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## In-Depth Coverage

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## Feature

### **The Cult of the Oligarchy: The Gore of Babylon**

**by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.**

'It remains impossible to understand the historic mission of the pseudo-scientific frauds of Gore today, without recognizing him, as I show here, as not only a true echo of Twentieth-Century fascism, but, also, an echo, in that specific historical sense, of the example provided by Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*.'

## The Gore Dossier

### **The Youth of Today Declare: 'We Will Not Be Gorified!'**

### **Carbon Trade Swindle Behind Gore Hoax**

The push for an expanded market for carbon emissions trading comes from a London-based network positioned to reproduce the oil bubble on a scale orders of magnitude greater and more dangerous, while at the same time, destroying what's left of the physical economy.

### **Does Global Warming Cause Amnesia?**

### **Yes, It's Insane! How CO2 Trading Works**

### **The New Environmentalist Eugenics: Al Gore's Green Genocide**

The environmentalist movement today is nothing but a revamped model of the Anglo-Dutch oligarchy's drive for eugenics and population control. LYM member Rob Ainsworth provides the shocking evidence from their own mouths.

### **Mr. Malthus**

### **The Eco-Fascist Al Gore in His Own Words**

## British Genocide, From Thatcher to Gore

## Is That Hitler in Your Garden? No, That's Al Gore

## A Genocidal Hoax: A Chronology of the Global Warming Swindle

# International News

## For the Good of the Locusts: Gabriel Misuses His Office

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche,

who is campaigning in Germany against the brainwashing of the population into green fascism, which Environment Minister **Sigmar Gabriel** wants to carry out by showing Gore's fraudulent movie in every school.

## Will Germany Revive Nuclear Power?

## EIR Releases Stanislav Menshikov's 'The Anatomy of Russian Capitalism'

## Russia's Next Step

## Iraq's Other Tragedy: 2 Million Refugees

## The French Election: How the Financiers Rigged the Game

## Of Bushes and Ethanol Madness in Colombia

## Civil Rights Heroine Honored Across Nation

Not satisfied with being honored for her accomplishments in winning voting rights in the 1960s, Amelia Boynton-Robinson is organizing with the LaRouche Youth nationwide.

## LaRouche Movement Expands in Italy

## Congressional Closeup

# Editorial

## A Bipartisan Committee of the Sane

# U.S. Economic/Financial News

## **ALT-A Defaults Rising as Fast as Subprimes**

The subprime mortgage meltdown is now spreading to borrowers with better credit, in the category "Alt A" between prime and subprime. "Late payments of at least 60 days and defaults on Alt A mortgages have risen about as fast as on subprime ones, to about 2.4%," Bloomberg reported March 22, quoting various bond analysts and adding: "Loans in the category made to borrowers with low credit scores, equity and documentation are doing about as badly as subprime loans, according to Citigroup Inc. and Bear Stearns analysts."

Citing the Credit Suisse Group, Bloomberg says that last year, the Alt A category accounted for about 20% of the \$3 trillion of U.S. mortgages, about the same as subprime loans.

On March 19, CNN also reported on rising worries that Alt A loans could pose the next big threat to the economy, noting that "just as the Alt A market has grown even faster than the subprime, some believe it could shrink even faster."

Alt A lenders include some of the nation's largest financial institutions, such as IndyMac Corp., Countrywide Financial, GMAC, General Electric, and Washington Mutual.

## **Subprime Loans Mostly Unregulated**

Over half of all subprime mortgages are originated by lenders with no Federal supervision, and the other lenders have minimal regulation, according to a front-page lead story in the March 22 *Wall Street Journal*.

Some 52% of subprime loans in 2005 were issued by mortgage brokers and stand-alone lenders with no Federal supervision; 25% were issued by finance companies owned by banks, which are technically subject to Federal Reserve supervision; and 23% are from federally regulated banks and thrift institutions. But even for those subject to Federal supervision, there is almost no Federal regulation, due to what the *Journal* calls the deregulatory zeal of Bush Administration appointees. To make it worse, financial institutions which are technically under the jurisdiction of Federal agencies, can't be regulated by state authorities.

Up until the 1980s, the *Journal* notes, virtually all mortgages were from banks and thrifts; this changed in the 1980s with the development of mortgage-backed securities, which weakened—actually eliminated—the direct connection between lender and borrower. (A more competent history of the development of subprimes is found in last week's issue of *EIR*.)

## **Housing Starts in February Down 28.5% from February 2006**

Building permits fell for the 12th time in the past 13 months—down 28.6% compared with a year ago, according to the Commerce Department. Permits for single-family homes fell to the lowest level since 1997.

## **Foreclosed Homes in Detroit: Cheaper Than New Cars**

At least 16 of about 300 Detroit-area houses repossessed by banks and up for sale recently by Texas-based auction firm Hudson & Marshall, sold for \$30,000 or less—lower than the price of an average new car. "The lumber in the house is worth more than that," commented the auctioneer. Among the startling examples: a four-bedroom house sold for a mere \$7,000; while a bungalow on the city's west side brought a paltry \$1,300. Likewise, a three-bedroom suburban house that had listed for \$525,000 fetched only \$130,000 at the auction. One-third of the population in this deindustrialized city officially lives in poverty, and the new foreclosure filings are the highest in the United States.

According to the realtors, prices have definitely not hit the bottom yet.

## Bubble at Its Limits

Margin debt in purchasing stocks on the New York Stock Exchange rose to an all-time record in February—before the stock market breakdown on Feb. 26—of \$295.87 billion, after January's record of \$285.6 billion. Both exceeded the debt high at the peak of the so-called Internet bubble in February 2000.

A *Washington Post* economic column by Steven Pearlstein March 21 called the decision by the huge private-equity fund Blackstone to issue public stock to ordinary investor-suckers, "proof, if you needed any proof, that ... the bubbles in private equity, hedge funds, real estate, and credit derivatives are about to burst." Pearlstein quotes a Carlyle Group internal memo given to him, written by Carlyle executive William Conway on Jan. 31: "I know that this liquidity environment cannot go on forever.... And I know that the longer it lasts, the worse it will be when it ends."

A March 20 *EIR* report by John Hoefle on the potential takeover of the Dutch-based ABN Hamro Bank by British Barclays Bank, notes the incredible expansion of the assets loaned out by the biggest U.S. banks from 2004 to 2006: "In 2001, Citigroup became the first U.S. bank to break the trillion-dollar [assets] barrier, with \$1,050 billion, compared to \$694 billion at JPMorgan Chase and \$622 billion at Bank of America. All three joined the club in 2004, led by Citigroup with \$1,484 billion, JPMC with \$1,157 billion, and Bank of America with \$1,112 billion. Since that time, Citi has grown by \$400 billion (27%); B of A by \$352 billion (32%); and JPMC by \$194 billion, (17%)." Those three banks alone have increased the assets on their increasingly bankrupt books, by nearly \$1 trillion in two years.

