

mittee meeting of June 27, the old guard of party secretary Giorgio Napolitano was ousted for its failed strategy of trying to sneak the Communist Party into the government by following a “national” line. The national executive committee was cut from nine people to five, and Achille Occhetto, a Gorbachov man, was voted in as vice secretary. He will become party chief by the end of the year.

Socialist leader Martelli and Communist leader Occhetto then granted a *joint* interview to the weekly *Espresso*, in which they affably discussed the possibility of one big “left” party in Italy, including the Greens and Radicals along with the Communists and Socialists.

The creation of a “dissent bloc” inside the Italian Communist Party—the largest in the West and Italy’s second-biggest party despite electoral slippage—clearly works as the driver for setting up this Italian “rainbow coalition,” whose only real function is to attack the Church. The scenarios by which the Communists could get into the government are various: a split in which a “left” and “right” party emerges; or, in not-unlikely early elections, a hemorrhage of Communist votes into Craxi’s party. Both scenarios would produce the indispensable prerequisite for the “lay bloc” to take over the government: a scaled-down Communist Party, kept “under control” by the Socialists, which would become the biggest left party.

How much Moscow is in on this game can be seen in the *Pravda* commentaries wishfully predicting a very short life for the Goria government, in the hopes of eroding further the independence of the Italian Catholic world.

### The Marcinkus case

Such schemes may have been set back when the Italian Supreme Court recently absolved Archbishop Paul Marcinkus for the financial scandal around the Banco Ambrosiano and the Vatican-linked Istitute per le Opere di Religione (IOR), after a months-long campaign of attacks on the Vatican. The anti-Marcinkus drive was launched by the self-styled “lay” print media which used the case as a political weapon to discredit the Church.

The Marcinkus case came back into the limelight exactly *one day* after Brazil had declared a moratorium on its foreign debt last February. Brazilian President José Sarney, in announcing the measure, relied heavily upon the document put out by Vatican’s “Justitia et Pax” commission, which attacked the policy of enslaving Third World countries by means of conditions on credit, and explicitly named the International Monetary Fund.

This issue—defiance of the International Monetary Fund—defines precisely where Prime Minister Giovanni Goria would have his best chance to keep his cabinet from sinking with the rotting hulk of “Irangate.” When then-Brazilian Finance Minister Dilson Funaro came to Italy last March, then-Treasury Minister Goria supported Brazil’s debt moratorium.

## The meteoric rise of Gen. V.N. Lobov

by Rachel Douglas

Expect to hear a lot more about V.N. Lobov, a Soviet military officer who currently has the rank of general colonel (three-star general) and is first deputy chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces. He has zoomed to the upper echelon of the Soviet military leadership in as short a time as any of the new generation of the Soviet high command, schooled under Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov. Like Ogarkov, he is a specialist in strategic deception.

The elevation of General Lobov to the post of first deputy chief of staff became known in April 1987. Already on June 15, he was dispatched on a sensitive diplomatic assignment—to Syria. He conferred with Syrian Minister of Defense Tlas and Chief of Staff Shehabi, being the highest-level Soviet representative on the scene as a major Middle East crisis began to boil in the Persian Gulf.

On June 28, less than a fortnight after his return from Syria, Lobov published a lengthy article in the Soviet military daily *Krasnaya Zvezda*. From this officer, who for the previous three years commanded the land-locked Central Asian Military District, Russian military readers received an authoritative treatise on the importance of *naval* operations in the global strategic showdown.

Complaining particularly about the global reach of United States aircraft carrier groups, Lobov admonished, “The world’s oceans are turning more and more into the starting point for the unleashing of aggression against the Soviet Union . . . and into a springboard from which a first nuclear strike will be launched.” He did not, naturally, say anything about such developments as the stepped-up deployment of Soviet Delta Class ballistic missile submarines, not to mention Victor Class and Alpha Class subs armed with cruise missiles, off the U.S. coast; or the Soviet Navy’s acquisition of two more Typhoon Class and four of the new Delta-IV Class strategic ballistic missile submarines, just in the past two years.

General Lobov zeroed in on current events: “Particular alarm is caused these days by the expansion of the American naval presence in the Persian Gulf and the northern part of the Arabian Sea. Using the shelling of the frigate *Stark* as a pretext, Washington has sent additional warships into an already explosive region, is keeping the carrier *Constellation* on combat standby in the region, is threatening to strike against Iran, and is seeking the right to base its aircraft on the

territories of a number of coastal Arab states.”

