

International Intelligence

Half a million Ugandans carrying AIDS virus

"AIDS Epidemic Ravages Uganda," headlines the London *Guardian* May 16, reporting that "someone is dying of AIDS in every second hut amid the lush coffee and banana plantations" in the Rakai district of Uganda, near the Tanzanian border. About 2,500 inhabitants of Rakai, 1% of its population, are believed to have died of the disease since the first case was reported in 1982.

The *Guardian* reports on tests done on 3,000 blood samples from all over Uganda by the Porton Down Research Center in Great Britain: "The tests show an alarmingly high positive rate of 12 to 15 percent—in comparison with 0.25 percent in the U.S.—in healthy men and women with no AIDS symptoms from the sexually active 18 to 45 age group. This means that around half a million Ugandans are likely to be AIDS carriers."

AIDS is reported to be just as rife across the border in Tanzania's Bukoba region, and is spreading, in part, via "groups of wealthy traders" who have developed AIDS, leading to a popular superstition that the disease is caused by "a spell cast by Tanzanians on Ugandans for renegeing on debts and dishonest business practices." The spread of the disease has also worsened because of Uganda's long tribal wars.

The *Guardian* notes that "despite the enormity of the problem, AIDS research in Uganda has been hampered by apathy and a lack of funds."

Communist insurgency builds in Philippines

The military situation in the Philippines is "serious and getting worse," U.S. Assistant Defense Secretary Richard Armitage told the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific on May 16. Communist guerrilla forces are assuming control

in areas where government influence had been eroded over the years, he said. "Far from embracing the new government, the Communists are exploiting the [Army's] defensive posture by reorganizing, regrouping, and recovering from its election setback to reinvigorate the insurgency."

Philippines military officials have confirmed this report, and warned that the country might become another Vietnam or Cambodia if the insurgency is not tackled now. Armed Forces chief Gen. Fidel Ramos, who with Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile led the military revolt to install Corazon Aquino as President, said that it could take 10 years to subdue the 17-year old Communist insurgency. Mass support for the Communist New People's Army has been eroded, they said, but "time is still on the NPA side."

General Ramos warned, "If we don't move just now, we may end up like Vietnam or Cambodia, which just let things slide. We have to choose what kind of society we want."

French premier backs U.S. beam defense

French Premier Jacques Chirac gave unqualified backing to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), at a press luncheon in Paris on May 22. "This movement is irreversible and it is justified," he said. "... France cannot afford not to be associated with this great research program."

Chirac stressed that his government was reversing the policy line of its predecessor on this issue. Chirac, who heads the Gaullist RPR party, became premier following the defeat of President François Mitterrand's Socialist Party in the March 16 parliamentary elections.

According to a report from the Reuters news agency, Chirac said that the SDI's shield against nuclear attack might not be totally effective, but its construction was historically inevitable because of the laws of human nature. He said the United States was now committed to a process that would

continue, whoever was in the White House. "It would be totally irresponsible to be left by the side of the road, especially for a country like France, which is the world's third nation in space technology," he said.

Pro-NATO government wins Dutch elections

The center-right government of the Netherlands won a sweeping victory in the elections held May 21, despite the predictions of pollsters and the "informed opinion" of the press. With the victory of Christian Democratic Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, Holland has been temporarily spared the fate of Norway, which earlier this month shifted from a center-right to an anti-NATO Labor government.

Above all, the Netherlands results confirm that the majority of the Western European population fears nothing so much as breaking with the United States and weakening the Atlantic alliance. Lubbers' weakness, and the cause of growing discontent against him, stems from his free-market, austerity-minded economic policies, which are destroying the Dutch economy.

Yet, when faced with a choice of forcing upon him an alliance with the anti-NATO Labor Party, the population chose to give Lubbers a sweeping mandate. The center-right coalition won 81 seats, for an absolute majority of five seats in the Parliament.

The Labor Party ran on a platform of barring U.S. cruise missiles from the Netherlands, and scrapping the country's ambitious nuclear power industry, which is supported by Lubbers' Christian Democrats. Labor's campaign manager, Joop Den Uyl, is also one of the more pro-Soviet figures in the Socialist International, as well as an advocate of euthanasia. Last April 13, he appeared on television insisting that impediments be removed to the legalization of euthanasia in Parliament.

The euthanasia question is one of the most hotly debated issues in the Netherlands today. The Democrats '66 party, which was

also being touted to win heavily May 21 and thus become part of the government coalition, is a single-issue party, backing the legalization of euthanasia. It was the Democrats '66 who recently sponsored a parliamentary bill to have euthanasia legalized.

