

International Intelligence

Soviets: shuttle tragedy to delay SDI

The Soviet Union and its satrapies have begun a campaign to portray the disaster of the Space Shuttle Challenger as potentially helpful to world peace, because it will delay the U.S. space weapons program.

The Soviet press agency TASS suggested that the U.S. Space Shuttle, which exploded killing all aboard Jan. 28, was carrying secret explosives to be tested in space. Quoting from no less authoritative a source than Gus Hall of the Communist Party U.S.A., TASS said the mission was part of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Reports that the U.S. Coast Guard had been warned not to touch part of the Shuttle's debris "confirm reports that have filtered into the press to the effect that the Challenger carried new secret explosives that were to have been tested in zero gravity," TASS quoted Hall saying.

Said the Polish armed forces newspaper, *Zolnierz Wolnosci*, "The tragedy has a chance to serve a good cause. During preparations for 'Star Wars,' there can be an accidental explosion mistaken for an attack. In such a case, the whole of humanity would be the victim." The editorial insisted that the primary objective of all U.S. Shuttle flights was furtherance of the SDI, and that it was likely that pressure from the Department of Defense "seeking quick progress in militarizing space, created a climate of haste and nervousness at NASA, compromising safety."

As for Muammar Qaddafi, he called the Shuttle's crew "victims of imperialist impatience."

García: narco-terrorism 'is Pol Potism'

Speaking about the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) terrorists who are laying siege to his nation, Peruvian President Alan García said, "I not only condemn the violence, but I condemn this type of inhuman and cruel violence which forces peasants from

far-off communities to confront, unarmed, the forces of order. . . . This is Pol Potism; this is inhumanity; this is cruelty. . . ."

Pol Pot was the Cambodian dictator, educated and groomed at the Sorbonne University in Paris, who killed 3 million of his countrymen during his short rule. Leaders of the Shining Path were also Paris-trained.

García made his statements after the resignation of all members of the peace commission he formed four months ago, to persuade the guerrillas to lay down their arms. Elements of his party linked to Amnesty International had wanted the commission to arrange a prompt amnesty for the narco-terrorists.

The extremist members of the commission told the press that they quit because of "the lack of support from the government."

On Jan. 24, García outlined his administration's peace policy for the press. He described the Shining Path as "intolerant people" who take advantage of peasants, using them as "cannon fodder." "The state will continue repressing them without committing excesses or falling into barbarism. This is a struggle in which I am convinced that the wrong ones will tire of their own mistakes; and the state will not appear as weak before them, but will continue applying all the rigor of the law and of the instruments which the Constitution provides in police action and repressive action."

Cardinal receives death threats

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger has received death threats, and is constantly accompanied by three agents of the Vatican secret services, according to the Jan. 26 issue of *L'Espresso*.

According to the newspaper, which says it relies on sources inside the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith headed by the Cardinal, death threats against Ratzinger have "alarmed the Holy See, where many fear a new attempt against a member of the Catholic hierarchy."

Ratzinger, in a Rome seminar on "The Church and the Economy," held on Nov. 19 in preparation for John Paul II's Extraordi-

nary Synod of Bishops (Nov. 26-Dec. 8), denounced both Marxist and "free enterprise" economics as immoral and, therefore, incompetent and unscientific. In the same speech, he denounced "Mr. Rockefeller" for handling the world debt problem in a way that produces widespread misery and death.

Israel agrees to SDI participation

Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin has accepted "in principle" the American invitation to participate in the initial research and development phase of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. In his acceptance letter to Caspar Weinberger, quoted in the Jan. 23 *Jerusalem Post*, Rabin suggests that the U.S. and Israeli governments draft a memorandum of agreement on the subject.

According to the *Post*, U.S. officials report that lawyers are expected to start drafting the text for U.S.-Israeli cooperation on the SDI in the coming weeks.

Rabin stressed that U.S. and Israeli experts had already reviewed technical aspects of Israel's participation in the SDI, and a team of Israeli specialists had been in Washington, during December 1985, for meetings with SDI head Lt.-Gen. James Abrahamson, to discuss an Israeli role.

Soviets dump interior minister

Gen. Vitali Fedorchuk, Soviet interior minister, has been moved out of his job to await a "new appointment," TASS reported on Jan. 26. The new Soviet minister of interior, who heads the civilian police, is Aleksander Vlasov (53).

Vlasov's ties to party leader Mikhail Gorbachov go back to the period in which Gorbachov was party chief in the Stavropol region of Soviet Russia. Vlasov headed the party organization, first, in the neighboring autonomous republic of Chechen-Ingush, and later the Don River port of Rostov. He

Briefly

● **A MONARCHIST** party is being formed in Brazil to promote the return to power of Luis de Orléans e Braganza, the 48-year old claimant to the throne. Brazilian republicans ended the Braganza empire in 1889, but the family has kept active behind the scenes through such operations as the Tradition, Family, and Property pseudo-Catholic cult.