## U.S. Hedge Funds That Once Managed \$35 Billion Shut Down in 2006

U.S. hedge funds that collectively once managed \$35 billion shut down in 2006, as more big firms ran into trouble, according to a survey released March 19 by industry publication *Absolute Return*. At least 83 nominally U.S.-based hedge funds—many operating from the Cayman Islands—shut in 2006. The largest was the \$9.1-billion multi-strategy fund run by Amaranth Advisors LLC, which ranks as the biggest hedge-fund collapse in the brief history of hedge funds.

Others that folded: Archeus Capital Management's Animi Master Fund, which oversaw \$2.65 billion at its peak; another run by Sagamore Hill Capital, which once held about \$2.6 billion; and Saranac Capital's Citigroup Multistrategy Arbitrage/Saranac Arbitrage fund, which topped out at \$2.2 billion. Five other funds that once managed at least \$1 billion also shut last year. However, these are the publicly released figures: no one knows how immense are the real losses these hedge funds created across the financial system.

## World Economic News

### China, Russia Expect To Sign Agreements Worth Over \$43 Billion

These economic agreements and contracts are expected to be signed during Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to Russia March 26-28. Assistant Chinese Foreign Minister Li Hui told journalists that Hu Jintao and Vladimir Putin will open the China national exhibit for the Year of China in Russia, which will be the biggest such exhibition ever sponsored by China in a foreign country. It will feature over 15,000 Chinese products.

While China-Russia trade has been growing rapidly—Russia is China's eighth-largest trade partner and China is Russia's

fourth-largest—there are real problems to be solved in trade structure. Yu Guangzhou, China's Vice Minister of Commerce, said in Beijing that machinery and electronic products are too small a part of bilateral trade, and mutual investment has not grown fast enough.

Konstantin Vnukov, director of the first Asian department at the Russian Foreign Ministry, said, "The issue of improving the trade structure is on the agenda." Russian exports are dominated by resources, of which 54% is oil and petrochemicals, and consumer goods dominate Chinese exports to Russia.

Li Hui also announced from the Chinese side, that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will hold a joint anti-terrorism military exercise in Russia this year.

## **Germany's Chief Financial Market Regulator warns on hedge funds**

In an interview with *Welt am Sonntag*, published March 18, Jochen Sanio, who heads Germany's financial market regulatory agency BaFin, warned that hedge fund collapses could blow the entire system apart. He said the Amaranth collapse last September within just a few days, was a "clear warning signal, strong lightning in the distance. In the next case that size, the lightning could strike and shake up the financial system." Sanio also said he is worried about the U.S. mortgage market. "I can only hope that we are not now at the beginning of a collapse in the U.S. housing market, which through the U.S. conjuncture would affect the global conjuncture... That would be the last thing we would need."

Sanio endorsed the German initiative for an international discussion about hedge funds, the discussion as such would be valuable, because "from now on, the issue can no longer be played down... The highly speculative hedge funds pose a great danger to the stability of the financial system."

## **United States News Digest**

### **House Votes Up Iraq Supplemental Bill with Withdrawal Date**

The House of Representatives passed by 218-212 on March 23 the \$122 billion Iraq Supplemental bill, which includes an August 2008 withdrawal date for U.S. combat troops. A similar bill was scheduled to be taken up in the Senate the following week. A visibly unstable President Bush responded immediately with a press conference, at which he surrounded himself with family members of U.S. military deployed to Iraq. Bush denounced the House passage of the bill as "an act of theater" which has no chance of becoming law. Bush said that it will delay funding the troops, who require the funds by "April 15 or face disruption," but then announced that he would veto it.

Excluding the current appropriation, Congress has provided more than \$500 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and more than \$350 billion for the Iraq War alone, according to the Congressional Research Service. More than 3,200 American soldiers have been killed in the Iraq War, now in its fifth year.

### **Kucinich Posts Video on Impeachment**

Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) has posted a 3 1/2-minute video on his website, in which he asks, "Do you think it is time for impeachment?" Kucinich continues, "We are in an interesting condition in this country, where we are told to take impeachment off the table, and keep on the table a U.S. military attack against Iran. This past week, in the Congress of the United States, I noted that the administration has threatened aggressive war against Iran .... We cannot let this administration go any deeper into this journey, into destroying democratic governance, trashing our Constitution,

forgetting the very purpose of this nation. America was never meant to be a nation forever on the warpath. It was meant to be a nation which also had the capacity to 'promote the general welfare.' We need to reevaluate the direction of this administration by looking at its conduct in office, by determining whether it has faithfully followed the laws of our nation. I began this week with a speech on the floor of the House, which warned the administration that its actions toward Iran already constitute a case to ask the question about impeachment. So I'm asking you, what do you think? Do you think it's time?"

## **Wolf Announces New Initiative on the Middle East**

Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.), who was a co-initiator of the Iraq Study Group, announced March 22 a new Middle East initiative, that will "combine economics and faith." It will include the participation of David Abshire, the president of the Center for the Study of the Presidency, which was also involved in the ISG; former Middle East envoy Dennis Ross, who will develop the economic side of the initiative; and former Rep. Tony Hall (D-Ohio), who will work the "faith" side of it. Wolf said that the aim of the initiative is to "build relationships; to prepare the soil" for diplomatic efforts being undertaken by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and others. Hall reported that he had just returned, with Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, from a visit to the region, where he found "a sense of urgency." He said people there "want peace now. They want something done in the next six months, because they expect a lot of trouble."

## **1,100 Reports of Substandard Conditions in VA Hospitals**

One thousand, one hundred reports of substandard conditions in veterans' hospitals and clinics across the country have come to light in the wake of the Walter Reed scandal, the *Washington Post* reported March 22. The conditions were exposed when Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson was forced to order an investigation as the story of conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center broke in the press. The VA has conceded that at least 10% of the reports involve serious maintenance problems, with mold spreading in patient-care areas, numerous leaks in the structures, and infestation of bats cited. The VA is claiming that the other 90% of the problems are "routine," which, spelled out, include worn-out carpet, peeling paint, mice sightings, and dead insects.

Meanwhile, a separate review of the VA system for handling disability claims is underway, with initial findings presented at a March 13 hearing before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. Linda Bilmes of the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, reported to the committee on her study, which showed the system to be on the verge of breakdown due to growing demands for services created by the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. She reported that the VA system currently has a backlog of 600,000 disability claims, and will see 638,000 new, first-time claims in the next five years, due to the wars alone; 400,000 by the end of 2009.

