

International Intelligence

Unrest reported in Nicaragua

The Nicaraguan junta headed by Daniel Ortega has resorted to violence, beatings, and arrests in the wake of strikes by construction workers and others against the government's IMF-style austerity program. The program involved large price hikes and small wage increases. The program was imposed in February, and construction workers have been on strike ever since, charging that the new price and wage levels deny them enough to live on.

In early May, 38 of the workers began a hunger strike in the union hall. To break it, the police beat up and arrested hundreds of workers and others who came to the hall to support the strike. The strike was called off after 10 days, with the workers stating that the government agreed to begin negotiations.

The austerity program itself has achieved none of its objectives. Inflation, running at 14,000% a year before the program was implemented, has continued at a 12,000% clip.

The junta has announced that it is abolishing several government ministries entirely, cutting staff by 10% across-the-board, and reducing most ministerial budgets by 30%, all in an attempt to cut an enormous budget deficit.

Pope begins tour of Ibero-America

Pope John Paul II on May 7 began his ninth tour of Ibero-America. He is to visit Uruguay, Bolivia, Peru, and Paraguay, with 54 scheduled speeches or homilies over 13 days.

In Bolivia, he addressed the problem of the drug economy. In Peru, he is scheduled to address a mass gathering in the Plaza de Armas, and meet with businessmen and clergy. He will also meet with a bishop from each of the five Bolivarian countries, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Colombia, concerning an upcoming Eucharistic Marian Conference.

The Pope told a crowd of 50,000 workers in Uruguay May 9 that he was close "in

word and heart" to trade union activities, saying, "Those who, with zeal and sacrifice, seek to better the conditions of workers, deserve unconditional support," in a thinly veiled reference to striking workers in his native Poland.

He also repeated the theme of his recent encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, saying that all private property is subject to "a social mortgage which obliges owners to insure that their properties yield a benefit to the collective good."

Before leaving Uruguay, a Masonic bastion and the most secular "Catholic" country in South America, the Pope succeeded in getting President Sanguinetti inside a Catholic Church, for the first time in memory.

Arriving in Bolivia on May 10, John Paul II warned against the advance of evangelical sects "of the fundamentalist mode who are sowing confusion among the people." He also repeated his condemnation of "liberation theology," saying that it falsely poses theology as an agent for social change.

Peru prepares crackdown on terrorism

Addressing his entire nation via television, Peruvian President Alan García warned that his government intended to implement a new, more effective anti-terrorism strategy, and if it failed "we can kiss democracy goodbye."

He attacked "apologists for terrorism" in the media and the congress, declaring, "We are playing for keeps here, and cannot permit the terrorists to take advantage of us under the pretext of a pseudo-understanding of what constitutes human rights. Often we forget that we are in a state of war, a state of confrontation with assassins and terrorists, and we grant them all the benefits and powers, so that they can laugh at our democracy."

Peru has been beset by savage Indian-ethnic terrorism by a network called Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso).

García is considering imposition of a temporary "state of siege" to permit a crackdown on Shining Path.

Four days before the President's speech,

his interior minister, José Barsallo, reiterated his call for the death penalty for terrorists. The issue has become a hot topic of debate. Barsallo said that the constitution expressly permits the death penalty in cases of treason. He said that the subversion of Shining Path has placed the country in a state of "internal war," and terrorism is properly to be understood as treason, and thus subject to the death penalty.

Gorbachov meets with Japanese opposition

Mikhail Gorbachov met separately with leaders of two Japanese opposition parties during the first week of May, and indicated his interest in paying a state visit to Japan.

In his meeting with the deputy head of the Japanese Communist Party on May 4, Gorbachov went through a typical Soviet litany, calling for a de-nuclearized zone in the Pacific, and saying that the Communist Party should play a more important role in Japan to counter the militarization of the area—a reference to increased Japanese defense spending. Both Anatoly Dobrynin and central committee member for the International Department, G. Korniyenko attended the meeting.

The Soviet leader, in his meeting with the leader of the Japanese Socialist Party, declared that it was high time for better relations between the U.S.S.R. and Japan, and said that the two countries should stop trying to prove that they can live without each other.

He indicated his desire to visit Japan, but the BBC reported that Japanese Foreign Ministry sources in Tokyo do not treat this as an official offer, since Gorbachov made the statement to the leader of the main opposition party.

BBC also noted that Gorbachov categorically rejected any concessions on the question of returning the Kurile Islands to Japan, a principal obstacle to relations between the two countries. The Russians seized the islands at the close of World War II.

