

International Intelligence

Central American border conflicts heat up

The Honduran Armed Forces are in a state of alert in areas bordering El Salvador, due to the fact that 200 Salvadoran families have been settled in territory which is disputed between the two nations. According to reports appearing in the Mexican press, the families were settled there by the FMLN guerrilla group.

The daily *La Jornada* on March 14 reported that the El Salvador government is considering placing its Armed Forces on alert also, if tensions with Honduras continue. Vice Minister of Defense Gen. Orlando Zepeda described the situation as "serious . . . the government has the patriotic duty to defend its national territory." He suggested setting up a border guard to prevent penetration by Honduran troops.

The Honduran government is also worried that its border may be threatened by recent events in Nicaragua, where joint forces of the Sandinistas and the Contras occupied the town of Ocotal to protest government policy. Ocotal is near the border.

Orthodox patriarchs denounce Vatican

The first summit of Orthodox patriarchs in 1,500 years has concluded with a strong attack on Roman Catholic Church activity in the East, according to reports in the European press. Closing their March 13-15 meeting in Istanbul, the spiritual heads of Eastern Christianity said that attempts by Roman Catholics to proselytize in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union had inflicted a "most severe wound on the dialogue between the Churches which will be difficult to heal."

Their statement read: "Traditional Orthodox countries have been considered 'missionary territories' [by the Vatican] and proselytism is practiced with all the methods that have been condemned and rejected for decades by all Christians. This has created

a situation incompatible with the spirit of the dialogue of love and truth initiated in 1964 by the late Christian leaders, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I."

Particularly taken to task were the Uniates, who use Orthodox ceremonies but who recognize the supremacy of the Pope. The Uniates were accused by the Orthodox leaders of being behind the Vatican's conversion campaign in eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R.

The Orthodox primates went on: "We particularly condemn the activity of the Uniates under the Church of Rome in Ukraine, Romania, east Slovakia, the Middle East and elsewhere against our Church."

The convocation of the 14 Orthodox primates was called by Patriarch Bartholomeos I, who became ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople last October, and who has a strong desire to unite the Orthodox Churches.

Prince Philip in search of Greek Orthodox roots

Britain's Prince Philip "is anxious to rediscover his Greek Orthodox roots," for ecological and other reasons, writes the London *Spectator* weekly of March 14. "He has personally planned a number of foreign trips that will take him on a pilgrimage to the holy peninsula of Mount Athos and to meetings with patriarchs of the Eastern Orthodox Church." Last May, he had a private meeting with the Russian Orthodox bishop in Britain, Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, and he intends to visit Russia in 1993, to meet Patriarch Aleksii II, "the first time that a senior member of the royal family will have visited the country since the Romanovs were assassinated in 1917." In June, he will meet the new patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomeos I, and address an Orthodox conference in Turkey.

Aside from being attracted by the Orthodox Church's "hierarchical structure," the Royal Consort's personal interest in ecology "naturally pulls him towards the Orthodox Church rather than the Church of England,"

the magazine writes. "As President of the World Wildlife Fund, Prince Philip can readily identify with the more earthly Orthodox approach, and has already agreed to take part in a future series of six radio programs about Orthodoxy and ecology for the World Service" of BBC.

Last November, Prince Philip addressed a pan-Orthodox conference in Crete on why he believed religion held the key to the future of the environment. "The challenge," he said, "is for all the Orthodox Churches to examine their consciences and to consult their scriptures so that all their members can make an appropriate response to the crisis that is now confronting God's creation."

The *Spectator* points out that "Buckingham Palace, aware that the Queen's position as head of the Church of England makes these trips especially sensitive, has been anxious to avoid any publicity."

Syria's Assad shifts his line, attacks U.S.

Syrian President Hafez al-Assad launched a surprisingly strong attack on the United States on March 12, during an address inaugurating his fourth unopposed seven-year term since he took power in 1970.

Referring to American pressure on the issue of North Korean ships delivering Scud missiles to Syria and Iran, and reiterating Syrian determination to acquire more surface-to-surface missiles "according to our needs," Assad asked: "How could America maintain a balance between its new world order of justice and international legitimacy intercepting missiles heading for Syria? How could the door be open for Israel to manufacture all kinds of weapons and with no limits, and at the same time Syria is besieged and prevented from importing? How could America patronize Middle East peace talks which are based on its own initiative and on United Nations resolutions, and at the same time impose a blockade on Syria and other Arab countries? How could this correspond with the new world order said to be the world of international legitimacy?"

Briefly

This is the legitimacy of the jungle, the legitimacy of beasts."