Daniel Bertoni of the Government Accountability Office echoed Bilmes, saying that, after ten years of research, the GAO found the Federal disability programs in urgent need of attention and transformation.

## **Proposed New Rule Slashes Billions from Medicaid**

In a March 21 letter to the House and Senate leadership, the National Governors Association (NGA) wrote that the changes proposed in a new rule issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), "are a significant cost shift to the states that governors strongly oppose." They add that, "The proposed policies represent a significant Medicaid policy change that will result in cuts of approximately \$5 billion in federal Medicaid spending over five years." The proposed rule would impose a new cost limit on payments to public hospitals, limit permissible sources of the non-Federal shares under Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, and impose new requirements on providers in those programs.

The NGA, along with the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems, and the American Hospital Association, is organizing Congressional opposition to the new rule, and that opposition abounds. Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) said, on March 21, that he and Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.V.) had sent a letter to the CMS, opposing the rule. The letter was signed by 58 other Senators, indicating widespread bipartisan opposition to the rule. That, he said, "should be an indication to the CMS that they are acting in a way that's contrary to the desires of Congress."

## **GOP Roundtable on Maglev and High-Speed Rail**

House Transportation and Infrastructure ranking member John Mica (R-Fla.) held a high-speed rail (HSR) forum on Capitol Hill March 20, hosting six witnesses to present why and how the U.S. should build HSR, and even magnetic levitated trains. This forum focussed on truly high-speed rail—i.e., 250 mph or faster—detailed how far behind the U.S. is compared to most other countries, and laid out the feasibility for development in the U.S. Charts and tables graphically showed that Europe and Asia are building the technologies, but the U.S. lacks any manufacturing of HSR equipment.

Most witnesses argued for lifting Federal restrictions to private development of these projects, while one argued for a "Federal initiative" with long-term funding, stating "we have spent far too much time debating this issue and no major system has been installed." This witness argued for a future: "We must begin this program now so that next generations will have a vast, safe, energy efficient ... mode of transportation...."

The full rail subcommittee has scheduled a hearing on international HSR for April 19, with no domestic HSR hearing set as yet.

## **Tempo of Wars has U.S. Military in a 'Death Spiral'**

The continued high-operational tempo and growing deployments in Iraq have left both the Army and the Marines incapable of effectively responding to a contingency, should one arise, according to senior military leaders in recent Congressional testimony, the *Washington Post* reported March 19. Army and Marine units are either in Iraq or preparing to go back. They are unable to train for the full range of military missions required of them, and are suffering from equipment shortages across the force, because so much ground and aviation equipment is being worn out at rates two to six times what was originally planned for.

There is no longer even a strategic reserve of ground forces to respond to a new contingency. Fully 88% of National Guard units are rated "not ready," yet the Pentagon has scheduled four National Guard brigades to deploy to Iraq over the next 12 months. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Pete Schoomaker told the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 15, "We have a strategy right now that is outstripping the means to execute it." Other officials privately describe the situation as a "death spiral" in which the ever-more rapid pace of war-zone rotations is consuming more and more equipment and wearing out the troops.

Nor is the problem limited to the ground forces, as Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne highlighted in remarks on March 19. Pilots are flying KC-135 air refueling tankers that are 50 years old, and some of those planes may be flying until they're 70; C-130E Hercules transport planes built in the 1960s and '70s cannot be used to haul cargo because of cracks in the wing boxes, and all of the Air Force satellites have to be replaced in within the next ten years, to name just some of the challenges facing the Air Force.

In response to a question from *EIR* on the industrial base, Wynne said that it will take 30 years to recapitalize the Air Force fleet. He chalked that up to budgetary constraints, but he also noted that the aerospace industry is a lot smaller than it used to be, and no longer has the capacity to produce hundreds of new planes per year. Assistant Commandant of the Marine

Corps Gen. Robert Magnus summed up the problem in testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, on March 14. "Most production lines to replace legacy aircraft lost in support of the Long War [i.e., Bush's war on terrorism] are no longer active," he said.

## Ibero-American News Digest

### Sen. Fernandez de Kirchner: We Are Copying FDR's New Deal

Visiting Ecuador March 21-23, Argentina's First Lady and Senator, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, centered her interventions on the policy issue which makes synarchist bankers most hysterical about her husband's government: the Kirchner government has repudiated the "system of ideas" associated with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and instead turned to Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal public works policy to revive the economy. And it works.

Addressing 300 people at the Latin American College of Social Sciences (Flacso) in Quito, Fernandez de Kirchner recalled that FDR understood that public works and infrastructure projects could serve as the motor to revive the devastated U.S. economy of the 1930s. Nestor Kirchner copied that New Deal policy when he was Governor of Santa Cruz, she said, and he is doing it now as President. We have stressed the importance of "public works and infrastructure, as movement which multiplies economic growth .... Economically it gave birth to industries ... it provided the basic infrastructure required for economic activity, so that businessmen could carry out their activity using railroads, communication systems, airports; and society could do the same, with hospitals, schools, potable water, housing. It's all a 'virtuous cycle,' that also recreates a country's confidence in itself."

Reviewing the last three decades, she recalled that Argentina's recovery from the devastation of the 1976-83 military junta, and the neoliberal economic policy that continued with the return of democracy, could serve as a useful example for other nations. Argentina today is not a model whose specific characteristics should be copied by other nations; each nation's sovereignty must be respected. But, she said, Argentina's experience shows that it is possible to govern on behalf of the general welfare and national interests, and stand up to the IMF, which predicted that any repudiation of its dictates would lead to disaster. Argentina chose not to live with "permanent 'adjustment,' and restriction of internal consumption," Mrs. Kirchner said. And it was not struck dead "by Jupiter."

President Kirchner outlined a national mission, not based on "individual salvation" or the "casino economy," but on the success of the whole nation. And the positive results of that project are visible—in job creation, poverty reduction, higher wages, higher pensions, growing industry, and impressive overall growth.

The Argentine First Lady added that we stand "at a unique moment in the history of Latin America, where integration is a duty .... The system of ideas" put forward by Ibero-American leaders today isn't a matter of dogmatism or ideology, as is often suggested. "It is simply that we have verified in practice that that *other* system of ideas"—the IMF system—"caused only hunger, misery, pain and had a devastating effect. It is therefore time that the system of ideas by which we can produce prompt and concrete results which improve our compatriots' quality of life, be given the historic opportunity that Latin America deserves."

### Two "Systems of Ideas" Clash at IDB Meeting

With the disintegration of the world financial system as its back drop, this year's annual meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), held March 16-20 in Guatemala and attended by 6,000 people, was quite contentious, as the financiers squared off against the spreading idea that survival requires a return to state regulation of private interests.



