beginning on Feb. 26, to Saudi Arabia. Iran has been working for over a year to repair relations, and reached a breakthrough in December 1997, when a high-ranking delegation led by Saudi Crown Prince Abdallah attended the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit in Teheran.

Rafsanjani, who now heads the Expediency Council, set meetings with political, cultural, religious, and commercial representatives, after making pilgrimages to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Rafsanjani was received by King Fahd, as well as Crown Prince Abdallah and Foreign Minister Saud al-Feisal. Two themes of their talks were: how to coordinate oil production policy, to keep prices from plunging;

and, more sensitive, setting up cooperation to establish a regional security arrangement. This is the centerpiece of Iran's foreign policy in the region, and is based on the idea, as expressed by Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi, that "security cannot be imported; joint action is required." Rafsanjani reportedly proposed that a regional mechanism for conflict resolution be established, within the context of the OIC. They also discussed economic cooperation (including giving Saudi Arabia access to Iran's free trade zones and transit), the Iraq crisis, and Zionism. Rafsanjani reiterated in press conferences, that Iran had nothing to do with the terrorist attacks against the U.S. military installation in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia in 1996.

Turkey's Erbakan barred from political activity

On Jan. 16, the Refah (Welfare) Party, headed by former Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, was banned and Erbakan and others barred from holding public or political office for five years, on the charges that the party was explicitly religious. The ban, which took effect on Feb. 22, threatens to create a split among the country's Islamists, between those, like Erbakan, who favor such development policies as the Eurasian Land-Bridge (Turkey's role in that is crucial), and radical Islamists, such as the young Istanbul Mayor, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Refah held 147 seats out of 550 in the Parliament. Under the ruling, they are free to hold their seats as independents, pending the formation of a new party.

A polarization in the leadership of such a popular party (Refah held the largest parliamentary bloc) would fuel British geopolitical moves to blow up both the Middle East and the Balkans, by increasing instability in this nation, which is a cross-roads for Europe, the Mideast, and Asia.

In anticipation of the ban months ago, the nucleus of the Fazilet Partisi (Virtue Party) was formed, and Fazilet is now about to become the official successor to Refah. Erbakan's choice to succeed him as party leader is his old friend Recai Kutan, who

AUSTRALIA will host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2001 in Canberra, Prime Minister John Howard has announced. CHOGM would possibly be the first international event in the new Australian republic, if the referendum on the republic is passed next year.

THAILAND'S Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai planned to visit Washington on March 12-13, for meetings with President Clinton and senior administration officials, the White House announced on Feb. 23. The President and the Prime Minister will discuss regional and bilateral security and economic issues, including the current financial crisis in Asia.

UGANDAN CHILDREN are being held on treason charges, according to the Feb. 9 issue of Kampala's *New Vision*. A total of 28 child rebels were arrested in 1997, reports the Uganda Human Rights Commission. Commissioner Constantine Karusoke said, "The children need serious rehabilitation, not incarceration. . . . The view of the Commission is that the children are victims of circumstances [many of them were abducted by the rebels] and should be shown mercy and compassion."

ZHU RONGJI, China's Vice Prime Minister who will replace Li Peng as Prime Minister, will visit Bonn and Paris in early April, before returning home from the Asia-Europe Meeting in London. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl plans to visit China in June, and French Premier Lionel Jospin may come in July.

THE CEILING of the ballroom at Buckingham Palace collapsed on March 3, while the Royal Marines band kept on playing "God Save the Queen" for Queen Elizabeth and 400 guests. One person was injured. According to the Italian daily *La Repubblica*, the Queen will have to pay for repairing the roof, which could cost tens of millions of dollars, "something that the Queen, known for her stinginess, is not going to like."

would continue Erbakan's policies. The front-runner, however, is Erbakan's opponent, demagogue Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Myanmar dissident blasts Aung San Suu Kyi

A former collaborator of Britain's pet dissident in Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi, scored the Nobel Peace Prize laureate's policies, in a commentary in the Feb. 19 issue of *Far Eastern Economic Review*. Ma Thanegi, who worked with Suu Kyi in 1989, and who served three years in a Yangon prison as a leading member of the National League for Democracy (NLD), wrote: "Ma Suu could have changed our lives dramatically. With her influence and prestige, she could have asked major aid donors such as the U.S. and Japan for help. She could have encouraged responsible companies to invest here, creating jobs and helping build a stable economy. . . . Instead, she chose the opposite. . . . Many of us cautioned her that this was counterproductive."

She tells of prominent Western academics and diplomats who argue for sanctions and boycotts to undermine the economy and force a revolution, and American human rights groups claiming to be "striking a blow for democracy." But, Ma Thanegi countered, "it is we Burmese who pay the price for these empty heroics. . . . We need jobs, we need to modernize. We need to be a part of the world. Don't close the door on us in the name of democracy. Surely fairy tales in the West don't end so badly."

Vatican wants Jerusalem as international capital

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican Secretary of State, stated in Rome, that Jerusalem was unfortunately claimed only from one side, i.e., Israel, which declared the city its capital in 1980. Speaking on the 50th anniversary of the apostolic representation in Jerusalem, Sodano recalled that in 1947, an international status for Jerusalem had been planned.

According to the Feb. 21 issue of Germany's *Berliner Zeitung*, Israel had refused to establish diplomatic relations with the Holy See, because the Vatican refused to recognize Jerusalem as its capital. In 1994, relations were established, but the Jerusalem question has remained an open sore. The Arabs have repeatedly raised the question of the status of the city, which Israel refuses to discuss. The Vatican's view is that it cannot only be a matter of a conflict between Muslims and Israelis, but that Christians have a claim to Jerusalem as well.

"The Pope," said Cardinal Sodano, "invites the whole human family to create the conditions whereby Jerusalem can fulfill its destiny: to become a city of peace and worship of God." According to the daily, the Vatican let it be known that it would be willing to provide financial support for the project. The *Zeitung* mentions that the Vatican has been negotiating with the Palestinians for some time, to try to gain more influence in cities on the West Bank, such as Bethlehem and Jericho. The Pope's dream, it says, is to pray for peace together with Jews and Muslims on Mount Sinai in the year 2000, after peace in the region has been achieved.

Jordan wants direct U.S.-Iraq dialogue

King Hussein of Jordan announced on March 1, that he will pursue his proposal for a direct dialogue between Baghdad and Washington, when he meets President Clinton in Washington, around March 15. King Hussein said he thought that this was the right way to proceed, but added, "I don't know how and when it will happen." He said, "I believe that there is certainly a requirement for direct contacts. Commitments that are made directly between concerned parties are the ones that are much more meaningful than following any other method. To those who wonder about this suggestion . . . it is not strange, for even adversaries do meet."

Although King Hussein did not mention it, if a direct contact were to be established, it would eliminate the UN and/or British mediation.