

International Intelligence

Japanese oppose war in Persian Gulf

The Japanese population strongly opposes intervention in the Gulf, according to a poll conducted early in November by the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper. Seventy-eight percent of those polled opposed sending troops outside the country, when asked about Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu's now-abandoned attempt to send 2,000 lightly armed soldiers to the Gulf. Most people thought that the proposed legislation to send the troops, who would only be armed with pistols and engage in "peacekeeping" activities, breached Japan's Constitution.

The Japanese government has not even been able to find civilian volunteers to go to the Gulf, much less soldiers, because of popular opposition. British press accounts of a recent mid-term election in Japan, which was seen as a referendum on the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's plan to send troops, say the LDP win was "embarrassingly narrow," with less than a 5% margin.

Finance Minister Hashimoto announced that he has no plans to increase the \$4 billion Tokyo has already pledged to support the U.S. deployment in the Gulf.

French high school students protest

Three hundred thousand high school students demonstrated in Paris on Nov. 12, and tens of thousands more in other parts of France, to demand better conditions in the schools, including the prevention of violence and drug use.

Although the media are focused on the violent disruption of the Paris march by a couple of hundred hooligans, the overwhelming majority of the students is seriously concerned about their future. Student federations of different political stripes participated in the demonstrations, and there was a meeting of student leaders with French President François Mitterrand.

The students' grievances are very real. In many French schools, there is extreme

overcrowding, decaying infrastructure, lack of heating, as well as continual threats to students by drug dealers.

Guatemalan military is target in elections

Jorge Serrano Elías, who was a top government official during the rule of Guatemalan President Efraín Ríos Montt in the early 1980s, pulled into second place, almost even with the top vote-getter, Jorge Carpio Nicolle, in the first round of Guatemala's presidential election on Nov. 11. Serrano, whose sudden surge in the polls reflects the strength of support for Ríos Montt, actively promoted peace talks with guerrillas in Guatemala.

Ríos Montt, a fundamentalist Protestant, is backed by the U.S. State Department and Israel.

Were Serrano to win, he would act to weaken and eventually destroy the Guatemalan military, on the model of neighboring El Salvador. The *Washington Post* put out the orders targeting the Guatemalan military, in an editorial on Nov. 13: "The 'dirty war' is blazing again in Guatemala. . . . The security services have made Guatemala the worst human rights offender in all of Latin America."

Predictions are now that Serrano will win, based on the strength of Guatemala's Protestants, now one-third of the population. "Serrano's stunning showing has turned the political landscape of the country on its head," wrote a local paper.

Buthelezi attacks ANC, but defends Mandela

In a Nov. 12 interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the head of South Africa's Inkatha movement, condemned violence "from whichever side it comes," and said that neither he nor African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela have control over the fighting between Inkatha and the ANC.

When asked whether a joint statement

by himself and Mandela calling for an end to the violence would be followed by ANC and Inkatha members, he said, "I am not naive," but added that such a statement would help. Noting that he was still a close friend of Mandela's, he stated, "He has said that he is a captive of certain members of the ANC who don't want him to meet with me."

Chief Buthelezi accused the ANC of having started the violence against Inkatha. The root cause of the violence is not tribal, he said, but economic; for example, many blacks have lost their jobs because of the foreign economic sanctions against South Africa. Buthelezi attacked the media for bias toward the ANC and against the Inkatha movement. For example, he attacked the idea that Inkatha was a "Zulu movement." "Inkatha has never been a Zulu movement," he said, and many of its members are Indians, whites, and members of other racial groups.

Growing role for KGB in the Soviet Union

If Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov resorts to rule by emergency decree in order to deal with the crisis in the U.S.S.R., he will become increasingly dependent upon the KGB and the Interior Ministry, the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote on Nov. 8.

Once Gorbachov were to declare a state of emergency or martial law over parts of the Soviet Union, stability would be largely based on the KGB's 1.5 million civilian personnel and soldiers (border troops, signal-corps, and spetsnaz units), and another 1.2 million men of the militia, crack forces, and regular troops of the Interior Ministry.

Most noteworthy in this case, the article says, would be the role of elite units such as the KGB spetsnaz, the size of which is not known, and the Interior Ministry crack anti-riot force of roughly 30,000 members, mostly "Afghantsi," the veterans of the Afghani war.

