

# International Intelligence

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## *Europeans a No Show at 'Asia Europe Meeting'*

For the first time in three years, the foreign ministers of the European Union and the tenation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were to begin their two-day "Asia Europe Meeting" (ASEM) in Vientiane, Laos on Dec. 11. However, not one European foreign minister had arrived for the meeting, as all of them continued to be tied up in the debate in Nice, France on the structure, and possible new members, of the EU itself. The Vientiane meeting would have been the first major opportunity for the EU to get a first-hand report on the ASEAN-Plus-3 summit in Singapore on Nov. 24-25. French Cooperation Minister Charles Josselin was left with the task of making amends to ASEAN ministers.

ASEM meetings have been stalled since ASEAN admitted Myanmar as a member in 1997. The EU has stuck to a politically correct position of boycotting talks in protest of alleged human rights abuses against the "democratic" opposition led by Aung San Suu Kyi, whose strongest support comes from Britain and Scandinavia, which have underwritten significant exile Burmese operations. However, the lower-level EU ministers in Vientiane were taken by surprise, when Myanmar announced that it has lifted restrictions on some opposition leaders, and will lift restrictions on Suu Kyi and the president and vice president of her National League for Democracy, Aung Shwe and Tin Oo, respectively; Myanmar will also allow complete access to an EU delegation in January.

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## *EU Nice Summit Shows European Paralysis*

The European Union chose to entangle itself in petty, secondary issues at its summit in Nice, France on Dec. 4-7, rather than free itself from the straitjacket created by the Maastricht Accords. Especially guilty, in this regard, are the major continental powers, France and Germany, whose impotence allowed existing frictions among all 15 EU members to prevail. These issues have to do

with status problems, including the weighted voting power of larger versus smaller nations and the status of expected new members from East and Southeast Europe.

With these dominating the agenda even before the summit, the continental EU members that use the single currency, the euro, have been distracted from the major issue: regaining economic-monetary sovereignty, by sidelining the Maastricht budget criteria, which are effectively the same as International Monetary Fund conditionalities against Third World countries. The promising Franco-German initiatives during May-June, for a redefinition of core policy responsibility of the national governments over the supranational EU institutions, were drowned out, in the EU chaos that has developed. The same is true for France's May-June-July initiative to defend the euro against capital flight into a vastly overvalued dollar, and prevent overreaching by the European Central Bank. A good deal of the blame goes to Germany, which opposes interference with the existing monetarist rules.

The Nice "compromise," which postponed final decisions on status questions to 2004-05 and 2010 (when the 12 eastern states will have joined), not only carries the seed for protracted conflicts and political disarray, it has also weakened the EU further at this crucial moment. Precious time and diplomatic energies have been wasted, for the promotion of a chaos that cannot be brought under control: not by any individual government, not by groups of governments, nor by the EU as a whole, so long as the Maastricht scheme is adhered to.

Capturing the mood, the German daily *Die Welt*, on Dec. 10, devoted one full page to the deep paralysis in Europe and another full page to the deep paralysis in the United States.

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## *Zimbabwe High Court Upholding Rhodesian Law*

Many of the judges on Zimbabwe's Supreme Court were high government officials or appointed to the bench under the apartheid regime of Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith, according to an article in the Nov.

30 issue of the Zimbabwe daily the *Herald*. When President Robert Mugabe is accused of violating the "rule of law," in his flaunting of Supreme Court decisions against his land-redistribution efforts, it bears taking a closer look at those laws.

In a November speech to a conference on law, Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa accused High Court judges of not cooperating with the government, and pointed out that several of the judges either owed their appointments to the Rhodesian regime, or held high posts in the Rhodesian government in the 1970s, before majority rule was incompletely implemented by the Lancaster House agreements of 1979. Chinamasa asked, "How can personnel so high up in the pecking order of a regime grounded in a racist *grundnorm* faithfully serve a democratic state?"

Chinamasa gave some of the details: Justice Blackie was a member of parliament from the Rhodesian Front, since 1976; Justice George Smith served as cabinet secretary for the government of Ian Smith; Chief Justice Anthony Gubbaya was appointed to the bench by the Ian Smith government in 1975; Justice Adam was part of Ian Smith's legal team at the Lancaster House conference, whose negotiation with Mugabe's insurgents implemented majority rule, but laid all the legal traps from which Zimbabwe is now suffering; and Justice Ebrahim was a state councillor in the Director of Public Prosecutions Department under the Smith regime.

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## *Pakistan Regime Sends Nawaz Sharif into Exile*

The Pakistan government of Chief Executive Gen. Pervez Musharraf decided to send former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, whom Musharraf overthrew in October 1999, into exile in Saudi Arabia, and, according to the Dec. 11 issue of Islamabad's daily *The Dawn*, moved quickly to seize the Sharif family's three major companies, residential estates, and 60 acres of agricultural land.

