

# International Intelligence

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## **Atomic Energy Agency opens conference**

The International Atomic Energy Agency opened its 28th annual conference on Sept. 24, in Vienna, Austria. Agency Director General Hans Blix predicted a decline in the growth of nuclear power because of political controversy and lack of funds.

Blix reported to the opening session of the conference that 25 new nuclear power plants went into operation during 1983, bringing the total worldwide to 313. "There were some setbacks, however," he said, "caused by political and public attitude constraints, and by financing problems. Orders for eight plants already under construction were canceled, and some projects were postponed. These developments," he said, "together with the paucity of new orders, will inevitably lead to a flattening of the curve of world nuclear capacity growth. The nuclear industry, after a period of very rapid growth, has entered a period of slower expansion."

He laid some of the blame on the "highly emotional issue" of nuclear waste management. "It is lamentable . . . that legitimate concern has sometimes been replaced by politically or emotionally motivated obstructionism directed against any activity relating to the nuclear fuel cycle, including steps to find suitable repositories for nuclear wastes. I remain optimistic that, in the long run, the environmental advantages of nuclear power will be generally recognized," he said.

The 112-member IAEA, a U.N.-linked organization, is charged with promoting and ensuring the safety of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Agency safeguards, including inspections, are supposed to ensure that nuclear material does not get diverted for use in nuclear weapons manufacture. However, both the Kissinger-tainted U.S. State Department as well as the U.N. itself, use the issue of nuclear non-proliferation to deprive developing sector nations of access to relatively safe and inexpensive energy needed for continued growth and economic development.

During the week prior to the conference, it was announced that the Soviet Union and the IAEA had reached agreement on putting some of the Soviet Union's non-military facilities under IAEA safeguards. Theoretically, states which already have nuclear weapons need not submit non-military facilities to safeguards, but Britain, France, and the United States have long done so as a sign of good will. Blix called the safeguards system "the only international verification system which has so far seen the light of day in the nuclear field."

He also announced his plan to set up, for an initial period of three years, an International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group, to review, analyze, and suggest nuclear safety policy.

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## **Soviet beam-weapons program advancing**

While Soviets and Kissingerites are urging President Reagan to negotiate away space-based missile defense weapons, the Soviet Union is moving rapidly toward its own space-based weapons capability.

According to the latest issue of *Jane's Defense Weekly*, a British defense publication, the Soviet Union is continuing ahead in its development of space-based weapons including a laser ASAT system. "The Soviet Union's military space activities have always been buried in its vast Cosmos series of launchings (the 1500th was launched in September 1983)," writes *JDW*. The weekly says that according to U.S. reports, "pointing and tracking tests, similar to those planned for the U.S. space-based high-energy laser weapon system"—that the Kissingerites want to negotiate away—"had already been conducted by cosmonauts on Salyut 6 and 7."

Soviet media has been making a big play of space stations, with female cosmonaut Svetlana Savitska the big heroine, including a front-page *Izvestia* article recently showing Svetlana doing work on the space station with an electron-beam gun. The Soviet daily *Izvestia* of Sept. 22 reports on its front page

that Soviet cosmonauts have now completed their 227th day on the Salyut 7-Cosmos T-11 space-station complex, working on astrophysical experiments involving an "X-ray telescopic-spectrometer."

*Jane's* also adds pointedly that there is "no sign of any slackening in the Soviet Union's annual launch rate of approximately 80 military satellites."

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## **Israeli government enacts more austerity**

The new Israeli national unity coalition government handed down a new set of austerity measures on Sept. 24 that will hit the population hard. These include:

- New taxes of up to 2% on cars, business buildings, and inventories.
- Increases in prices on government-subsidized food—mostly dairy products and bread—by 18 to 50%.
- Hikes in gasoline prices by 30%.
- Plans to cut the \$22 billion budget by \$1 billion; defense accounts for 40% of the budget.

These measures are being put forward as necessary in order to please Secretary of State George Shultz, who is often quoted in the front pages of the Israeli press as demanding that Israel get its financial house in order. Specifically, the Israelis are hoping that if they impose a harsh enough austerity against the population that they will receive \$900 million additional to the \$2.6 billion aid package promised by the United States. In effect, Israel's economy is being steadily "dollarized" as the shekel falls through the floor.

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## **Japanese scramble against Soviet air violations**

According to British military sources, Japanese fighter aircraft were first alerted and then ordered to take off on Sept. 24 when Japanese radar determined that at least 20 Soviet long-range Backfire bombers had suddenly appeared from out of the blue off

the northern Japanese coast.

