

# IN BOX

## Would Jesus Join the EU?

On June 8, 2003, Poles will face one of their most important national decisions since the fall of communism: whether to join the European Union (EU). And in its crusade to win entry, the Polish government of ex-Communist Prime Minister Leszek Miller has found an unlikely ally: the Vatican.

The pro- and anti-EU camps are fighting fiercely for each vote. Three quarters of the voting population are expected to turn out in the referendum, whose outcome is uncertain. In March 2003, only 58 percent of Poles had declared their support for EU accession.

Enter the Roman Catholic Church. In a society that is 95 percent Catholic, a thumping 43 percent of those surveyed about the EU referendum said they would follow the church's lead. Problem is, the church is divided on the issue. The Vatican has supported Poland's entry, seeing it as an opportunity to extend the church's influence on social affairs in Europe. When Pope John Paul II traveled to Poland at the government's invitation last summer, he expressed his hope that his native land would "find its place in the structures of the European Union, and will not lose its identity but enrich the continent." At the parochial level, however, local priests often deliver anti-European sermons blaming the West and the

Internet for the secularization of Polish youth. "Globalization is the communism of the 21st century," said right-wing commentator Andrzej Leszek Szczesniak, arguing against EU integration on Radio Maryja, an extreme-right Catholic station that reaches nearly 3 million Poles. And unfortunately for the government, the audience for such views is exactly the one that it most wants to win over for the referendum—rural voters who tend to be the most isolated and least educated.

Prime Minister Miller and Polish primate Józef Glemp have worked hand in hand on the European question, following the endorsement in March 2002 by the Polish episcopate of plans for EU integration. But the political price of this partnership may be higher than anticipated. In December 2002, the government postponed its campaign promise to change Poland's restrictive antiabortion law. And in January 2003, it approached the EU for permission to preserve the laws on the "protection of human life" in the accession treaty. Still, no matter how the referendum goes, it has succeeded in yoking together a remarkably odd set of bedfellows: Ex-Communists working with Catholics to join what may be the ultimate secular democratic institution.

## Mine Weeders

The innovative use of e-mail and the Internet to win a treaty banning antipersonnel land mines has made the International Campaign to Ban Landmines one of the most hackneyed examples of high-tech in action. But deminers themselves are still stuck with World War II technology to do their jobs, according to a February 2003 RAND report, "Alternatives for Landmine Detection."

## Ten Years Ago in FP

One day the United States may have to decide how committed it is to the seemingly contradictory goals of protecting the Kurds and preserving Iraq's territorial integrity. . . . Many believe the Western-defended Kurdish autonomous zone endangers the allegiance of Turkey's own Kurds. . . . Turkish leaders are not likely to prevent the West from maintaining its protection; nor will they initiate what could be a break with the United States and others over Hussein.

Morton I. Abramowitz  
Dateline Ankara: Turkey After Ozal

Atlanticists in Britain and the United States preferred to see Britain link its destiny with the United States rather than with the [European Community (EC)]. . . . De Gaulle's opposition to British entry [to the EC] was, of course, driven wholly by the fear that Britain would act as the Americans' Trojan horse within the EC, bringing in the interests and influence of the United States and undermining the French policy of independence from U.S. hegemony.

Jagdish Bhagwati  
Beyond NAFTA: Clinton's Trading Choices

Americans prefer to see other countries enjoy the same liberties they do. That desire is especially strong when other peoples show that they too want to decide their fate by democratic means. . . . Further, if Americans saw that U.S. policymakers were promoting democracy around the globe, they would be more likely to support American policy with financial commitments and military action when necessary to accomplish those foreign policy objectives.

Morton H. Halperin  
Guaranteeing Democracy

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Land mines are perhaps the most pernicious obstacles confronting poor countries trying to put their conflict-ridden past behind them. In Afghanistan, for example, an estimated 5 million to 7 million still litter the landscape, maiming children, killing livestock, and rendering vast stretches of territory unfit for habitation or development. To find and remove these flowers of death, today's deminers still use metal detectors and prodding devices. But metal detectors also pick up any scrap of metal, producing time-consuming false alarms. In some cases, deminers may also have mine-detection dogs. Unfortunately, these dogs are as expensive as they are trustworthy—breeding and training costs between \$13,000 and \$25,000 per animal. And as Jackie MacDonald, one of the RAND report's authors, explains, "People still have to follow up with a metal detector after dogs go in."

New approaches such as training bees to detect mines or using systems that reflect sound or seismic

waves off mines are in the works. But none of these, argue the authors, can alone effectively reduce false alarms in the various conditions and terrain of the roughly 90



Semper Fido: Will dogs always have to do the dirty work?

mine-infested countries. At the current rate, ridding the world of all mines would take 450 to 500 years—and that's only if no new mines are laid.

The U.S. Army is currently testing a new technology—the Handheld Standoff Mine Detection Sys-

tem—in Afghanistan. Fast tracked through the research and development (R&D) phase, this system combines two existing methods (the metal detector and ground-penetrating radar) and may achieve much better results. But the RAND report argues for a "next-generation multisensor system" that integrates mature technologies with newer ones. Estimated costs are up to \$135 million; R&D could take up to 19 years.

The U.S. government—not a signatory of the Ottawa land mine treaty, but the biggest spender on demining efforts—plunks down approximately \$100 million per year on humanitarian demining. In 2002, only \$2.7 million of that sum was invested in R&D.

"Right now," says John Wilkinson of RONCO Consulting, a private firm with a five-year contract with the U.S. Department of State for humanitarian land mine clearance, "there's nothing better than mine-detecting dogs."

## Some Assembly Required

The challenge of forging a peaceful, democratic post-Saddam Iraq has sharpened debate about the ways and means of nation building. Recent reports on Afghanistan, Bosnia, East Timor, and Kosovo offer a smorgasbord of relevant case studies, lessons, and horror stories:

**AFGHANISTAN** For every soldier in the new Afghan National Army, at least 100 militia members still operate in various corners of Afghanistan, thanks to funding from neighbors like Iran and Uzbekistan. So writes Mark Sedra in *Afghanistan: Between War and Reconstruction* (Foreign Policy in Focus, March 2003). In *Afghanistan: Women and Reconstruction* (March 2003), the International Crisis Group notes that although the Taliban's defeat promised an end to the systematic oppression of Afghan women, most aid is being channelled to projects likely to prove at most symbolic.

**EAST TIMOR** The growth of militia groups and an upsurge in violence, including a deadly riot last December in the capital Dili, could undermine progress in East Timor, according to the *Special Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor* (March 2003). The United Nations has recommended delaying its current timeline for a gradual exit of the roughly 4,000 U.N. peacekeepers.

**BOSNIA** Although 907,000 refugees have returned to their homes since 1995, about 500,000 Bosnians remain displaced, reports the International Crisis Group in *The Continuing Challenge of Refugee Return in Bosnia & Herzegovina* (December 2002). A weak economy, discrimination against refugees, and the threat of violence deter many from returning. In *Fostering Regional Cooperation and Reconciliation in Serbia and Southeastern Europe* (October 2002), the Stanley Foundation argues that the single biggest dilemma facing the region is whether it will be a unified market of 55 million people or several smaller markets.

**KOSOVO** Kosovo's final status is the subject of the U.S. Institute of Peace's *Kosovo Decision Time* (February 2003). The *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo* (January 2003) highlights the difficulty of building effective, representative, transparent, and accountable civic institutions with a divided populace. From running power plants to introducing the euro, the assistance efforts of the European Union are detailed in its periodic newsletter, *Commitment to Kosovo*.