● **ADMIRAL SONTEE** Boonyachai, deputy prime minister of Thailand, has agreed to become president of the Advisory Board of the Schiller Institute in Thailand. The institute is strongly in favor of a new world economic order and the preservation of America's Atlantic and Pacific alliances. Sontee is a leader of the Citizens' Party, and has taken a firm stand against the looting of the underdeveloped sector by the International Monetary Fund.

● **BRAZILIAN** Federal Police broke up what they called one of the main narcotics mafias of Rondonia province. The operation began with the September arrest of a former federal deputy for Rondonia, Isaac Newton da Silva Pessoa, with 140 kilos of cocaine in his possession.

● **BULGARIAN** Politburo member Chudomir Aleksandrov, a possible successor to party chief Todor Zhivkov, has been promoted in a party reshuffle, reports the Bulgarian News agency BTA. The agency also said that Todor Bozinov, a full Politburo member, and Stamish Bonev, a candidate member, had been removed from their posts.

● **AUSTRIA** is studying the possibility of deploying plasma and particle-beam weapons against tanks, airplanes, and missiles. The creation of such a defensive weapon, Col.-Gen. Othmar Tauschitz told the Vienna daily *Die Presse* on Jan. 29, would not contradict the specifications of the Austrian State Treaty of 1955, which defines the country as "neutral." Tauschitz said that it will take about two years to determine the feasibility of such a weapon.

sat on the North Caucasus Military Council with Gorbachov.

Under Gorbachov, the most massive purges have been conducted since the Stalin era, with the "Brezhnev mafia" largely decimated, and replaced by figures who, by history and experience, are capable of improving efficiency in the militarized and mobilized Soviet economy.

Press attack Palme's foreign policy

Svenska Dagbladet, the leading conservative newspaper in Sweden, has attacked the foreign policy of Socialist Prime Minister Olof Palme, characterizing it as appeasement toward the Soviet Union.

Citing a report on ongoing Soviet submarine violations of Swedish territorial waters, recently released by Swedish Commander-in-Chief Lennart Ljung, the Swedish daily in its Jan. 25 lead editorial, makes an unusually strong attack on the Palme policy:

"This report and the preceding one definitely remove all hopes that the submarine violations can be made to cease by Sweden's exerting all efforts to try to create friendly relations with the Soviet Union. This notion has characterized the Palme government's foreign policy ever since the spring of 1983," when the first discovery of Soviet violations was made.

"This appeasement policy has now definitely broken down in a confrontation with the bitter reality. . . . We have to forcefully strengthen our defense and stop making the Soviets' favorite proposals in disarmament our own." Palme is to travel to Moscow in April for the first time.

Three resign in Indian spy scandal

Another spy scandal in India has forced two junior cabinet ministers and a high-ranking civil servant to resign from the Indian government of Rajiv Gandhi.

Newspaper reports indicate that the min-

isters were linked to a businessman, Ram Swaroop, accused of spying for Israel, Taiwan, and West Germany.

The Press Trust of India announced the resignations of K.P. Singh Deo, minister of state for food and civil supplies and Chandulal Chandrakar, minister for rural development. M.S. Sanjeevi Rao, chairman of the Electric Commission, also resigned.

Meanwhile, Nural Hassan, India's Ambassador to Moscow, has been recalled to Delhi and fired. Sources say that Hassan, who is considered pro-Soviet, repeatedly "sent false signals" between the two capitals. One result was Rajiv Gandhi's surprise trip to Moscow in October, which was unproductive.

Hassan had indicated to both Gorbachov and Gandhi then that both had something important to say to each other.

Appointed to replace Hassan is A. P. Venketaswaran, former ambassador to China and Syria. He is now foreign secretary in charge of East Asia.

Arafat meets with King Hussein

PLO chief Yasser Arafat met with King Hussein of Jordan Jan. 27, but there has been no announcement of any breakthrough in terms of the Palestine Liberation Organization's willingness to endorse U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, which recognize the existence of Israel and treat the Palestinians as refugees.

Arab sources report that Moscow has been applying pressure to the PLO not to endorse the U.N. Resolutions for fear that should the Palestinians do so, it will lead, as Arafat termed it, to "a second Camp David."

King Hussein plans to travel to Cairo for a visit with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to discuss the meetings with Arafat. Mubarak had warned Arafat that he would be "the big fat loser" if he failed to endorse the U.N. Resolutions. Arab sources report that the latest U.S. offer involves America acting as broker for Palestinian self-determination on the West Bank and Gaza strip, once a Jordanian-Palestinian confederated state has been created there.