The Institute of International Finance (IIF), representing 375 of the world's top banks, released a new report attacking Argentina, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador by name for "increasing the role of the state in the economy ... at the expense of market-oriented policies." Writing of possible U.S. "recession" and likely flight of risk capital from the region, the bankers demanded that governments step up reforms to cut pensions, labor protections, and government regulation.

The Argentine and Venezuelan Finance Ministers, however, were busy discussing the "Banco del Sur" project with other delegates, urging the necessity of establishing a regional facility to lend to countries on the basis of physical, not financial criteria. Paraguayan officials announced during the meeting that their country wants to join.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, the IMF's fat boy at the Mexican Treasury, Augustin Carstens, and Colombia's Finance Minister Oscar Zuluaga went on record against the Banco del Sur at the meeting, insisting that "the IDB is all the region needs."

IDB president Luis Alberto Moreno flapped around promoting the IDB's so-called "new initiative," "Opportunities for the Majority," whose Bush-like slogan is: "Let no one be left behind." Nothing but refried neoliberalism, the initiative centers on such ideas as:

- \* Portraying the remittances sent by millions of economic exiles back to their families as the "new" form of foreign aid, which governments must get their hands on. The IDB reported that remittances reached a new record in 2006, at a whopping \$62 billion;

- \* Promoting Mussolini-like Public-Private Partnership programs as anti-poverty measures. A seminar at the meeting on "Private Initiative for Public Welfare" featured lunatic monetarist Hernando de Soto, who's setting up a two-year project at the IDB on this; and

- \* Reintroducing plantation economies across the region, under the guise of biofuel production. Moreno, a member of Jeb Bush's Inter-American Ethanol Commission, announced that investments worth \$200 billion would be needed for mass production of biofuels in the region over the next 14 years, and the IDB will support infrastructure and R&D if they are geared to biofuel production.

## **London Flips over 'Banco del Sur'**

If Brazil were to join Argentina's and Venezuela's "Bank of the South" project, the new bank would be "the biggest threat to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) since the 1980s debt defaults," IDB "insiders" are moaning, London's *Financial Times* reported on March 23. "With the money of Venezuela and political will of Argentina and Brazil, this is a bank that could have lots of money and a different political approach. No one will say this publicly, but we don't like it."

The IDB, set up in 1957, has evolved in recent decades from its original intent of financing regional development, into being a branch of the International Monetary Fund, imposing the same conditionalities. The Banco del Sur is projected to have a capital base of \$7 billion, even without Brazil, which is about equal to the IDB and Andean Development Corporation (CAF) combined, with their \$4 billion and \$3.7 billion, respectively.

Technical teams from Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Argentina met in Buenos Aires March 23, to continue negotiations on the details for the new bank.

Venezuelan Finance Minister Rodrigo Cabezas said from Caracas that he hopes the final planning meeting for the bank will be held in Brasilia, but the brawl within the Brazilian government over whether to join continues. Brazilian Planning

Minister Paolo Bernardo stated earlier last week that Brazil prefers to put its money into the CAF, rather than start up a new institution. Bernardo is from the still-dominant monetarist faction within the Lula government.

## **Spanish Fascists Host Venezuelan Opposition Leader Pena**

Venezuelan opposition extremist Alejandro Pena, head of the miniscule Fuerza Solidaria NGO, visited Spain on March 6 to pay personal homage to the fascist movement led by the former Franco official, Blas Pinar. Pena gave a conference at the headquarters of Fuerza Nueva Editorial, the organization created by Blas Pinar 40 years ago as "the" legitimate heir to the Spanish Falange version of fascism. Pena's conference was titled "Toward a Hispanic-American National Force." (Lawfully, the next speech in Fuerza Nacional's conference series was on "From the Cristeros to Today: The Christian Struggle in Mexico," given by one Austreberto Martinez Villegas, "delegate to the National Synarchist Union of Mexico.")

As far back as 2003, *EIR* exposed Pena's role in the Fascist International being reconstructed by Blas Pinar. Pena is a one-note band, insisting that only civil war can save Venezuela from Hugo Chavez, so there is nothing surprising about his hobnobbing with Spain's unrepentant fascists. What is interesting, is that someone has thrown some money and publicity into building up this self-proclaimed leader of a party, which only received 0.04% of the vote, as some kind of international figure. Since January, he has traveled from El Salvador, to Mexico, the United States, Argentina, Spain, and Italy.

His trip to Washington, D.C. in January reveals that it is the crowd around George Shultz's World War III-promoting Committee on the Present Danger who are now using Pena. Pena was hosted in Washington by the CPD-allied Center for Security Policy, and founded a "chapter" of his Fuerza Solidaria.

The gambit to "mainstream" this two-bit Venezuelan fascist into Italian politics, however, ran aground. Pena was received in Rome on March 8 by high-level Vatican officials, had an official meeting with the Secretary General of the Christian Democratic Union (UDC), Lorenzo Cosa, with whom he even had a joint statement, and was prominently interviewed by a popular national radio show, Radio Radicale, and the national newspaper *Il Tempo* as if he were the leader of the opposition to Chavez.

But when a young Italian professor, Gennaro Carotenuto, posted an exposé of how Pena was an avowed neo-fascist, sponsored by the Cheney crowd, the game fell apart. UDC leader Cesa, when informed by Carotenuto of Pena's background, publicly distanced himself from Pena, stating: "I did not know that Pena was anti-Semitic and a golpista [coup-monger].... We will not support a coup in Venezuela."

## **Western European News Digest**

### **European Unions Issue Call for Action Against Locust Funds**

Unions from 15 countries and a dozen global organizations meeting at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris March 16 issued "a strong call for the activities of companies to be oriented toward long-term sustainable investment strategies that create wealth for all, and good employment opportunities for workers." Their release further reads:

"The unions noted that private equity firms have in a short period become owners and movers of vast pools of capital and significant swaths of the economy and of employment. The share of private equity investments in the total volume of mergers and acquisitions exceeds 20% in some OECD economies. These alternative funds are highly "leveraged" (i.e., debt-financed) and are exempt from many of the regulations that apply to traditional collective investment schemes, to

banks and to insurance companies, notably in the areas of investment-prudential rules and reporting requirements. The very high rates of return required to finance private equity debt-driven buy-outs can jeopardize target companies' long-term interests and provision of decent employment conditions and security for employees. Rather than corporate restructuring for the purpose of shared productivity gains, some private equity firms are seeking to extract maximum value over a short period before reselling the company (or what remains of it), and banking a substantial premium.

"Trade unions' experiences with employment and working conditions in leveraged buy-out firms are alarming. There is a strong concern that the private equity model poses risks to the stability of the international financial system and the sustainability of national economies."

