

a more and more tangible influence on world politics. Among them, great significance is attached to the new movement of ecologists in the struggle for peace . . . forming around the journal *Protection of Nature*," published in Sofia, Bulgaria.

In August 1986, Frolov said, this East-West movement will convene a conference on "The Protection of the Environment and the Defense of Peace." Again, the venue will be Bulgaria, the Soviet bloc's most notorious nexus of both anti-science kookery and terrorism.

and about homosexuals (etc.) is to be set up in libraries and made available without restriction. . . .

"Promotion of homosexual culture. . . . Homosexual and lesbian parents are not to be denied custody of their children because of their sexual orientation.

"Relationships: Relationships desired by children and young people are not to be interfered with. Parental rights have no priority over the needs of children and young people. There will be no prevention of the development, the work, and cooperation of homosexual student groups. No prevention of homosexual public-relations efforts in schools and at youth centers. . . . Suitable rooms and financial assistance for a self-governing homosexual center are to be furnished. . . . Abolition of the police file on prostitutes. . . . Spending the night in open places is to be allowed."

Although Green tacticians like terrorist attorney Otto Schily have clearly recognized that an open frontal attack by the Greens on the moral basis of society could cost the Greens the power they urgently need to cripple the most important West German states economically and politically, the Greens are continuing their sexual-politics antics.

Not only have the Frankfurt Greens not backed down from their demands, the Greens in the Bundestag have recently introduced a bill to eliminate section 175 (homosexual contacts between adults) and section 182 (seduction of minors) of the federal penal code.

In the Berlin radical newspaper *tageszeitung*, a letter was published in which parliamentary steering committee member Susanne Langhammer, an opponent of the revised program paper, attacked those "Green men" still occupying the "role of the family father," demanding that they "give up their child-dominating motherly anxiety about 'their children' along with their anxiety about the property and educational claims on and for 'their' children." Ms. Langhammer spoke as the representative of the Federation of Female Pedophilia.

In February 1984, the Green parliamentary faction had initiated a petition drive in support of Peter Schult, who was sentenced to almost three years in prison for homosexual abuse of boys.

Syria's Hafez Assad wins a respite

by Thierry Lalevée

A month ago, Syria's President Hafez al Assad was contemplating two related threats: 1) the possibility of a war with Israel in Lebanon or on Syrian territory itself, and 2) that Washington would give him the "Libyan treatment" for Syrian intelligence involvement in the April bomb attempt on an El-Al airliner in London and the almost simultaneous bombing of the La Belle discothèque in West Berlin. Evidence mounted linking the apprehended Hindawi brothers in London and West Berlin to the East Berlin-based Syrian embassy and Syrian intelligence. A countdown seemed to have begun. But suddenly, it stopped.

Exemplary is that, on May 26, Italian authorities announced that Judge Sicca, investigating the Rome airport massacre of last December, would present to the press evidence linking the sole surviving terrorist to General al Khouli, chief of Syrian Air Force intelligence and a longstanding personal friend of Assad. However, Judge Sicca's press conference was postponed *sine die*, and Rome withdrew its charges.

In mid-May, to protect himself, Assad had circulated elaborate stories purporting to demonstrate possible Syrian intelligence involvement in terrorism—but against his will. Hawkish Syrian intelligence factions were acting to set Assad up, force his hand, and compel him to lead the country into war, said these reports. That war was at stake is obvious; if Nezar Hindawi had succeeded in blowing up the El-Al airliner, an Israeli attack on Syria would have acquired legitimacy. But the point of all the reports: Assad was not the real culprit.

Whether Assad's ploy worked or not, high-level decisions were taken, both in the United States and Israel, not to go to war with Syria. From Washington, Secretary of State George Shultz almost immediately expressed misgivings at the possibility of an American strike on Syria, right after it was first mooted following the April 15 raid on Tripoli. Then, Assad's old friend, Henry Kissinger, told the *Los Angeles Times* on May 24: "I believe that the Syrian leader limits himself to closing his eyes to the groups that plot in his country. I don't believe he supports terrorism. I have a great appreciation for his ability for calculation. . . ."

Then, on May 30, speaking for the administration, U.N. Ambassador Vernon Walters told French radio that the ter-

rorist connection of "Syria is more complicated," adding without blushing, "We do not have irrefutable proof of Syria's involvement, as we did against Libya's Qaddafi." The same line was echoed the same day by the White House spokesman Larry Speakes, who added, "Syria remains nonetheless on the list of terrorist countries."

In sum, there has been as much high-level diplomatic deployment to save Assad's neck as there had been to denounce Qaddafi and Libya.