The Soviet Union, revealed Lobov, has a whole agenda in the wings, for bringing global naval operations under the umbrella of arms control negotiations. Why not agree on limiting anti-submarine warfare (ASW) activity in parts of the Pacific? Why not set up “zones of peace”

Ocean or South Pacific? In party chief Mikhail Gorbachov’s July 1986 speech in Vladivostok, Lobov recalled, “It was stressed that if the United States would renounce its military presence in, say, the Philippines, we would not fail to reciprocate.”

might consider a halt to the massive build-up at Vietnam’s Cam Ranh Bay, once the United States had cleared out of the Pacific altogether! Meanwhile, the Soviet Union would retain its more than 50 divisions based on Soviet territory in the Far East.

### Strategic sneakiness

As recently as 1984, it was General Lieutenant V.N. Lobov (two stars), first deputy commander of the Leningrad Military District. He arrived there in 1981, when he was 46 years old, and served under Leningrad Military District Commander Gen. B. V. Snetkov (who today is the only one of the 20 Soviet district and force group commanders to have been in his present location for more than three years) until mid-1984. The Leningrad Military District is a component of what the Soviets define as the Western Theater of War, which is commanded by Ogarkov. It boasts a heavy contingent of ground forces, and the headquarters of two of the four fleets of the Soviet Navy lie within its bounds—the Baltic Fleet (Leningrad) and the powerhouse of strategic nuclear forces, the Northern Fleet (Severomorsk).

In 1984, Lobov succeeded Gen. Dmitri T. Yazov, the future defense minister, as commander of the Central Asian Military District. This occurred as part of an extraordinary overhaul of the U.S.S.R.’s military command, as Soviet forces were reorganized according to Ogarkov’s prescription, for wartime command-and-control to be fully in place before hostilities are overt. Yazov became commander of the Far East Military District, whose previous commander, Gen. Ivan M. Tretyak, took charge of High Command Far East, one of the wartime super-districts mandated by Ogarkov.

While he was in the Central Asia Military District, Lobov prepared himself for bigger things. Between July 1986 and March 1987, Lobov published three articles in the main Soviet military journals—rather prolific for a Soviet officer. In two of these, he marked himself as a specialist in disinformation and deception, by addressing the theme he calls *voyennaya khitrost*, or “military cunning.”

is a very powerful one in the Russian language, because of historical associations. It may be translated as “cunning,” “know-how,”

Greek *tekhnikos*, which gives the root for “technology.” most famous use in Russian, appropriately highlighted by

James H. Billington in his *The Icon and the Axe*, was in the phrase *zamorskaya khitrost*, or “cleverness from overseas,” by which the Russian monks at the time of the 17th-century Old Believers’ schism referred to the influx of foreign technologies that they hated.

The monks counterposed piety to *khitrost*, but as far as General Lobov is concerned, sneakiness is a fine, powerful military method. “This concept,”

“unfortunately has not yet received the theoretical development it deserves. The concept of ‘military *khitrost*’ is not in the *Soviet Military Encyclopedia*. . . . But the experience of this is q the past irrefutably testifies, about the importance that military *khitrost* has had in various periods of history. . . . The development of scientific and technical progress leads to the creation of more modern equipment and weapons, and the emergence of new forms and means of armed struggle.”

In this article, in the March 1987 issue of *Voyenno-istorichesky zhurnal* (*Military-Historical Journal*), Lobov stressed the decisive importance throughout military history of all types of *khitrost*—*maskirovka* (camouflage), deception and related techniques of military art—for securing victory by hitting the enemy when he least expects it.

The last sentence quoted above, about new types of weapons, marks Lobov as one of the military modernizers of Ogarkov’s school, who are grouped around Deputy Chief of Staff General Colonel M.A. Gareyev and the Voroshilov Academy of the General Staff. General Lobov has now moved to the front of this group: Leaping to the post of first deputy chief of staff (one of three), he filled the slot formerly occupied by General I.A. Gashkov. The latter had succeeded Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev in that position, when Akhromeyev followed Ogarkov as chief of staff of the Armed Forces. Thus, Lobov may be in line to become chief of the General Staff in the future.

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