

International Intelligence

Israel said to plan ouster of Palestinians

The Israeli government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is planning the deportation and "collective punishment" of West Bank Palestinians, the leftist German daily *tageszeitung* reported from Tel Aviv on Dec. 8. According to an unnamed high-level source in the Israeli Army, preparations for that are ongoing, in connection with the third anniversary of the start of the Palestinian uprising, the Intifada.

There will be collective punishment measures like the blowing-up of homes of Palestinians and expropriations under martial law. This is what Defense Minister Moshe Arens means when he says that "fire will be retaliated by fire," the article said.

More than 1 million inhabitants of the West Bank of the Jordan River—especially in the cities of Nablus, Hebron, and Achenin—have already been put under house arrest by military decree. Forty percent of the population there is backing the Intifada, as are 60% in the Gaza strip, where most of the population is slated for mass deportation by the Israeli regime.

Mexican legislators denounce U.N. Gulf vote

Congressmen from across the political spectrum in Mexico issued a statement during the first week in December condemning the threat to resolve international conflicts with force and denouncing the United Nations' role in that. The U.N. Security Council on Nov. 29 had voted to authorize the use of force against Iraq by the U.S.-led multinational force in Saudi Arabia.

The U.N., says the statement, "should preserve the peace, and not authorize war; we condemn that it should authorize a country to use force and, in any case, it should be the U.N. which is in command."

The statement directly contradicts President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's effusive backing for Bush's war adventure in the

Gulf. The unified statement, however, was not voted up as a resolution, but instead sent to the various congressional committees; it included the comment that Mexico's oil "should be used to mitigate the effects of the conflict on the poor nations, and not merely as a strategic reserve for the powerful nations."

Christian clergy meet in Baghdad

An international conference of Christian clergy took place in Baghdad on Dec. 3-5, sponsored by Iraq's 600,000-member Christian community, almost all of whom are Roman Catholics of the Chaldean rite, led by Archbishop Bitwid.

Archbishop Ibrahim Ibrahim, the Chaldean Archbishop of the United States, told the gathering that "men of religion in the United States do not want war," and that the "recent resolution adopted by the Security Council against Iraq was taken under the U.S. administration's influence and pressure to ignite a destructive war rejected by all heavenly laws."

Pope John Paul II sent a message to the conference and sent a special envoy to attend. Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz is a member of the Chaldean congregation, as are many of Saddam Hussein's advisers.

Purge rocks China's security services

Wang Fang, the head of Communist China's Public Security Ministry, has been ousted, in a total purge of the P.R.C. military and paramilitary in the wake of the June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, the British daily *Independent* reported from Beijing on Dec. 3. Premier Li Peng approved the ousting of Wang in mid-October, as one of many officials accused of "wavering" or incompetence during the massacre and subsequent national crackdown.

Wang is being replaced by Tao Siju, one of his four former deputies, but the change will not be made public until the next session of the National People's Congress "approves" it. Wang, although he was one of the first to call for a crackdown last May, has been blamed for bungling the police efforts to stop the demonstrations, allowing some of the democracy leaders to escape abroad, and failing to stop policemen joining the demonstrations. It has been frequently reported that police in Guangdong province, near Hong Kong, helped dissidents escape in the months after the massacre.

All the top regional leadership of the People's Liberation Army have been moved or purged in the last months, and the commander and political commissar for the People's Armed Police were also purged this spring.

In a related development, student leader Wang Dan from Beijing University has been formally charged with "counterrevolutionary propaganda and agitation" in Beijing, where he has been held at the top-security Qincheng political prison since his arrest last July. Only his immediate family will be able to attend his trial. It has taken the Chinese authorities 17 months of interrogating witnesses to compile enough evidence to even begin to lend credence to their charges that the Tiananmen demonstrations were only the work of a tiny group of conspirators, and not the result of mass outrage with Communist Party rule.

Australia's backing for U.S. in Gulf under fire

There is growing opposition to Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke's commitment of military forces to the Persian Gulf. The leader of the Australian Democrats, Senator Powell, is calling for warships to be withdrawn, according to Melbourne press accounts, and 16 state Members of Parliament from the Labour Unity faction have written a letter to their federal counterparts urging them to bring Australia's Gulf force back home.

Briefly

The MPs' statement says that Western nations were strengthening their forces for "a totally unnecessary war" because of the intense pressure being mounted by the United States. The letter accuses the Australian government of "uncritical participation in what is basically an Arab conflict." The Australian action is "clearly an act of subservience to Washington," the letter continues. It called on the federal caucus members to "learn the bitter lessons of Vietnam and bring our warships home."