Even as Gorbachov's statements were being reported, Japanese Defense Agency statistics were issued showing that, "In the

three years since Mikhail Gorbachov assumed power . . . [Soviet] ground forces in Eastern Asia have been increased by 20,000 men, naval forces by five ships totaling 70,000 tons, and the air force by 190 operational aircraft." Overall, Soviet ground forces are estimated to be 390,000, or 43 divisions.

Hungarian leader may step down

Hungarian communist leader Janos Kadar, who has been in power for 32 years, ever since the Soviets crushed the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, told an American television interviewer that he is ready to step down if the Hungarian Communist Party's Central Committee so decides at its conference beginning May 20. Kadar added, however, that he has no specific plans to resign.

Hungarian Prime Minister Karoly Grosz told the BBC that he is sure Kadar would accept any decision made by the Party.

Grosz was in London in early May, and is obviously grooming himself among diplomatic circles to be the next leader of Hungary.

Ethnic riots rock Pakistan

The Pakistani army was called out and a curfew imposed in Karachi on May 9, following ethnic clashes which left 26 people dead and over 100 injured.

A day earlier, shopkeepers in a Karachi suburb closed their stores to protest what they called "police excesses" after an another ethnic riot.

Elsewhere in Pakistan, at least two children were killed May 5 when a bomb exploded near the bungalow of an assistant commissioner in Charsadda, near Peshawar.

In a separate incident, Faiz Mohamed Arbab, a member of the Sind provincial assembly, was kidnaped by unidentified persons as he was driving into Karachi the morning of May 8.

State Dept. caught meddling in Singapore

Although the U.S. State Department has denied that there was any impropriety in his activities, the U.S. envoy in Singapore was kicked out of the country the weekend of May 7. The government of Singapore explained that he was "trying to manipulate and instigate Singaporeans to contest the elections against the government."

State Department spokesman Richard Gong said that E. Mason Hendrickson, by meeting with Singapore opposition lawyers, was doing what American diplomats are expected to do in any country: "Keep in touch with a broad spectrum of individuals in order to report accurately developments in the country." But Singapore's government says Hendrickson promised Patrick Seong and other opposition lawyers that "financing would be no problem."

Later, in a move State Department spokesman Charles Redman unconvincingly denied was retaliation, the United States asked Singapore to have Robert H.H. Choo withdrawn from the Singapore embassy in Washington.

Taft arrives in South Korea

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense William H. Taft arrived in Seoul, South Korea on May 10. His mission is to pressure the Korean government to contribute more to the U.S. military deployment in the Persian Gulf, provide more aid to the Philippines, and contribute more in support of the U.S. military presence in South Korea.

The *Wall Street Journal*, for one, took exception to these proposals. It editorialized, "For a country short on friends, in a world short on democracies, is \$20 million really worth the risk?"

South Korean defense official Col. Pak Yoong-ok said May 9 that South Korea would not involve itself in the Persian Gulf, but is studying the possibility of paying more support for the U.S. troop presence in Korea.

Briefly

● **35 MILLION** Africans have AIDS, writes journalist Maurizio Blondet from Kenya in Italy's *Il Giornale* May 6. In Nairobi, 8 prostitutes in every 10 are infected. Two millions blacks will die of the disease in the next five years, he wrote.

● **THE SOVIET** Space Shuttle will undertake its maiden flight this year. "You will not be waiting for long to see this launch," stated Alexander Dunayev, chairman of the Soviet space agency, Glavkosmos. An interview with him was published in the May issue of the British journal *Spaceflight*. The shuttle will not be manned.

● **BRITAIN** is blocking the next five years' funding of the European Commission's research into thermonuclear fusion. Britain, says *The Independent*, suffers from "a lack of commitment to fusion as a major source of power for the future."

● **THE PLO** may target Americans for terrorist attack, in retaliation for the assassination of the PLO's number-two leader Abu Jihad last month, according to Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy.

● **HANS-DIETRICH GENSCHER**, the West German foreign minister, is the source of proposals for a Marshall Plan for the East bloc, according to a source in Zurich. "Some call it a Marshall Plan for the East bloc, but it's really a Genscher plan, he's the energy behind it, with some of the German banks," said the source.

● **SOVIET JEWISH** emigrés arriving in Israel are warning that rumors abound in the U.S.S.R. that anti-Semitic pogroms are being prepared to coincide with the June 1988 celebrations of the Russian Orthodox Church Millennium. One told the *Jerusalem Post* of a March 6 demonstration in Moscow's Gorky Street, featuring signs, "Kill the Jews and Save Russia."