## **Germans Split Over U.S. Missile Defense Deployment**

Germany's Social Democrats (SPD), Greens, Free Democrats, and Linkspartei (Left Party) entirely oppose American plans to deploy an anti-missile defense system in the Czech Republic and Poland, with SPD chairman Kurt Beck even saying that the "money wasted on new weapons systems should rather be spent to protect the climate." Included in the opposition is a strong dose of anti-Americanism among Greens and Linkspartei. The Christian Democrats are in favor of the systems, but prefer a common NATO missile defense policy, in consultation with Russia, to a bilateral deal between the USA and Poland, according to German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The compromise line from both parties' views for the Grand Coalition is that 1) a bilateral U.S.-Polish deal should not be pursued, but instead a joint NATO policy integrating Russia in the project; 2) it is imperative to avoid splits inside NATO, splits between the U.S. and Europe, and splits inside Europe.

## **European Leaders Break Isolation of Palestinian Government**

The international isolation of the Palestinian National Authority continues to break down as more and more Western governments meet with representatives of the new Palestinian unity government between Fatah and Hamas, according to the March 21 edition of the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*.

The European Union envoy to the Middle East, Marc Otte, met March 20 with Palestinian Foreign Minister Ziad Abu Amr, and planned to meet with Finance Minister Salam Fayad.

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt told reporters in Stockholm that he intends to meet with Palestinian President Abu Mazen and two other government ministers during a trip that began on March 24.

Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht also planned to meet with Palestinian officials the week of March 20.

Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Raymond Johansen was the first to meet with Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh in the Gaza Strip. Although Norway is not a member of the European Union, which has not yet lifted sanctions, it has long been a key player in the Middle East peace process.

## **EU 'Renewables' Policy: A New Kind Of Colonialism**

Enforcing continued lack of development on the developing sector and perpetuating their role as raw material suppliers, which is a policy of genocide, lies at the core of the European Union's drive for "renewable energy sources."

One aspect of that became public several weeks ago, when U.S. Ambassador to the EU C. Boyden Gray told the Europeans at a Brussels meeting to drop plans for expensive bio-fuels production in Europe, and open their market for mass imports of cheap ethanol from Brazil and Central America. Indeed, the required state funding of bio-fuel production in Europe, to make bio-diesel and ethanol prices affordable, would run into conflict with the policy of the EU Commission to phase out all state funding of production.

Another aspect is the insane idea of constructing huge solar power parks in the North African deserts, to supply Europe with cheap power. That project, running under the name of TREC (Trans-Mediterranean Renewable Energy Cooperation), originates with the Club of Rome and has been adopted by the European Commission, in the context of its own EUMENA (Europe-Middle East-North Africa) scheme.

## **Trilateral Commission Meets, Backs Green Agenda**

The Trilateral Commission met between March 16 and 19 in Brussels, to a signal absence of publicity. The single exception was the big media play given to the climate-change ravings of John Deutch, former CIA director. He told Reuters, "If the United States or any other OECD country that is a large producer of greenhouse gas emission is to retain a leadership role in other areas, it cannot just opt out of the global climate-change policy process." He advocated adding another dollar of taxes to each gallon of gasoline—a surefire recipe for economic depression—and called for developing clean coal-burning technology and nuclear energy. He also called for creating nuclear explosions in space to induce a "nuclear spring."

## **Carl Schmitt Legacy Memorial Society Created**

An article in the German paper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reports on the founding of a Carl Schmitt Legacy Memorial Society in Plettenberg (Sauerland, where he was born). The mood was polarized in Plettenberg after the war, how to deal with this controversial figure from the Nazi era—for it was Carl Schmitt more than any other single figure who developed the Nazi legal theory by which Adolf Hitler ruled.

For Schmitt's 90th birthday in 1978, the SPD mayor organized the presentation of an "honorary ring," after having received assurances by from several law professors. Now, after the formation of the new Schmitt society, the mayor has announced his support, while the city archivist and the former cultural city councillor are among the five members of the Society. They are planning to set up an Internet site, and will start a course on Schmitt at the local adult educational school.

## **Save the Polar Bear From Animal Rights Activists!**

A polar bear cub born at the Berlin Zoo and rejected by its mother, was saved by zookeepers three months ago. While the zoo personnel are determined to keep the healthy cub alive, crazed "animal rights" activists are demanding that it be killed, since its mean and nasty polar bear nature (its role as a "natural predator") is being violated by being fed and played with by human beings, and thus its "dignity" is being stripped away.

## **Britons Express Loss of Faith in Government**

Almost 60% of the British population would not trust the government if it tried to start another war like the one against Iraq, the BBC reports, based on a recent poll. A similar percentage said they believed that the U.S. and U.K. were not right to invade Iraq, and only 29% thought the war justified.

# Russia and the CIS News Digest

## Lavrov: Russia Doesn't Need Knee-Jerk Anti-Americanism

"Russia has regained its foreign policy independence. ... Russia is beginning to protect its national interests in full, probably for the first time in its history, using all of its competitive advantages." Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made these assertions in a March 17 speech before the 15th meeting of the Russian Council for Foreign and Defense Policy (SVOP). RIA Novosti featured a full transcript of the speech, for several days afterwards.

"We want for the world what we want for ourselves: an evolutionary development without shocks," Lavrov said at the conclusion of his speech. While he was very critical of the proposed deployment of U.S. anti-missile systems in Europe (in place of which he noted the alternative of "a European theater defense system involving NATO and Russia"), Lavrov spoke strongly against knee-jerk hostility to the U.S.A. "Anti-Americanism is dangerous and intellectually deficient," he said. "At the same time, we should address the origins of the problem, i.e., the current actions of the United States in international affairs. The fact that the U.S. Administration is following the lead of neo-conservatives, however, should not influence our fundamental attitude to the United States."

The Foreign Minister further developed the U.S.-Russian relationship, saying that Russia "would not like the United States to retreat into itself because of the Iraq catastrophe, but to take part in renewing its partnership with Russia on the basis of equality and mutual benefit." The two nations can work together on combatting nuclear terrorism, on "the initiatives of our Presidents on the safe development of the global nuclear power industry, and on allowing all countries, wishing to make use of the benefits of nuclear generation, to access those technologies on the condition that they comply with their non-proliferation commitments."

Russia will not accept being pushed into confrontation with the Islamic world, he said, and he stated his conviction that "the choice by Russia and other leading countries, including those that constitute a single civilization, such as India and China, in favor of a unifying policy, will become the main factor working against the division of the world."