Assad, who brought Syria totally into the anti-Iraq Gulf war "coalition" last year, also charged that only Israel had benefited from the war. He said the conflict was so inimical to Arab interests that it sometimes appeared as if "what happened had been deliberately planned and executed for Israel's interests."

According to reports in the London *Independent* on March 13, Syria has quietly stopped its anti-Iraqi propaganda, while strongly opposing the U.N. Security Council's threat of military action against Iraq. Not only is this said to be a reaction to the current deadlock in the peace talks, but also to a growing realization that the United States wants to turn the Middle East into a "U.S. security zone." There is reported to be a growing sense in Syria that Damascus was deceived by Washington, in return for support in the Gulf war.

Georgian opposition to Shevardnadze grows

Anti-communist figures in Georgia are mobilizing against the appointment of Eduard Shevardnadze as president of the newly created Georgian State Council, the French daily *Libération* reported on March 12.

Nana Kakabadze, a well-known dissident who had been put in jail on charges of "hooliganism" by the KGB in 1983, during the period of Shevardnadze's tenure as Georgian Communist Party chief, says she is "anguished" by the Shevardnadze appointment, calling it "immoral and without foundation. . . . In 1983, he arranged the shooting of four men who were trying to flee the Soviet Union by diverting an airplane toward Turkey. Today, he puts himself forward as the great defender of the Georgian nation, but he has never done anything except to obey the Kremlin. He has always represented the central power and repression; he was hated."

Leaders of the Ilya Chavchavadze Society, the foremost nationalist organization,

have made it known that they are preparing "political actions" against Shevardnadze.

Libération says that growing numbers of Georgians fear that a new dictatorship, under Shevardnadze, is now going to be created. The paper also says that in recent days, more or less coincident with Shevardnadze's return to Georgia, some fruit, cheese, and meat began to reappear in stores. The rumor is circulating that Shevardnadze is exercising "his influence in the local mafia," to ease the shortages at an opportune time.

Malaysian group forms to save Iraqi children

The first large meeting in Malaysia to launch a campaign to Save the Children in Iraq was held March 3 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia daily *The Star* reported March 4. The campaign was organized by the Malaysian Medical Association and launched by Datuk Seri Dr. Siti Hasmah, who is a physician and the wife of Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad.

The campaign's purpose, according to *The Star*, is to raise donations of money, medicines, and medical supplies for the children in Iraq. (It has no official connection with a similar campaign of the same name organized internationally under the auspices of the Schiller Institute.)

"The campaign is a non-partisan humanitarian appeal and we call on all Malaysians to contribute generously to this appeal," said organizing committee chairman Datuk Dr. R.S. McCoy. Dr. McCoy also called on the U.N. Security Council to lift economic sanctions immediately. He said sanctions had hampered reconstruction of Iraq's water and power supplies and caused an acute shortage of food, medicines and medical supplies. "As a result, 500 Iraqi children are dying every day from malnutrition and preventable diseases such as cholera, typhoid and gastroenteritis."

The campaign raised \$10,000 in pledges and \$4,500 in donations at the meeting.

● **RUSSIAN** Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev told the March 15 Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun* that Russia is gravely concerned about its nuclear scientists going abroad, which "could seriously destabilize the international order now taking shape." In contrast, he emphasized that "Russia's basic science has unlimited potential. I think if we can blend it with Japan's knowledge of advanced technology, major results can be expected."

● **SERBIA** is charging that Iran and Libya are training and arming Bosnian Muslims for war with Belgrade, the Serbian news agency Tanjug said in mid-March. The Bosnians are trained in special camps in Iran and in Libya, the news agency charged.

● **AHMED JIBRIL** has moved his guerrilla training camps from Syria to Iran, the London *Times* reported on March 14. Although Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command will continue to be based in Damascus, most of the organization will be transferred to three bases in western Iran, and another base in the south.

● **SENIOR BRITISH** establishment figures Sir Michael Palliser of the City of London and Sir Percy Craddock, former head of the powerful British Joint Intelligence Committee, were among the guests at a luncheon to mark the eighth anniversary of the "U.K.-Japan 2000" group hosted by Prime Minister John Major on March 9.

● **EGYPT** will not back nor take part in any western military move against Iraq or Libya, declared Egyptian Foreign Minister Amre Mousa in an interview which the German daily *Frankfurter Rundschau* published on March 13. "Our view is that the future of the regime in Iraq can be determined only by the Iraqi people," he said. "We are not willing to take part in any operation aiming at the overthrow of the regime."