

International Intelligence

Soviets gloat over Shuttle disaster

From the moment the U.S. spacecraft Challenger exploded in the air above Kennedy space center on Jan. 28, the tragedy has been "good news" for the Soviet Union, and Kremlin media outlets have harped on it endlessly.

"American space hardware, advertised as the most perfect in the world, has proved to be not so perfect. Now picture to yourself what might have happened if the space shuttle had carried on board a combat laser unit activated by a nuclear explosion. Yet, it is with the help of exactly such spaceships that Washington plans to test and put into orbit laser and other weapons under its 'Star Wars' program. . . ."

Thus Moscow World Service Feb. 3 uses the Shuttle disaster against President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.

Novosti news agency political commentator Gennadiy Gerasimov, said on Soviet television Feb. 2: "The creators of Challenger overlooked something: Computers calculated to cope with all conceivable unforeseen situations on this occasion showed complete calm right up to the explosion. They were not ready for what happened."

Then there was: NASA has been taken over by the "alliance of the Pentagonites, arms manufacturers, the scientists and engineers who are nourished by them, and reactionary members of Congress" (*Pravda*, Jan. 28). "NASA is not keeping up with the requirements of its main clients, the military clients. . . ." said Aleksandr Vladimirovich Zholkver, on Soviet television Feb. 2. "There was not always sufficient time left to remove malfunctions of various kinds because the launches followed one after another."

Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Lebedev, editor-in-chief of *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnyye Otnosheniya*, said in the Feb. 2 roundtable on Soviet television: "Throughout this entire episode, we have observed the astonishing arrogance and even, I venture to say, the conceit with which various U.S. officials have talked about there

being no problems. . . . It's an astonishing confidence in the superiority of U.S. technology. They can do it all!"

Swedish handicapped groups attack euthanasia

The joint board of two umbrella organizations for handicapped persons in Sweden, issued a public attack on Feb. 14 against advocates of euthanasia, for purveying "fascist ideas," and for being "angels of murder."

The spokesmen, Barbro Gregorsson and Ulla Branden, representing the Nationwide Association of the Handicapped and the Central Committee of Handicapped Associations, also denounced those individuals in the Dutch parliament, who are seeking to make Holland the first nation in the world to legalize euthanasia. "Such a first prize is nothing to be proud of," Gregorsson declared.

The statements were made at a press conference in Stockholm, on the eve of a pro-euthanasia meeting at Stockholm's Peoples' House, which will feature Dutch euthanasia activist Dr. P. V. Admiraal, and Berit Hedeby, head of the Swedish "Information Exit" group. Admiraal boasts that he has committed at least 50 murders in Holland, applying "mercy killing," or "death help." Hedeby spent one year in a Swedish jail in the early 1980s for having helped a journalistic colleague commit suicide.

Italian courts defend Qaddafi from 'insult'

The Rome local of the Schiller Institute, an international organization founded in 1984 by Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, announced on Feb. 18 that, on March 15, four of its members will be tried in front of the Rome district court for having damaged the "prestige and honor" of Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi.

The alleged "crime" goes back to July 13, 1983—before the Schiller Institute ex-

isted—when some individuals later associated with the Institute staged a demonstration, with police permission, in Rome against the terrorist policies of the "madman" of Tripoli.

This action is not only without precedent in postwar Italian judicial history; it also represents a slap in the face to the victims of the recent Rome and Vienna airport massacres and to all those Italians who have openly denounced Qaddafi's Libya as being behind the terrorist outcry.

The Italian government, alone among the European governments, partially went along with the recommendations of the Reagan administration for an economic embargo against Libya, freezing arms sales to Tripoli. Premier Bettino Craxi at least acknowledged that Qaddafi's regime had helped the Abu Nidal organization responsible for the Rome and Vienna massacres.

According to reliable Rome intelligence sources, the decision behind this procedure by the court originates from financial and political circles, such as current Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, sending "appeasement" messages to the exposed Qaddafi. On Feb. 16, Andreotti himself whitewashed Qaddafi of any crime or criminal intention in an interview with Milan's *Corriere della Sera* daily.

Peronist leader calls for 'debtors club'

Argentine Peronist leader Juan Labaké gave a well-attended press conference on Feb. 14 in Washington, D.C. to denounce the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as "genocidal." He presented his proposal for a "debtors club" and fixing of a percentage of foreign income to finance debt payments.

