

# International Intelligence

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## **Thailand-Laos border war to heat up?**

The Soviet-backed government of Laos has brought reinforcements and heavy weapons into the border area where Laotian and Thai forces fought a bloody battle in February. The weapons include 163mm artillery, mortars, recoilless guns, and armored personnel carriers. In a letter delivered to the Thai ambassador in Laos, Niran Panupong, the government of Laos has also rejected Thailand's proposals to revive the joint Thai-Lao cooperation committee and joint border committee, in hopes of settling the border conflict.

Laos's chief of staff, Sisavat Keobounphan, on March 20 boasted that Thailand could never defeat Laos in a military confrontation, because even the United States lost when fighting Laotian troops. Speaking in Thailand, where he was visiting at the invitation of his counterpart, Gen. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, the Laotian general boasted to a group of Thai military wives: "Americans fought Laos, but never beat us. Laos shot down more than 1,500 American aircraft. Does Thailand have so much money to buy such a large number of aircraft?"

The Army chief then singled out the wife of Thailand's permanent secretary for the interior: "Khyunging Mali—you'd better tell [Ambassador] Khun Phisan to stop fighting Laos. The burden of housewives is to maintain the peace!"

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## **Soviets score matching funds grant to LaRouche**

On March 28, the Ukrainian-language Radio Kiev denounced the U.S. Federal Election Commission's long-delayed decision to certify federal matching funds for the LaRouche Democratic Campaign. According to the March 24 broadcast, monitored in Western Europe:

"The Federal Election Commission decided to give federal funds to the election

campaign of Lyndon LaRouche, who is a Democratic Party candidate for the President of the U.S.A.

"At first glance, there may seem nothing unusual about this rather normal occurrence in the political life of the U.S. However, in the contender's campaign, through which for the fourth time he is trying to get a seat in the White House, there is one unusual detail: In Boston there is a trial taking place, in which LaRouche is the central figure. He is being charged with fraud and with plotting to deliberately obstruct government investigation of the LaRouche-headed organization of neo-Nazi tendency—the National Caucus of Workers' Committees.

"In the course of the last presidential elections in 1984, 700 of his candidates ran for various electoral offices in 26 states of the country. Such a mass operation involved large-scale shady financial dealings. And this is far from being the only sin of LaRouche and his associates.

"There's nothing clean-cut about them this year either. The contender, running on a Democratic slate, cheated about 6% of those who contributed money to his election fund. Many of the contributors had no idea where their money was going. The people were told that their contributions would be used in the fight against the AIDS disease.

"Representatives of the Federal Election Commission are not denying that these facts are known to them. Yet all saw no serious objections to giving matching funds to a man involved in outright swindles.

"The situation becomes more clear if we recall that the main goal of LaRouche's entire political career is to uncover the 'global red conspiracy.' These extreme-rightists are trying to rupture the influence of progressive organizations, which often involves their sending of provocateurs into the ranks of these organizations. Similar operations of LaRouche are coordinated with influential reactionary circles of the U.S.A. In addition, according to press reports, he and his people are maintaining working contacts with American intelligence agencies.

"Not to be excluded is that all these factors played a decisive role in the Federal Election Commission's decision to give the

political extremist access to American taxpayers' money."

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## **Marshal Ogarkov in Poland to discuss crisis**

Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, Moscow's top military strategist and commander of the Western Theater of War, held a meeting on March 10 in Poland with Poland's defense minister, Gen. Florian Siwicki, and Gen. Lt. Ivan Korbutov, the commander of Soviet forces in Poland.

The meeting was reported in the Soviet Armed Forces newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* of March 11, and is viewed by Western experts as a signal of Moscow's concern over the extremely unstable Polish situation. Sources have told *EIR* that recently many Polish reserve officers, from captain to colonel in rank, have been summoned back to active duty.

The Soviet newspaper also reported that Ogarkov was accompanied by Gen. Col. B. Utkin, the chief political officer of the Western Theater. Utkin was recently reported in the Soviet military press to be visiting the Carpathian Military District, which is nominally part of the Southwest Theater of War, and hence outside his sphere of normal operations.

The visits indicate that Soviet military contingency plans concerning possible trouble in Poland have reached an advanced stage, and that all of the Soviet Groups of Forces and Military Districts bordering on Poland are now under a unified Western Theater command.

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## **Soviets dispute origin of the AIDS epidemic**

In the era of glasnost, an unusual debate has broken out in the Soviet media, over the origin of the AIDS epidemic. Sharply departing from the standard propaganda line that the disease was a creation of "the Pentagon," Radio Moscow's Domestic Service

on March 19 reported the statement of Vadim Velentinovich Pokrovskiy, department chief at the research laboratory for AIDS epidemiology at the U.S.S.R. Health Ministry, that "not a single Soviet scientist believes that it [AIDS] has artificial origins."

