

International Intelligence

Russians in Baltics are not 'ethnic minorities'

Russians in Estonia and Latvia are not "ethnic minorities," but remnants of the occupational forces, Dr. Kazys Bobelis, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lithuanian Parliament, told a hearing of the U.S. House Republican Research Committee, chaired by Rep. Bob Dornan (R-Calif.), on Aug. 25.

"These people are remnants or relatives of the Russian occupation forces that came illegally to Estonia and Latvia," he said. "They established themselves, and now that the troops are withdrawing, their families and relatives don't want to leave Estonia and Latvia because the living conditions are much better there, they consider themselves, all of a sudden, an ethnic minority." He contrasted this to regions where ethnic minorities were not brought in by force but instead have been established for hundreds of years.

Serbs prepare for war with Croatia

Serbia has reconstructed much of former Yugoslavia's vast arms industry on its territory and is gearing up in preparation for war with Croatia, *Jane's Defence Weekly* magazine reported on Aug. 28, according to Reuters.

Production of ground-attack aircraft and battlefield weapons is being given top priority at factories, some of which were rebuilt in Serbia after being dismantled in other republics as the Serb-led Yugoslav Army pulled out.

The Serbs, who dominated the Yugoslav Army command and ensured that key arms manufacturing was based in Serbia, have been relatively untouched by the two-year-old U.N. arms embargo on Yugoslavia which has crippled Bosnia. Defense experts say Serbia has enough basic weaponry and ammunition to last for years.

Jane's said that aerospace development was progressing, using a factory which was removed to Serbia from the Bosnian town

of Mostar. A new armaments heartland in Serbia's central Morava Valley and in the town of Valjevo, 90 km southeast of the capital Belgrade, is now turning out weapons and ammunition which used to be made in republics which seceded. *Jane's* said the army procurement department, now a holding company called Jugoimport, had "re-grouped the defense industry from Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia and Slovenia."

"Serbia is determined to have a functioning arms manufacturing business for the so-called Third World market should sanctions be lifted, but it also continues to prepare for a possible conflict with Croatia," *Jane's* said.

Jordan's Shubeilat leaves politics

Laith Shubeilat, the independent Islamist politician who served as the most popular member of the Jordanian parliament, announced on Aug. 28 his intention to quit politics, in protest against an election law reform passed by the government. Shubeilat was subjected to a political frameup last year, and narrowly escaped the death penalty (see *EIR*, May 7, 1993, for an interview with him).

The reform, which allows citizens to vote for one candidate only (whereas previously slates could be voted), was put through by a caretaker government, put into place to ram through the law. This, Shubeilat has contended, is illegal, as only the parliament should hold legislative power. The parliament, which recessed at the end of April, was abruptly dissolved just before the electoral reform was introduced.

Shubeilat's decision to leave parliamentary politics stems as well from his disappointment with fellow parliamentarians, according to his close associates. "Political groups incite Shubeilat to lead the opposition, but in the end he emerges a lonely voice," said one associate. Shubeilat fought corruption and what he saw as a perversion of the democratic process, but did not get the support he sought.

Shubeilat plans to continue social and cultural activities, but does not want to pro-

vide political cover for perversions of the democratic process, which he has characterized as a "farce."

Turkey seeks to restore ties with Iraq

A senior Turkish official told the London *Daily Telegraph* of Aug. 28 that Turkey will begin trading non-sanctioned exports to Iraq without seeking prior United Nations approval. The move is seen as part of a broader effort to "defrost" relations with Baghdad.

The Turks' position is that the U.N. sanctions committee is partial to western countries, particularly Britain. "The U.N. sanctions committee has been approving the sale to Iraq by various western countries of a number of items. Permission for the sale of the same goods has been denied to us," the Turkish official charged. The Turks are also said to be concerned that the U.N. has allowed the sale of goods to Iraqi Kurds which it does not allow Baghdad to purchase.

Turkey has called on the U.N. to review its imposition of trade sanctions against Iraq at a forthcoming session. Turkey is also said to have held recent talks with Iraqi officials over re-opening the Turkey-Iraq oil pipeline for maintenance purposes.

French police trace KKK ties of rightists

Recent investigations by French police establish new evidence that the neo-Nazi resurgence in Europe is not a local phenomenon, but is part of an international drive by the U.S.-based Ku Klux Klan and other assets of diverse intelligence agencies.