"I have come to Washington to denounce the fact that more people have died under IMF policies than during the military dictatorship in my country, when 8,000 died," Labaké stated. He added that 44% of Argentina's debt is due to "illegitimate interest rates. . . . We believe that we have no reason to pay \$22 billion of the \$50 bil-

Briefly

● **OLOF PALME'S** government announced on Feb. 14 that it is shutting the country's last remaining shipyard, Kockums of Malmoe, idling 2,200 workers. It was once Europe's most modern shipbuilding facility.

● **HANS JANSSEN**, board member of the West German trade union IG Metall, spoke in front of the Green Party convention in Hagen on Feb. 17, and predicted a turning point in trade union policy toward the Green fascists. Until now, labor did not accept the Green Party because of their hostile policy toward industry. But Janssen praised the Greens as "collaboration partners" and recommended other trade unionists take the same view.

● **EAST GERMANY'S** number-three man arrived in Bonn on Feb. 19 in the midst of the crisis caused by an announced investigation of Chancellor Kohl for perjury. Horst Sindermann, the president of the East German Parliament, on the invitation of the Social Democrats, stayed for three days.

● **'PRESIDENT** Lusinchi [of Venezuela] should follow the valiant example of Peruvian President Alan García," Cesar Olarte, the head of Venezuela's trade union movement (CTV), declared Feb. 15. He continued, "García, defending his people's interests, has said he would pay no more than 10% of exports for debt service. If President Lusinchi were to make that decision, I am sure he would have majority support in the country, except for those few who place their own interests above those of the nation."

● **THE SOVIET** Air Force in East Germany was modernized in January, receiving its first 29 of 40 expected units of modern MiG-29 "Fulcrum" interceptor aircraft, at Wittstock near Neubrandenburg, between Berlin and Stettin. These aircraft not only have interception capabilities but are capable of shooting down cruise missiles.

lion foreign debt that we hold. Nevertheless, we want to pay everything. . . . The point is that we can not pay under the recessive IMF policies."

He said that Peru would be in agreement with that idea and that other countries like Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico could also be willing, because they have given indications of not accepting IMF impositions.

Labaké, a former Peronist deputy, also said that he has drawn up a proposal to limit interest payments to a percentage equal to U.S. dollar inflation, plus one percent for bankers' profits. The payment in such case would be 4.8% because dollar inflation last year was 3.8%—at least officially.

He added: "What does the developed North want? Do they really want us to pay the debt or to keep it permanently as an arm of domination over our countries?"

Show trials begin in Soviet Union

Seventy-six purged functionaries were convicted of "corruption" in a big show trial in the Russian city of Rostov on the Don, and two were sentenced to death.

The "hero" of the trials is said by the Soviet government newspaper *Izvestia* to be Aelksandr Vlasov, a personal friend of Kremlin strongman Mikhail Gorbachov. Until January he was Rostov regional party boss, and now is interior minister.

Izvestia stressed that those on trial in Rostov represented only the "lowest link on the chain" of mass corruption. In other words, watch for bloody purges on a Stalin-scale.

Commonwealth group visits South Africa

Members of a British Commonwealth mission, ostensibly interested in promoting "dialogue" between South Africa's government and blacks, flew to Cape Town on Feb. 16, for what was described as a low-key visit.

The delegation includes former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser; former Nigerian head of state Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, now involved with the Palme Commission; and World Council of Churches President Dame Nita Barrow.

The Palme Commission and World Council of Churches are both essentially under Soviet policy control. But the presence of Fraser alone is enough to indicate the something is not right. Fraser has been running a special operation within the U.N., specifically targeting the transnational corporations in South Africa, with the object of forcing them to pull out of the country. The members of Fraser's U.N. committee are almost exclusively British or East bloc nationals.

German Chancellor under 'investigation'

Chancellor Helmut Kohl is now under a public prosecutor's investigation for perjury, and could face indictment.

The new attack, launched by a terrorist-linked Green member of the Bundestag, Otto Schily, is a reactivation of the four-year old "Flick Affair" involving illegal contributions to major West German political parties, primarily Kohl's own Christian Democratic Union (CDU). The scandal almost caused the fall of Kohl's government in late 1983.

In mid-February, Schily succeeded in having an official investigation launched by the public prosecutor of Koblenz into charges that Kohl submitted "false testimony" when he told an earlier Bundestag committee that he was unaware that a foundation was being used to "launder" contributions to the CDU. The payments were made when Kohl was CDU party chairman and Rhineland-Palatinate prime minister back in the early 1970s.

The attack on the government is receiving major coverage in all West German media, British press, and Radio Moscow. It is the first time in postwar West German history that a public prosecutor has opened legal proceedings against the head of state.