## Russia Denies Stopping Fuel Deliveries to Bushehr

The *New York Times* wrote March 20 that Russia had given Iran an ultimatum, threatening to withhold nuclear fuel for the nearly completed Bushehr power plant, unless Iran suspends its uranium enrichment program, citing U.S. and Iranian officials. The ultimatum was supposedly delivered the previous week by Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. Additionally, AP reports that Russia is pulling out its technicians and engineers from Bushehr; a spokesman for the Russian company working on the Bushehr project acknowledged that 100-150 Russian experts returned to Russia over the past week. The same day, Iranian state television described Russia as an "unreliable partner," adding, "It is clear that Russia has stopped construction of this plant under pressure and for political reasons."

In Moscow, Ivanov called in the Iranian ambassador to complain about "the appearance in the Iranian media of several unfriendly statements and publications, which do not correspond to reality," around Bushehr. He stressed that problems "have to do exclusively with financial technicalities," and are being calmly worked out. A Foreign Ministry spokesman, when asked about the *Times* article, cited comments issued by the Russian Security Council press office, that the *Times* report is inaccurate. That commentary said that there was no "ultimatum" to Iran, and that, "Furthermore, the language of ultimatums is not the style of Russian diplomacy."

## Putin: Develop New Weapons with Foreign Partners

Speaking at a March 20 session of the Technical and Military Cooperation Commission, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia should develop new weapons in cooperation with foreign partners. India and China currently account for some 80% of Russia's weapons exports, but Russia is also looking to Latin America and Southwest Asia. "Our primary objective is to find new forms of cooperation," Putin said. "The priority here is certainly joint weapons development and their subsequent serial production, both for the domestic and export markets. Another goal is to set up joint servicing ventures." On Jan. 18, Putin made the state-run firm Rosoboronexport the sole authorized arms exporter.

The new Russian Defense Minister Anatoli Serdyukov was appointed to represent Russia at bilateral meetings on military cooperation with China and India. Serdyukov will be in Beijing April 2, and will visit New Delhi soon thereafter.

## **Floating Nuclear Plants on Fradkov's Agenda in Namibia**

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov arrived in Namibia March 18, for talks during which he intensified Russian efforts to contract for construction of a nuclear power plant there. He had talks with President Hifikepuniye Pohamba, following which, Fradkov told reporters that Russia was considering the construction of mini-plants and floating nuclear power plants that would use uranium. "These are issues still to be discussed," Fradkov said.

As *EIR* reported March 23 ("Changing World Map For Nuclear Fuel," by Marsha Freeman), Russia's Renova Group and Vneshtorgbank have already established a joint venture to produce uranium in Namibia, which was visited by Russian nuclear energy chief Sergei Kiriienko, with a large delegation, in February. Russian Natural Resources Minister Yuri Trutnev said that Russian companies aim to set up similar joint ventures in South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

## **Southwest Asia News Digest**

### **Palestinian Unity Gov't Formed: Cheney War Drive Continues**

Despite continuing attempts by the Cheney forces to foment civil war, and provoke Hamas into breaking its "truce" of no terrorism against Israel, the Palestinian National Unity Government agreed to in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, on Feb. 8-9, was voted up, 83-3, in the Legislative Assembly on March 17 (41 members of Parliament could not vote because they are still imprisoned in Israel). President Mahmoud Abbas swore in the new government, headed by Hamas Prime Minister Ismael Haniyeh. However, the European Union (EU), the U.S., and Israel remained committed to withholding funds to the Palestinians, and furthering tension.

Among the developments surrounding this:

\* Saudi King Abdullah phoned Abbas and Haniyeh, congratulating them, and expressing hope that the new government "would work for achieving a settlement based on UN resolutions and the Arab peace plan [of 2002, passed in Beirut]."

\* Haniyeh said, in a speech to Parliament, that the coalition wants to set up a Palestinian state "in the lands Israel occupied in the 1967 Mideast War," and will seek "to expand a truce with Israel," in the words of the Saudi-run English paper *Arab News* March 18. He also made the usual statement that Palestinians do not give up their right to resist occupation.

\* Israel's Foreign Ministry statement says the Palestinian government "platform ... does not accept recognition of Israel's right to exist, elimination of terror and the dismantling of terrorist infrastructure," therefore, Israel "will not be able to work with the Government or any of its ministers." But it says they will continue to "work with" Abbas on "security" and

on "improving the quality of living of the Palestinians."

\* Through the consul in Jerusalem, the U.S. said that it will not lift financial sanctions on the Palestinian government.

\* The EU basically backed Israel and the U.S., albeit more "politely"—no full financial support until the Palestinians accept the Quartet demands, though individual European countries, like Norway, *might* give some immediate financial aid.

## **Saudis Prepare for Arab League Summit**

Jordanian King Abdullah II and Saudi King Abdullah met at the latter's ranch in Janadriya on March 22, and discussed relaunching the Arab peace plan, for the March 28 summit. Saudi Arabia's permanent representative to the Arab League, Ahmed Kattan, was there to prepare the summit, which he said would focus on Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, and Sudan. He said he expected it to be a success, in light of the Saudis' diplomatic efforts over the past six months. He said the Arab League would also discuss the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Shi'a-Sunni conflict, and measures to boost educational, economic, and social development. Muhammad Al-Tuwaijri, assistant Arab League secretary general for economic affairs, said the summit would discuss economic cooperation, preparations for a greater Arab Free Trade Zone, and review a report on an Arab customs union.

## **U.S. Pressures on Arab League Members Prior to Summit**

Reports from the Middle East at the end of March indicate that U.S. envoys in three Arab countries are exerting pressure on the Arab League to retool the Saudi peace proposal, which is up for discussion at Riyadh on March 28-29 at the 19th Arab League Summit. The Saudi peace proposal, originated in 2002, by Saudi King Abdullah offers Israel recognition and permanent peace with all Arab countries, in return for full Israeli withdrawal from lands captured in the 1967 Mideast War. It also calls for Palestinian refugees to return to their former homes in Israel. Israel rejects full withdrawal from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and it strongly opposes the influx of large numbers of Palestinian refugees into the Jewish state.

It is evident that the U.S. position is not to allow the Arab League Summit to form a consensus around the 2002 Saudi Peace Proposal. The *Jerusalem Post* reported on March 23 that if the Arab League does not retool the plan the way "it would be acceptable to Israel and the international peace brokers," then Israel would launch a diplomatic campaign to paint the current Arab regimes as the primary obstacle to peace.