One member of the group, Ian Baker, Minister for Property and Services, notes that Australia will have difficulty convincing its neighbors in Asia and the South Pacific that it saw itself as part of the region, "when we keep sending gunboats off to any blue on the Northern Hemisphere."

Analyst sees 'Israeli maverick ally scenario'

The Paris-based *Israel and Palestine* newsletter warns that an "Israeli maverick ally scenario," is the most likely variant for how war will begin in the Gulf. In its November 1990 issue, editor Maxim Ghilan reaches the conclusion that Bush "in due course and after understanding he cannot have his way, might become inclined to let things fall in the hands of America's ally Israel."

"Israel has become extremely frustrated by the Gulf crisis and by the Americans' interdiction to participate in the anti-Iraqi coalition in any form or manner. . . .

"If the U.S. is unable to deliver, the game itself changes. Unilateral Israeli action against Iraq, after the U.S. stops threatening Baghdad, would let the U.S. off the hook—as well as Arab leaders in the Gulf, Syria and Egypt: After all, such a unilateral Israeli strike would not be openly coordinated with them; could even be written into a 'maverick ally' scenario in which the Israelis 'surprise' the U.S. . . .

"According to Western sources, Israel's inner military and political leadership has already taken the decision to strike at Iraq and to eliminate Saddam Hussein—if the U.S. does not.

"In military terms, Israel is willing to pay the price. . . . Israeli military doctrine nowadays holds that some civilian and military losses are 'acceptable' if Iraq, considered to be the only real military threat to Israel in the Arab world, is destroyed or at least neutered. . . .

"Thus, circles close to Western intelligence expressed in mid-November the view that Israel will strike at Iraq, beginning March 1991 and most likely during the month of Ramadan—should the U.S. not initiate before that time military action of its own against Saddam Hussein."

Havel appeals for Czechoslovakian unity

Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel, in a dramatic appeal to Parliament on Dec. 10, warned of the danger of the Czechoslovak Republic breaking apart along ethnic lines, and announced that he will seek emergency powers to prevent the dissolution of the federation.

Czechoslovakia consists of a Czech and a Slovak republic, both of which are highly autonomous in domestic affairs, due to constitutional changes put through by Havel, in an effort to eliminate justified Slovak grievances against past Czech hegemony.

Havel's warning came right after the Slovak Parliament passed a resolution declaring that from now on the laws of Slovakia have precedence over the laws of Czechoslovak Federation. Referring to this action, President Havel declared that if carried out in practice, this would "lead to the breakup of unity."

Havel also stressed the importance of the President being granted emergency powers, because under present law, the only emergency intervention possible is in the jurisdiction of the Army. To resolve the crisis over the division of powers between the central state and the republics, he proposed the creation of a Constitutional Court and provisions for popular referenda on crucial issues.

● **KUWAITI NEWSMAN** Mohammed Saquer, editor of the newspaper *Qabas*, let the cat out of the bag about his government's supposed invitation to the U.S. to send in troops after the Iraqi invasion. "There was an American plan to send troops to the region, regardless of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but it was provided a golden opportunity to justify its move. The Americans are not here to defend Kuwait, but to defend their own interests," he said, according to the *Financial Times* of Dec. 6.

● **CHINESE PREMIER** Li Peng has called off his trip to India next month because of the instability in New Delhi, according to Asian diplomatic sources. Li Peng will visit Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka beginning Dec. 10.

● **SRI LANKA** signed an agreement with China to purchase gunboats by early next year. Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunge, who visited China recently, conveyed a desire to purchase more arms and military equipment. Sri Lanka is also to be supplied with two light landing craft, and is in the process of acquiring A-5 jets from China.

● **CONRAD BLACK**, chairman of the Hollinger Corp., is expected to ask Margaret Thatcher to join the board of directors of either Hollinger or the Hollinger-owned *Daily Telegraph* of London. The board of Hollinger Corp. includes such figures as Lord Carrington and Henry Kissinger. Black is known to be a "conspicuous admirer" of Thatcher.

● **DEMONSTRATORS** in Pakistan protesting the U.S. military buildup in Saudi Arabia burned President Bush in effigy in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad on Dec. 3. The demonstration was apparently organized by two youth organizations allied to the party of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the Pakistan People's Party.