Courts condemn libels against Zepp-LaRouche

The 17th Penal Court of the Paris Tribunal on May 22 ruled to condemn the newsweekly *L'Express*, owned by Jimmy Goldsmith, for defamation of Helga Zepp-LaRouche, president of the European Labor Party in the Federal Republic of Germany, and founder of the Club of Life and the Schiller Institute.

L'Express was charged with having stated falsely that Mrs. LaRouche was born in East Germany, and that the European Labor Party was "heavily infiltrated by East bloc agents."

Mrs. LaRouche was awarded 20,000 francs (about \$2,900) in damages, while the magazine's owner and the author of the article were each fined 5,000 francs.

In a related development, the European Labor Party in France (POE) won a civil libel suit in Paris on May 21 against the newsletter *La Lettre de Magazine-Hebdo*, which is linked to "New Right" theoretician Alain de Benoist, an apologist for the "Conservative Revolution" theories of Swiss fascist Armin Mohler.

La Lettre de Magazine-Hebdo had engaged in a systematic campaign of libel against the POE over the past year, attempting to portray it as a Soviet KGB "disinformation sect" allegedly under investigation by the French intelligence services on suspicion of being "manipulated by the East."

Pravda lashes out at Germany on Chernobyl

The Soviet Communist Party daily *Pravda* has issued a furious attack on West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, accusing him of backing the "revanchist" demands of the

"dispersed followers of Hitler," and denouncing him for allegedly demanding compensation to German farmers for the losses they have suffered due to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

In its May 19 issue, *Pravda* attacked Kohl for attending a convention of the Sudeten Germans in Munich the day before (the Sudeten Germans were expelled from Czechoslovakia in 1945). Kohl had mentioned in his keynote address to the convention that he "would wish the Soviets had indicated how to compensate for the damages caused by the Chernobyl accident."

Pravda retaliated: "Kohl raised this impertinent demand before the dispersed followers of Hitler on the eve of the 45th anniversary of the assault on the Soviet Union by fascist Germany. Obviously, people in Bonn have forgotten the unforgivable debt to the Soviet people for all the pain, murder, destruction and suffering that German fascism brought to the U.S.S.R. and each Soviet family." Chancellor Kohl's appearance at the Sudeten convention—the first ever by a German chancellor—was termed "another proof that revanchist currents in West Germany are being encouraged by the official Bonn."

Although Kohl did not specifically demand compensation, West German interior ministry spokesman Michael-Andreas Butz on May 16 accused Soviet Ambassador Yuli Kvitsinskii of misinforming the Bonn government of the situation in Chernobyl after the accident. Kvitsinskii told reporters on May 14 that radiation fallout from the plant had never posed a threat to West Germany, and had repeatedly assured German officials that the reactor was under control. Butz called Kvitsinskii's false reassurances "disgraceful" and said the Bonn government would seek compensation for German farmers.

Replying to the *Pravda* attack, Kohl announced on May 20 that he had never officially asked Moscow for compensation. Bonn government spokesman Friedhelm Ost informed the press that the chancellor would meet Kvitsinskii soon, in hopes of "calming down the waves of emotion" between Moscow and Bonn.

Briefly

● **GUATEMALAN LABOR** Minister Catalina Soberanis Reyes met with Peruvian President Alan García in Lima on May 16, and reiterated Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo's invitation for García to visit Guatemala. She further offered to support García's struggle for debtor unity, and characterized García's 10% debt payment limit as "a position in defense of the majority interests of all the Latin American population."

● **THE NORTH ATLANTIC** Assembly has issued a report on terrorism, which affirms that Syria's role is "far more complex" than that of Libya. Syria, it says, "never stops misusing diplomatic privileges and violating international law." The report was drawn up by British Labour Party parliamentarian Bruce George, who states: "The members of the ruling Ba'ath Party, stationed at Syrian embassies in West European countries, are always seeking to recruit students for terrorist campaigns."

● **LIBYA HAS BANNED** the teaching of English at all levels of education and replaced it with Russian, the Libyan news agency JANA said May 22.

● **SPAIN AND THE U.S.** will begin negotiations within two months on a reduction of the U.S. military presence in Spain, Reuters reports. The decision was announced following a meeting May 21 in Brussels between U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and Spanish Defense Minister Narcis Serra. Serra briefed Weinberger on how Spain plans to function in NATO within the constraints of the recent referendum limiting participation.

● **JAPANESE** Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone wants to hold early general elections this summer, a leader of his ruling Liberal Democratic Party said. The tactic is reportedly intended to increase the party's influence and to secure a third term in office for himself.