

International Intelligence

Incursion into Thailand denied by Vietnam

The widespread publicity surrounding a reported incursion this week by Vietnam into Thailand was well-timed to have a disruptive effect on the opening round of talks of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Malaysia this week. In fact, the supposed incursion was so well timed as to lead many to doubt its very existence. "We are not so ignorant or so stupid as to carry out such an action at this particular time," said one top Vietnamese source.

Of course, all informed observers, upon hearing of the reported "aggression," assumed that the Vietnamese had been provoked into such action by the barbarous action of Pol Pot guerrillas being harbored inside Thailand, and supplied and armed by the United States, China and various international agencies like the "Red Cross." It could be, however, that aggression did occur, by Thai troops or some combination of Thai and Pol Pot forces. That would be entirely consistent with the behavior of the Carter administration and Peking in their new military alliance, and also typical of the way the White House likes to conduct itself on the eve of major international conferences.

The meeting of the ASEAN nations, which is designed for "consultations" by the group with the United States and the EEC, was shaping up to be a showdown over the issue of recognition of the Vietnam-allied government in Kampuchea. Numerous reports indicated that Indonesia and Malaysia were considering breaking with official ASEAN policy and arguing for recognition, as fears of China has for some time been overshadowing the concerns of these two countries about Vietnam. Singapore and Thailand, who are on good terms with Peking, are arguing for a policy of continued hostility and confrontation toward Hanoi.

The reported fighting between Vietnam and Thailand appears to have put the Indonesian and Malaysian plans temporarily on the back burner.

Hanoi has issued a sharp denial of the charges, which first surfaced on Tuesday, June 24. Several thousand Vietnamese troops are said by Thai military sources and unnamed "Western diplomats" to have crossed into Thai territory and engaged Thai troops in fighting. An additional 10-18,000 Vietnamese troops in two divisions are reportedly in the vicinity of the border. In the course of the reported conflict, two Thai aircraft were shot down.

Both the State Department and Peking have denounced the Vietnamese "actions" as blatant "aggression." Moreover, both Thailand and Singapore issued statements to the effect that the Vietnamese "aggression" showed that Hanoi is not intent on establishing peace in the region.

For the time being, Indonesia and Malaysia have been swayed off their original plan, and immediate prospects for recognition of the government of Kampuchea and normalized relations in the area are remote. However, the statement issued by the Foreign Minister of Indonesia in response to the reported Vietnamese incursion was much more mild than others issued, indicating that the door to the country's original plan is not closed.

Sanjay Gandhi dies in plane crash

The sudden tragic death of Sanjay Gandhi, 33-year-old son of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has deeply shocked many in India. Hundreds of thousands of people turned out to line the streets of his funeral procession and attend Mr. Gandhi's cremation on the banks of the Jumna river in New Delhi.

The controversial Mr. Gandhi had steadily gained political prominence and influence after his election to the Parliament in the January 1980 triumph of Mrs. Gandhi's Congress Party. He acted as a close adviser of the Prime Minister, particularly in regard to party matters. Following the late-May Congress victory

in state assembly elections, Mr. Gandhi was appointed one of four General Secretaries of the Congress-(I). Even Mr. Gandhi's critics were beginning to concede that he was gaining a legitimate place on the Indian political scene.

The concern in New Delhi today is twofold. A political vacuum has now been created, particularly in the leadership of the influential body of younger congressmen who looked to Mr. Gandhi; and Mrs. Gandhi herself has suffered a terrible and unexpected personal blow at a time when her leadership is irreplaceable in India.

The circumstances of the crash of Mr. Gandhi's Pitts aerobatic stunt plane are under investigation. So far there is no evidence to suggest that it was anything other than a tragic accident. However, the careful examination being carried out is certain to turn up any evidence to the contrary.

Soviets go after Ghotbzadeh

For the first time since the Iranian Revolution, the Soviet Union has begun to exert open pressure on Iran, targeting Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, Iran's Foreign Minister. Over the June 21 weekend, an article in *Pravda* by Yuri Kornilov attacked Ghotbzadeh, a long-time Anglo-American agent, for "singing someone else's tune" and for voicing "concoctions" about the U.S.S.R. during his recent trip to Scandinavia.

On June 16, the Soviet news agency *Tass* had gone even further. "The imperialist forces and regional reaction" want to open a second front against Afghanistan through Iran, *Tass* reported. "According to reports . . . certain circles of the Iranian leadership regrettably express the desire to play up the organizers of the anti-Afghan campaign. . . . Suspicious activity of the so-called leaders of the 'Afghan emigration' who cover their banditry with Islamic slogans has been reported in Iran. Iran's Foreign Minister

Ghotbzadeh recently spoke about the possibility of providing Iranian territory for terrorist training camps . . . for the creation of a new bases for aggression against Afghanistan." *Tass* cites a *Pakistan Times* report that while in Oslo, Ghotbzadeh discussed with Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua an escalation of "counterrevolutionary forces against Afghanistan."