The decision to send Sharif to Saudi Arabia was primarily a deal worked out by Islamabad and Washington, with the help of

**DUTCH** lawmakers were warned against legalizing euthanasia, by the chairman of Germany's medical association, Dr. Dietrich Hoppe, on Dec. 13. They should be aware that "the euthanasia program of the National Socialists *also* began with the discreditation of the ban on active mercy-killing." German physicians, he said, "will oppose any attempt to turn medical doctors into euthanicians, legitimized by the state."

**PAPUAN** tribesmen from the central highland region of Irian Jaya raided a lumber camp, killing two, in the Indonesian province. The tribesmen are supposedly fighting on behalf of "independence" for West Papua (Irian Jaya), and are generally understood to be supported by Australian-based interests working through Papua New Guinea.

**MOROCCAN** authorities arrested members of the Ak-Akdl Wal Ihsane (Justice and Charity) organization, an outlawed Islamic party, following demonstrations by hundreds of Islamic fundamentalists on Dec. 9. Among those arrested were the children of the group's spiritual leader, Sheikh Abdessalam Yassine.

**CHINESE** Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan continued his tour through southeastern Europe, after his visit to Yugoslavia, visiting Albania, Hungary, and Poland, in mid-December. In Albania, he had talks to enhance economic cooperation with Albanian President Rexhep Meidani and Prime Minister Paskal Milo. In Hungary, he met President Ferenc Madl and Foreign Minister Janos Martonyi, inviting President Madl to visit China.

**AUSTRIAN** populist Jörg Haider's Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) has lost two state elections since it joined the Federal government coalition, and becoming engulfed in a police spy scandal. Two FPÖ leaders have lost parliamentary immunity, in the course of investigations into the illegal use of confidential police files, obtained from policemen who are party members.

Riyadh. Islamabad is hoping that Saudi Arabia will help solve Pakistan's huge budget deficit. However, Musharraf's government has come under attack for abandoning its earlier statement that Sharif will have to face the consequences for his "limitless corruptive practices." Moreover, Sharif has a significant band of followers in the military as well as in the establishment dominated by the Punjabis.

On the other hand, with two of Pakistan's main political leaders, Nawaz Sharif and his rival and predecessor Benazir Bhutto, in exile and self-exile, respectively, it is expected that Musharraf's military rule will now have an easier time domestically, and that no serious democratic challenge can be organized in the short term.

In addition, Musharraf, by releasing Nawaz Sharif from prison (while taking away his political rights), has appeased Washington. This may help Musharraf in dealing with the Kashmir issue, where India has declared a unilateral, month-long cease-fire on its side of the Line of Control.

## **Philippines President Vacates Death Sentences**

Philippines President Joseph Estrada has celebrated the Jubilee by vacating all death sentences in the nation, and releasing all political prisoners, reported the *Straits Times* on Dec. 11. Estrada said: "I will order tomorrow that all those sentenced to death will be commuted to life imprisonment on the occasion of the Jubilee Year."

There were more than 1,500 people on death row, all of whom have been sentenced since capital punishment was restored in 1994. Estrada supported the first execution, against huge opposition led by the dominant Catholic Church. On Dec. 12, Estrada declared that he would push for the 1994 death penalty law to be repealed, citing overwhelming opposition to it in the country. Seven people have been put to death, and earlier this year, Estrada imposed a moratorium on the law's implementation.

Although the press and the opposition are screaming that Estrada is acting opportunistically, to save his own skin in the impeachment process already under way (with

the Church and Cardinal Jaime Sin leading the charge), the fact is, that the President has now set a moral standard internationally. (See article on the German Bundestag's resolution against the death penalty, in this section.)

## **Tensions High in South Serbia, after KLA Attack**

Tensions remain high in the KFOR/NATO-patrolled "demilitarized zone" where southern Serbia borders Kosovo. On Nov. 26, Kosovo Liberation Army terrorists attacked and killed several Serbian policemen in the Presovo-Medvedja-Bujanovac region. Despite a cease-fire, two weeks later, Serbian officials still report sniper fire from "Albanian terrorists," and four mortar shells were fired at a Serbian police patrol.

Serbian police are under orders not to attack ethnic Albanian militants, unless in immediate self-defense, but, Yugoslav Prime Minister Zoran Zizic has pointed out that their patience has limits, saying, "We will not spend the entire Winter under such serious threats, if diplomacy does not succeed." Yugoslavia has demanded that the UN Security Council meet on the situation.

Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica has called on popular Kosovar Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova, who backs a peaceful route for Kosovo independence, to join in negotiations on Kosovo's future. He further expressed his condolences to Rugova over the murder of Rugova's close adviser, Xhemajl Mustafa, who had been gunned down outside his home in the Kosovo capital, Pristina.

According to Agence France Presse, one of the "Albanian rebel" leaders is a Dutch volunteer, who goes by the name of "Qlirim," which means "Liberator." Earlier in his career, this individual had been involved in the war in Bosnia and in Kosovo, and in fighting with the Palestine Liberation Organization, after he had completed his military service in the Netherlands. Thus, one of the main "Albanian militants" is quite likely an *agent provocateur* controlled by Western and/or NATO-related intelligence agencies.