## **New Sanctions Imposed on Iran**

On March 24, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to impose new sanctions on Iran for refusing to halt its enrichment of uranium. The new resolution bans all Iranian arms exports, calls on nations "to exercise vigilance and restraint" in supplying military hardware to Iran, freezes the assets of a number of individuals and organizations (connected with the Revolutionary Guards), calls on governments and financial institutions not to make any new commitments of grants, financial assistance, or loans to the Iranian government, and a number of other measures. The resolution gives Iran 60 days to suspend its enrichment activities before the new penalties are imposed. If Iran still refuses, then tighter economic sanctions may be considered.

Acting U.S. Ambassador to the UN Alejandro Wolff said the vote "sends a clear and unambiguous message to Iran" that pursuing a nuclear weapons capability "will only further isolate Iran and make it less, not more, secure." Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, who went to New York in place of President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, said after the vote, that the Security Council "is being abused to take an unlawful, unnecessary, and unjustifiable action" against Iran's

"completely peaceful" nuclear program.

For its part, Russia announced two days earlier, that its first international enrichment center will soon open. Known as the International Center for Uranium Enrichment, it will start operating in Angarsk by the end of 2007, said Nikolai Spassky, head of the Russian delegation at Rosatom-IAEA talks. It is a pilot project and more centers are to follow.

## **Sharon-Syria Talks Kept Secret from Bush Administration**

*Ha'aretz* of March 22, quoting the London-based Arab daily *Al Hayat*, reports that, according to French sources, Israel does not want to see the collapse of the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad, especially because they don't know what would follow. These French sources, apparently government officials, had been in discussions with Israel over the situation in Lebanon. Israel told the French they feared the Lebanese government itself was backing the rehabilitation of Hezbollah forces.

Also on Syria-Israeli relations, Akiva Eldar of *Ha'aretz*, quoting former head of Israeli military intelligence, Maj. Gen. Aharon Ze'evi, said that former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had fully backed the secret talks that were being held between Syria and Israel between 2003 and 2006, but kept them secret because he did not want the Bush Administration to know about them. Ze'evi, now retired, is quoted saying Israel should hold talks with Syria.

Expressing criticism of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's anti-Syria policy, Ze'evi said, "The approach that Assad is not a partner is pushing him into the axis of evil. He doesn't want to be there, but when everyone is rejecting him and telling him he is a bad boy, there is nothing left for him to do but to behave like a bad boy."

## **Indian-Israeli Talks on Infrastructure Development**

During his recent visit to India, Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz said at a conference, organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on March 21, that Israel's government is looking forward to Indian Railways and other Indian private sector companies for participation in Israel's infrastructure development. In return, he said, Israel would share with India its expertise in providing state-of-the-art road-safety infrastructure. He also said that they would look forward to strengthening relationships with India in research and development as well as infrastructure investment.

At the New Delhi conference, Mofaz said Israel is in the process of preparing a master plan for Israel's infrastructure development.

Gideon Siterman, director-general of Israel's Ministry of Transport and Safety, who accompanied Mofaz, said India could be a gateway for Israel into the South Asian market, while Israel could be a gateway for India into European markets.

## **Gulf States Plan Pipelines To Bypass Strait of Hormuz**

Gulf countries are planning to build two pipelines with an output of 6.5 million barrels per day of oil—about 40% of total oil exports from that area—which will reduce transportation through the Strait of Hormuz. The ostensible reason driving these projects is the threat issued by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, last June, that his country could disrupt the world's oil supply if it comes under attack.

The first 224-mile pipeline would carry 1.5 mbpd oil from United Arab Emirates (UAE) to the emirates of Fujirah, located outside the Strait of Gulf of Oman. Abu Dhabi's International Petroleum Investment Co. is planning to build the line and the construction of it would start sometime this year.



The second pipeline, which would carry 5 mbpd oil and has been dubbed the Trans-Gulf Strategic Pipeline, would bring in oil from various Persian Gulf terminals outside the Strait, perhaps to Oman. A forthcoming Gulf Research Center study identifies six possible routes for the second, 1,500-mile-long pipeline, which is not expected to be completed before 2015.

## Asia News Digest

### India-U.S. Nuclear Agreement Is Falling Apart

A few days ahead of talks on an agreement to make the U.S.-India nuclear deal operable, India's Atomic Energy Commission chairman, Anil Kakodkar, has made it clear that unless the agreement allows India to reprocess spent fuel, the agreement is off. "We want reprocessing rights up front. Reprocessing is a non-negotiable right," Kakodkar told the news daily *The Hindu* March 18.

Indian and U.S. negotiators are planning to meet soon to discuss the 123 Agreement, known as the Hyde Act, required by the U.S. Congress. If the 123 Agreement does not go through, India has other options, "but this will definitely be a setback for the nuclear business community, which is aggressively pushing for the deal," Kakodkar said.

Reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel is not allowed by the Hyde Act, which is dictated by the U.S. Atomic Energy Act of 1974. The Atomic Energy Act does not allow reprocessing by any nation that did not sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty( NPT), such as India.

On the other hand, India's thorium-fuel-based nuclear program, in the immediate future, depends on plutonium as a trigger to set off a nuclear reaction inside the reactors. Plutonium, which does not exist in nature, is a product of nuclear reactions in the nuclear fuel assembly, and is later separated out from the spent fuel.

### Hu: China-Russia partnership Key to World Peace

Chinese President Hu Jintao said that the China-Russia strategic partnership is key to world peace and stability, in an interview with Russian journalists in Beijing March 20, in preparation for his trip to Russia March 26-28. Hu also emphasized that trilateral cooperation among China, Russia, and India is "beneficial for the development of these three nations and that of the world at large."

Hu said that relations between Russia and China now "are at their highest." Beijing and Moscow are "closely cooperating in crucial international problems such as the nuclear problem of the Korean Peninsula and the Iranian nuclear problem, which certainly plays a serious role in maintaining peace and stability around the world," he said.

Hu said the two countries should "intensify their practical cooperation in the economy, the energy sector, science, technologies and other areas in the spirit of mutual benefit." This year marks the beginning of the second decade of the Russian-Chinese strategic partnership.

### Increased World Role for China, Russia, India

China, Russia, and India are playing an increasingly important role in the world, Chinese President Hu Jintao told the Russian press March 20. He stressed that their trilateral cooperation "is not aimed against any third party." They share interests and outlook, including advocating "a multi-polar world;... they want international issues and inter-state disputes

to be settled on the basis of universally accepted norms of international law and seek a consolidated role for the United Nations."

Hu stressed the role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in this trilateral cooperation, although India is as yet only an observer. He said that there is "an enormous potential for cooperation" in the SCO. The organization is now preparing a legal document to admit new members, and added that "some countries have already expressed the wish to join the SCO," which will be "comprehensively considered only after work on the document is completed."