He noted "that an increasing number of facts are emerging to corroborate the natural origins of the virus. Last year several viruses of this kind were discovered, and this points precisely to its natural origins. At the moment there are two major sources of the disease—Central Africa and North America. Probably the virus sprang up in one of those regions, yet we are unable to determine yet the origins of its evolution—where and when it appeared."

As *EIR* reported on Aug. 28, 1987 ("LaRouche attacks Moscow's AIDS disinformation"), the standard Soviet line maintains that the virus was developed at Fort Detrick, Maryland, in U.S. biological warfare laboratories.

### ***Mystery death of another British defense scientist***

In response to the eighth mysterious death of a British scientist working in the area of defense, Labour Party parliamentarian Doug Hoyle is calling on Defense Minister George Younger to order an urgent inquiry into the pattern of deaths.

On March 25, 52-year-old Trevor Knight, who worked in Marconi's guided weapons division for space and defense in Stanmore, Middlesex, was found slumped at the wheel of his car in the garage of his home, with a hose connected to the exhaust.

Hoyle, president of the Manufacturing, Science, and Finance Union, released a statement on March 28: "Is it not worrying that this is happening to top scientists? Is it simply overwork, or is there something more sinister afoot? It is very alarming."

In all, eight scientists have died under odd circumstances over the past couple of years, and three others have disappeared and never been found. Many of them worked for Marconi, in projects related to the U.S. Stra-

tegic Defense Initiative. The *Daily Telegraph* on March 29 headlined its coverage, "Sinister Star Wars Deaths."

### ***Israel threatens to knock out Saudi missiles***

Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's office, told Radio Jerusalem that "this possibility always exists," when asked whether Israel would launch a strike against the CSS-2 missiles that the People's Republic of China will be building in Saudi Arabia. He said that Israel has a reputation of "not waiting until a potential danger becomes real."

The medium-range ballistic missiles would not be equipped with nuclear warheads, the Saudi government maintains.

The Israeli statements drew an angry retort from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who said at a press conference, "Why is it that the Israelis consider that all weapons, are only turned against them? Each state has its own enemies. Rather than threatening war, Mr. Shamir should join the efforts toward peace."

Although President Reagan said that Washington is "totally opposed" to any Israeli actions against the Saudis, this did not stop the U.S. State Department from delivering to the Saudi government an official protest against the deployment of the missiles. Saudi King Fahd responded on March 31 by demanding that the United States recall its ambassador—the first time this has happened since 1933.

The Saudi-Chinese arms negotiations have been under way for at least two years. China is now the world's fifth-largest weapons supplier, after the U.S., U.S.S.R., France, and Great Britain, and its total sales last year were estimated at well over \$2 billion. The announcement that China was supplying missiles to Saudi Arabia came just a week after the United States had said it would resume high-technology sales to Beijing, after Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian pledged that China was not selling Silkworm missiles to Iran.

## **Briefly**

● **THE PALESTINIAN** Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem, Michel Sabbah, explained the Palestinian revolt in the Israeli-occupied territories, in an interview with the Italian daily *La Repubblica* published March 31. "It is natural and normal to revolt after 20 years of military occupation," he said. Sabbah called for a referendum among Palestinians to elect a real national leadership.

● **GERMAN** Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher hailed Soviet leader Gorbachov as "a good Soviet patriot," who deserves that the West "invest trust" in him. Speaking in Athens, Greece on March 28, Genscher stated that he opposes the "prejudice that behind Gorbachov's words there is a trick, and traps for European politicians."

● **NIKOLAI BUKHARIN** has been officially readmitted to membership in the Soviet Communist Party, according to a March 22 report by the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, citing "reliable Soviet sources." This act marks the "full political rehabilitation" of the 1930s leader of the Right Opposition to Josef Stalin, the sources said.

● **IN TURKEY**, a "government-in-exile" of Azerbaijan has been established, according to the British newspaper the *Independent*. The move was seen as an indication of Ankara's increasing sympathy for the plight of the Azeris in the Soviet Union. On March 15, the *Turkish Daily News* warned against a "new wave of Armenian fervor," quoting officials expressing "growing irritations with what is seen in Turkey as anti-Turkish Armenian propaganda."

● **ARMED CLASHES** between Turkish troops and Kurdish separatists from the PKK guerrilla group, near the Syrian border, left 20 Kurds and 3 Turkish soldiers dead. The incident, the most severe in recent years, may signal a broader destabilization of Turkey's eastern regions.