Making the matter "more complicated," to use Walters' words, has been, first, Syria's close relationship to Moscow, and second, Damascus's well-known power of life or death over the American, British, and French hostages detained in Lebanon. Walters was candid on the issue: "We believe that our hostages, like yours, [the French] are being held in the Syrian-controlled Lebanese territories."

Assad gains time

Are these the only reasons for letting Assad off the hook? In fact, there are two others. The elimination of Assad would ruin the scenario of the U.S. Eastern Establishment for a permanent situation of conflict (Israel vs. Syria) to keep the region under manipulative imperial control, on a wider chessboard of regional conflicts with the Soviet Union.

The alternative to such "crisis management" is represented by Israeli Premier Shimon Peres's proposal for a Middle East Marshall Plan, which is adamantly opposed by the State Department, as well as the British government, as Margaret Thatcher made clear during her recent visit to Israel.

There is a complementary to spread the delusion that, upon Saudi prompting, Syria could be led to break with the Soviet Union, and play a positive role in mediating an end to the Gulf War. (For the Saudis to lead such a diplomatic initiative is perfectly natural; Riyadh does it out of desperation, not a desire to whitewash Assad—just to buy him.)

Assad has seized upon such things to gain time. Out of economic need, Damascus has accepted the offer presented by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and Jordan's King Hussein, to mediate a mending of Syrian relations with Iraq. In mid-May, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al Sharah went to Tehran to urge restraint in the Gulf War, and on May 19, Assad himself went on national Syrian television to announce that he was telling the Iranian leadership "not to threaten other Gulf countries and not to expand the war into the Gulf."

It was all for show: Last fall, Iran cut its oil deliveries to Syria by half because of accumulated debts. Damascus's spiritual power over the Mullahs is very limited—the more so considering the fighting between Syrian troops and the Iranian Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Nonetheless, arriving in Damascus May 24, King Hussein flew on to Baghdad the following day with a proposal for the reopening of the Iraqi/Mediterranean pipe-line closed down since 1982, and an offer of a high-level meeting between the

Syrian and Iraqi leaderships. Baghdad offered proposals of its own: If Damascus wants to help end the Gulf War, it should side with the Iraqi Arabs against the Iranian Persians. Jordan's Prime Minister Zaid Rifai transmitted this answer to Assad on May 27 in Athens.

While helping Syria gain new international credibility, these maneuverings have in no way interfered with Syria's main preoccupation: to consolidate its military and political relations with the Soviet Union and its allies. At the peak of the crisis-period in Syria's international relations in early May, a Soviet military delegation flew to Belgrade where Assad was on official visit, to confirm that Moscow was ready to deliver new MiG-29s and some SS-23 middle-range missiles. The issue was discussed further on May 20 during the visit to Damascus of Lt.-Gen. D. Lizichev, director of the Political Department of the Soviet Army. By early May, a group of Syrian pilots had left for the Soviet Union to train on the MiG-29; sixty of the craft are expected to be delivered to Syria in coming years.

Amid widely circulating rumors that Assad himself flew to Moscow on May 17 for a secret visit, Vice-President Abdel Halim Khaddam arrived most officially in Moscow on May 25 to meet with the entire Soviet leadership. With Khaddam was Gen. Hikmat Shehabi, the Syrian chief of staff. Little was made public of the many meetings with Gorbachov and Defense Minister Marshal Sergei Sokolov, or the political planning sessions with International Department boss Anatolii Dobrynin and Konstantin Katushev, the director for economic relations with Third World countries. Summary statements put out each day underlined Moscow's total commitment to "meet Syria's defense needs."

Khaddam had not even concluded his visit before the commander of the Syrian navy, Mustafa Tayara, arrived in Moscow on May 27 to meet with Admiral Chernavin, commander of the Soviet navy, to discuss deliveries of Soviet submarines. The same day, Syria's culture minister, Nazdah al Attar, was welcomed to Moscow by P. N. Demichev who, just a few days earlier, as Soviet minister of culture, participated in a Soviet KGB conference.

Assad was visiting Greece on May 26 and Romania on May 28. Though his visit to Greece was heralded as his first in a NATO country in 10 years, it coincided with a rise of tension between Greece and NATO-member Turkey. Greece's Papandreou chose to use his toast to his Syrian friends, with whom he signed a defense treaty two years ago, to launch threats against NATO and Turkey. Though officially the talks concerned the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the real issues were Greek and Syrian common interests against Turkey.

Syria may be quiet on the Western front, but evidence is mounting that Moscow thinks the time is ripe for a crisis on NATO's Southern Flank, and Syria has its role to play. Assad has gained the time he wanted.