A new development, the article reports, is the reinforcement of the Interior Minis-

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try's 300,000 regular forces by another 65,000 men who have been recruited from the Soviet military pulled out from Eastern Europe in the past months. The role of the KGB and Interior Ministry would be far more important under conditions of emergency than the Soviet military, the article states, thus corroborating earlier analyses by *EIR*.

North Korea seen as continuing threat

North Korea may be able to make nuclear weapons by 1995, the South Korean Defense Ministry stated in a Defense White Paper released on Nov. 8. The White Paper also stated that Pyongyang is "actively proceeding with plans to produce chemical and biological weapons, and its military adventurism is a threat to South Korea."

North Korea has already completed nuclear reprocessing facilities at a large-scale nuclear research complex in Yongbyon, north of Pyongyang. The White Paper estimated North Korea's armed forces at 990,000, up 10,000 from 1989, and compared to 655,000 in South Korea. Pyongyang has "overwhelming" air, tank, and artillery superiority. North Korean military strength is not expected to be in balance before the early 2000s, Seoul warned.

African refugee crisis looms out of control

Kingsley Amaning, a Ghanaian representative of the U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), has warned that his agency is vastly overstretched in its ability to meet Africa's refugee needs.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, he said that whereas previously the UNHCR was responsible for overseeing 5 million refugees worldwide, now there are that many officially living in refugee camps in Africa alone. The same \$400 million budget that was allocated for 5 million people, must now be applied to the needs of 15 million.

The *Los Angeles Times* on Sept. 11 had

reported on the crisis in Ethiopia, where refugees are fleeing warfare in southern Sudan. "Hundreds of thousands of refugees have ranged over the land cutting down trees for fuel, denuding the dales and hillocks so thoroughly that Itang (in southern Ethiopia) has suffered something no one can remember ever happening before—extensive flooding during the rainy season," the article stated.

Gorbachov agrees to new 'unity' government

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov has agreed to create a new government of national unity, to be jointly named by him and the Russian Federation, declared Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Nov. 13, speaking before the Russian Federation Parliament.

Commenting on his five-hour meeting with Gorbachov at Gorbachov's dacha outside of Moscow, Yeltsin said, "As a principle, the building of a coalition government of national unity was supported." A compromise was reached, he said, on "dividing up the functions and the property" of the central government and the Russian Federation.

The agreement was struck in the first two hours of the meeting, attended only by Gorbachov and Yeltsin, after which Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov and Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev were brought in.

Special Soviet-Russian Federation Commissions were set up to work out the details of what Yeltsin called "a completely new system of state power." The agreement paves the way for Russia to sign the new "Union Treaty," creating a "Union of Sovereign States," as the successor to the Soviet Union, he said.

Yeltsin added that "Russia was never against the Union and never against the new Union Treaty." His statements underscore that his own policy is and has been to use his Russian position and popularity to assist Gorbachov in the primary task of preserving at all cost the Slavic core of the Soviet Union, through containing and limiting the process of disintegration.

● **SIKH ACTIVISTS** from Punjab have set up a French-registered association called the Embassy of Khalistan, and described it as the "first diplomatic representation of the government in exile in Khalistan." The French Foreign Ministry had told the Indian Embassy in Paris in October that an "error" had been committed by the local council in Paris in registering the association.

● **NELSON MANDELA** accused the West of racism in targeting Iraq, in a speech in Paris at the close of a three-week tour of Europe and Asia. Mandela said that no objections were made when the U.S. invaded Grenada and Panama, "But now, the whole of the West is screaming and sending armies." Iraq is being singled out, he said, because its people are "brown-skinned."

● **THREE-QUARTERS** of a million Palestinians have been thrown out of the Gulf region since the Iraq-Kuwait crisis began, a senior British source opposed to Thatcher's policy in the Middle East reports. He said that certain Gulf countries, like Bahrain, have simply ejected Palestinians, while Saudi Arabia has "made life impossible" for them.

● **THE PHILIPPINES** plans to lease the firing range at Clark Air Base to Thailand, Singapore, and other countries, as part of an agreement with Washington on the future of the U.S. military bases, Bangkok's *The Nation* reported on Nov. 6.

● **SOUTH AFRICA'S** President Willem de Klerk won a vote of approval in elections in a Johannesburg white suburb. The vote is seen as an endorsement of his negotiated approach to black majority rule. The race was between the pro-apartheid Conservative Party and de Klerk's National Party.