Japan's LDP wins big; fight on for succession

Japan's ruling Liberal-Democratic Party won a surprising, smashing victory in the June 22 elections, giving it a 28-seat majority in the 511-seat Diet (parliament). This is the largest majority it has enjoyed since the 1960s and ends for the time being the prospect of the LDP having to form a coalition with some of the "middle-of-the-road" opposition parties. Such coalitions would have likely ushered in an era of Italian-style unstable governments.

The question now is who will succeed Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira, who died suddenly of a heart attack in early June. The major policy stance at issue in the succession is whether the new Premier will follow in Ohira's path of complete subservience to Washington, particularly around the creation of a NATO-style U.S.-Japan-China military axis against the Soviet Union. The alternative is a closer policy collaboration with France and Germany, particularly on economic issues, such as Ohira's predecessor, Takeo Fukuda, followed in 1978.

Fukuda and former Prime Minister Takeo Miki are supporting former Trade and Industry Minister Toshio Komoto, also a favorite of business. He is viewed as much less likely to follow Carter's dictates than Ohira. The other leading contender is Yasuhiro Nakasone a faction leader in his own right who is supported by former Premier Kakuei Tanaka and some members of the now less cohesive Ohira faction. Nakasone's profile is that of a nationalist who often

proposes policies of economic growth and independence for Japan, but who is usually willing to sacrifice policy for personal ambitions. His actions as Premier are least predictable of the major contenders. Washington's favorite is former Foreign Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, a leading member of the Trilateral Commission and a firm supporter of Washington's NATO-ization of Japan. But he is viewed as least likely of the three to succeed, not even having clear succession to leadership of the Ohira faction.

If no choice can be arrived at in time for the July 17 Diet opening, a caretaker may be chosen until the regular new term in December of this year.

NATO coup in the works for Turkey?

The London *Guardian* leaked June 23 that at the NATO ministerial conference this week, NATO leaders would be "weighing up military men as well as politicians" to take power in Turkey. "Propping up Turkey does not necessarily mean propping up democratic Turkey," the *Guardian* editorial stated point-blank.

The NATO conference—held in the Turkish capital of Ankara—coincides with President Jimmy Carter's tour of the Mediterranean countries of Spain, Italy and Yugoslavia, as part of the effort to beef up the Atlantic Alliance in that region. It also coincides with an Anglo-American effort to informally reconstitute a CENTO-style alliance of nations on the "underbelly" of the U.S.S.R.

Despite Turkey's political and economic turbulence, combined with rampant terrorism that laves 10 dead each day, the Turkish military has thus far been reluctant to intervene directly into politics. Those factions of the Turkish Armed Forces most susceptible to NATO's proddings may, however, soon find themselves manipulated into seizing power.

Briefly

● **ARCHBISHOP** Munoz Duque of Bogota stated June 16 at an official meeting of Colombia's Roman-Catholic Episcopate that Colombia is close to being "defeated" by the drug mafias and government action against those mafias must take place "without any violation of human liberty." The archbishop, who is closely allied with the Society of Jesus, added that "one need not reflect too much to realize that the 'mafia phenomenon' resides in the heart of each human being."

● **MICHAEL MANLEY**, Prime Minister of Jamaica, and the nation's military chief of staff were the targets of an assassination plot foiled June 23 with the arrest of 29 plotters, including members of the armed forces. A government spokesman told *EIR*, "I would not be a bit surprised if this plot was set up by foreign elements."

● **COMECON** members agreed at a June 12 meeting to launch a joint project to produce fast breeder nuclear reactors. The breeder project, announced from Hradec Karlove, Czechoslovakia, is part of a plan by the U.S.S.R. and its allies to build 37 gigawatts of atomic power generating capacity in the next decade.

● **ITALIAN DEFENSE** Minister Lagorio stated to the Chamber of Deputies June 25 that "I fully agree with Chancellor Schmidt; I support a Euromissile moratorium; I reject any idea of a subaltern position with respect to the U.S." He also endorsed French President Giscard's proposal for an East-West conference on European disarmament.

● **KIICHI MIYAZAWA**, Washington's favorite choice to become Japan's new Prime Minister, is facing increasing opposition in Japan. The word from Tokyo is that one thing in particular about Miyazawa has rubbed many people the wrong way—his not-so-secret severe drinking problem.