This is apparently part of a major Soviet military exercise now under way in the area of the Sea of Japan and the Soviet-occupied Kuril Islands, which lie off the northernmost Japanese island of Hokkaido. On Sept. 23, the West Berlin newspaper *Tagesspiegel* reported that, following a fire on board, a Soviet Golf II class nuclear-missile submarine was being towed from a point 90 kilometers northwest of the southern Japanese Island of Okinoshima in the Korean Straits toward the Soviet naval base of Vladivostok. The towed Soviet sub is being escorted by a Soviet minesweeper, a supply tanker and two tug boats. The "Golf II" class of nuclear missile submarine is the oldest in the Soviet Navy, having first entered service in 1960.

### ***Betancur blasts U.S. sabotage of Contadora***

On Sept. 26, Colombian President Belisario Betancur criticized the U.S. State Department's "lamentable prattling" in labeling Nicaragua's endorsement of the Contadora peace document as "hypocritical," and again warned the Reagan administration against treating Central America as an arena of East-West superpower confrontation.

The State Department has consistently attacked the Sandinista government for not signing the peace agreement, and has used that fact to try to justify its own notable lack of support for the Contadora peace process. Now that Nicaragua has signed the document, a spokesman for the State Department could only charge that the Managua regime was acting "hypocritically."

Speaking from the United Nations, Colombian Foreign Minister Ramirez Ocampo took Betancur's criticism one step further by dismissing the State Department's charge, saying that as far as Colombia was concerned, there had not yet been any "official U.S. response" to the Nicaraguan signing of the Contadora document. The Colombian minister also pointedly observed that there were some "second or third rate U.S. government officials" who viewed with "certain

skepticism" the Contadora peace process which the rest of the Americas has endorsed.

### ***U.S. to retaliate against New Zealand?***

Rep. de la Garza of Texas (D) and Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.) publicly threatened retaliation against New Zealand on Sept. 24 if it does not retreat from its position of denying port access to U.S. nuclear-fueled and nuclear-carrying ships. New Zealand took this stand upon the election in July of Labour Party leader David Lange. The proviso effectively rips up the ANZUS treaty between the United States, New Zealand, and Australia.

The pressure is now coming on New Zealand from both Congress and the Pentagon. Solarz and de la Garza are threatening that if New Zealand does not back down, then Congress will accede to the demands of the U.S. dairy lobby and close U.S. markets to New Zealand milk and casein. Before, according to a State Department official, moves to shut off the markets to New Zealand were always stopped by citing the country's important defense role in the Pacific.

It would appear, however, that the New Zealanders had already taken this retaliation into account when they made their decision to rip up the ANZUS treaty. Perhaps they have a new market in the Soviet Union. Yesterday, New Zealand Defense Minister Frank O'Flynn stated that New Zealand is ready to end its being "kind of a protectorate of the United States" and to take the consequences for it.

New Zealand wants to see the creation of a "nuclear-free zone" in the Pacific basin, i.e., they are working within the terms of the plan of NATO Secretary-General Lord Peter Carrington, Kissinger, and the Soviets to eliminate the United States from Asia as well as from Western Europe and the Middle East.

There is a significant faction in the Australian Labour Party that is pushing for Australia to take the same kind of action.

## *Briefly*

● **RADIO KABUL** confirmed on Sept. 23 that French TV reporter Jacques Abouchar has been captured by Afghan-Soviet troops. The kidnap took place not in Afghanistan, but in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan. Abouchar was captured last Monday after a battle between Afghan-Soviet troops and Afghan resistance fighters.

● **FRENCH DOCTORS** have proclaimed that they are practicing euthanasia and are urging other physicians to support the legalization of "mercy killing" for the terminally ill who "want to die." In a statement published in the daily *Le Monde* on Sept. 20, five prominent physicians admitted helping "patients in a terminal stage of illness to end their lives in the least painful way possible." The doctors said that "medical ethics" "implied respect for people and for life," which for a person in pain meant "to also respect the conditions of his death."

● **THAILAND'S** former Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces has come out with an endorsement of the Kra Canal project. The endorsement opens up a public debate in the Thai military which could shift the balance in favor of the canal, which would relieve the overburdened Straits of Malacca shipping route from the Pacific into the Indian Ocean. The Thai Communications Ministry, the Fusion Energy Foundation, and *EIR* are sponsoring an Oct. 31-Nov. 1 conference on the project in Bangkok.

● **AN INDIAN** astronaut will join a U.S. space shuttle voyage in 1986. The voyage will also carry India's U.S.-built INSAT-1C weather and communications satellite. Last April, India's first man in space went up aboard the Soviets' Soyuz T-11 spacecraft. The Indian government announced on Sept. 27 that it had accepted the invitation from the United States to provide a shuttle crew member.