## **China's Nuclear Fusion Research Highlighted**

The *Peoples Daily* March 21 featured China's nuclear fusion research. This includes at the Hefei Institute of Plasma Physics, where scientists have built the Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST), a superconducting non-circular section nuclear fusion experiment device. In addition, Chinese scientists are working to build another tokamak at the Southwestern Institute of Physics (SIP) in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Here, the scientists were able to generate 55 million degrees centigrade, the highest temperatures in Chinese history.

Chinese fusion research began in 1965, at the Heilongjiang Province Institute of Nuclear Physics, which was then relocated to Sichuan. China is part of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, which plans to build a demo test reactor around 2035. The Chinese scientists are now working to achieve this also in Chengdu by 2030.

## **Move To Link India-Myanmar, India-Russia by Railroad**

Speaking at a meeting of the Asian Regional Authority of the International Union of Railways on March 21, chairman of the Indian Railway Board, J.P. Batra said: "Construction of rail links to China and Myanmar will help tap the economic potential of the region as well as promote peace in the region." What Batra was referring to is the "missing" rail links in the Trans Asian Railway Network (TARN)—an agenda of creating global rail linkages.

Under the agreement, India has already approved 150 kms of the 315 kms of "missing" link between the Indian and Myanmar railroads at a cost of about \$250 million. Batra said discussions are on between the Indian and Myanmar foreign offices for the completion of the balance 165 kms of railroads. Once that link-up is accomplished, India, China, and Myanmar will be connected by railroads. "Myanmar has shown considerable interest and I am sure very shortly we will reach an agreement on the funding pattern." China, too, is planning a freight corridor to Myanmar covering a distance of about 660 km, which would be linked to the India-Myanmar rail link.

In addition to this rail link-up, Batra, who was the first non-European to head the International Union of Railways, pointed out that the India-Russia rail link would be via Iran, and include a shipping link through the Caspian Sea. This project, called the North-South Corridor, is yet to be sanctioned by respective governments.

## **Unprovoked Killings by Police in West Bengal**

The Communist Party-led West Bengal government fears that the entire state may become engulfed in fresh violence following the unprovoked killing of 14 farmers and villagers by police in Nandigram on March 14, the *Times of India* reported March 20. Anticipating violence, police camps have been set up now throughout the state. Meanwhile, following the Calcutta High Court's order for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the police shooting, the ruling Communist government, pretending to act fairly, has ordered an executive inquiry by the local police commissioner.

There is little doubt that the killing has touched a raw nerve within the population in West Bengal, whose opposition

political parties have come out charging that the government has adopted "Chinese fascist capitalism" by killing off farmers and grabbing their lands.

So far, the Manmohan Singh government in Delhi, which depends on the support of West Bengal, has kept quiet. But analysts point out that the land-grab from the farmers to make Special Economic Zones is the policy dictated by New Delhi, and adopted ruthlessly by the Bengal communists.

## Africa News Digest

### Heavy Fighting Breaks Out in Mogadishu

Somali insurgents attacked Ethiopian troops March 21-23 in the country's capital Mogadishu. Ethiopians have responded with tank shots and rockets. Ethiopian troops have also launched rockets against Mogadishu's stadium where some Somali insurgents are reportedly hiding.

A Somali government source said a plane crashed in northern Mogadishu March 23. The plane was a Russian-made Ilyushin carrying engineers who had been working on another damaged aircraft at Mogadishu airport. Local radio reported the crashed plane had been hit by a missile. Witnesses who saw it come down could not confirm that it had been attacked.

The fighting broke out at a time when the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was attempting to control Mogadishu with the help of Ethiopian troops, after they had allegedly dislodged the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) from Mogadishu and much of the rest of the country. However, some analysts claim that the collapse of the Islamist group has brought to the fore some of the inter- and intra-clan rivalries.

Meanwhile, the United States, on March 21, pledged support for the upcoming Somali reconciliation conference. Addressing a news conference in Nairobi, Kenya, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Michael Renneberger urged the transitional government to make the conference inclusive by reaching out to the UIC.

The TFG is now under pressure from Ethiopia, the United States, the European Union and the United Nations to expand its support base by bringing all Somali parties, including the UIC and moderate clans to the negotiating table.

### U.S. Accused of Rendition in Horn of Africa

Human rights groups in Kenya are charging that about 150 people arrested in Kenya fleeing the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia have been forcibly returned, to be questioned by U.S. and British interrogators, and to possibly be tortured, The *London Independent* reported March 23.

According to information seen by the *Independent*, about 80 people suspected of al-Qaeda links, were flown to Mogadishu and Baidoa in Somalia, in January and February. Several are reported to be shackled to the walls of underground prison cells at Mogadishu's airport. Another 50 or 60 people, accused of belonging to Ethiopian rebel groups, were flown directly to Adis Abeba, Ethiopia. Ethiopia has been accused of routinely torturing political prisoners. They were all reportedly interrogated by U.S. FBI officials while still in Kenyan prisons, and at least four were questioned by British officials in Mogadishu and then released. "This is extraordinary rendition," said Maini Kiai, chairman of the Kenya National Human Rights Commission. "Britain and America are involved in interrogating suspects."

### African Leaders Reject Global Warming Agenda

Uganda President Yoweri Museveni called the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Control (IPCC) demands "an act of aggression against Africa," according to a report on openDemocracy.net. March 23. Global warming was the key theme of the African Union summit this past January, and Nicholas Stern, Al Gore's fellow climate advisor to the British government, lectured African leaders in Addis Ababa on Jan. 30. Stern has authored a report which uses the global warming hoax to demand immediate reduction in energy use and suppression of industry. At the African summit, Stern called for biofuels and "sustainable development."

But, according to an article by Ehsan Masood, on openDemocracy.net, Stern faced a revolt from African leaders. In a debate on global warming, Masood wrote, "Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni set the tone for what was to follow during the next half-hour. Global warming, Museveni said, is "an act of aggression by the developed world against the African people." After him, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso declared: "Those who pollute, should pay."

The AU secretariat had invited Stern to address the summit, Masood reported. Earlier, he had spoken to the AU on Nov. 20, 2006.

## **Brit Economist Lectures South Africa on Global Warming**

Sir Nicholas Stern, the British government economist, lectured the South African cabinet on global warming March 14, as a guest of Environment Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk. Stern called for "adaptation and mitigation" to deal with climate change.

Stern claimed that everything, from the floods in Mozambique to the drought in Kenya, were due to global warming, and predicted more serious water-flow problems in the Nile River and an increase in waterborne diseases. Stern said that Africa could benefit from initiatives to invest in "clean" energy, reduced deforestation, and development of global public goods.

He said that South Africa, which has a "global profile" on the question, and as one of the G-8+5 nations, could play a role such as promoting talks on the U.S.-China "standoff" on greenhouse gas emissions.

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