Police apprehended three individuals in their car in the suburb of Villepinte outside Paris, supposedly for traffic violations, according to the Aug. 24 daily *Libération*. In the car, they found pistols, grenades, and other weaponry, as well as stickers with the slogans, in French, "Hitler was right," and "Stop immigration." According to *Libération*, the stickers "carry the address of a post office box in the United States, and, ac-

cording to the first steps in the investigation, they are of the same type as those distributed by the American Ku Klux Klan."

The three apprehended men are known to be sympathizers of extreme right-wing groups, including one called Hammerskin, a "skinhead" group active mainly in the United States.

German minister calls for NATO expansion

German Defense Minister Volker Ruehe on Aug. 28 called for NATO to export stability to the former Soviet bloc by accepting eastern European nations as members, Reuters reported. A NATO summit to be held in January 1994 should discuss extending membership to Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, Ruehe said.

"Germany and France have a special interest in the export of stability in this direction," said Ruehe, addressing an Aug. 27 news conference in Rastatt, Germany with French Defense Minister François Leotard. "NATO should not be a closed society. It is important for the stability of Europe."

"The process has started and we on the French side will certainly not raise any obstacle in this expansion," responded Leotard.

Outside intervention stirs up Sri Lanka

Four Nobel laureates, George Wald, Ilya Prigogine, Jan Tinbergen, and Malread Corrigan Maguire, have announced a "peace plan" for Sri Lanka's northern and eastern provinces.

The intervention is not being received well in Sri Lanka. The government maintains that the ethnic conflict there is Sri Lanka's own problem and that there is no need for outside intervention. A Tamil group which is not otherwise averse to outside mediation has questioned the credentials of the organization that initiated the move, the World Council for Global Cooperation.

It is reported that the catalyst for bring-

ing the four eminent persons together is James Nicholas, international secretary to the World Council for Global Cooperation. Nicholas is a Sri Lankan Tamil who is now a citizen of Canada.

The thrust of the peace plan is that the Sri Lankan government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) should invite the U.N. secretary general to send an envoy to the island to mediate a negotiated settlement. Such an agreement would include: 1) a cease-fire verified by the U.N.; 2) disengagement of military forces in selected areas; and 3) U.N.-sponsored elections. The plan also promotes a federal form of government and granting to minorities some form of regional autonomy.

Both the President and the prime minister have rejected the plan.

Schools burnt down in southern Thailand

Over 30 schools were burnt down in three provinces in southern Thailand during August, the *Bangkok Post* reported. Most accounts blame the arson on Muslim separatists, whose base is in the jungle areas between Thailand and Malaysia, but one report in the *Post* on Aug. 13 said that the National Security Council was investigating whether former members of the National Peacekeeping Council (which ruled Thailand after the military coup in 1991) were involved, in an effort to discredit the government of Prime Minister Chuan.

Former Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan, ousted in 1991, indicated that disaffected persons would do better to burn a few political parties in Bangkok than schools. Muslim leaders have denied responsibility for the attacks, which have destroyed 34 schools and terrified teachers and pupils. Mosques have also been ransacked.

On Aug. 17, separatists ambushed a group of Thai soldiers, killing two, and injuring several civilians. A group also reportedly attacked a train on Aug. 22, and police reinforcements were sent to the southern region. Police identified a Muslim separatist group, the PULO, as responsible for the train attack.

Briefly

● **DAVID OWEN'S** agenda is a *Pax Britannica* for the Balkans, which means only the fittest will survive, charged the German magazine *Focus*, which also reports that the European Community's "mediator" is acting out a colonial attitude by having himself driven around by an Ethiopian chauffeur, in his limousine in Geneva.

● **THE PRESIDENTS** of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania issued a joint statement on Aug. 27 deploring Moscow's decision the week before to halt the withdrawal of Russian troops from Lithuania. Moscow charged that Lithuania was making "unjustified claims" for compensation for 50 years of Russian occupation.

● **THE CHINESE** Communist Party's National Commission for Inspecting Discipline launched a nationwide campaign against corruption, at a meeting in mid-August. The meeting emphasized "foreign influences" as the chief cause of the national crisis, according to the *London Times*. It also banned party officials from playing the stock market.

● **PHILIPPINES** Archbishop Cardinal Jaime Sin denounced the claim of President Fidel Ramos that slowing population growth would help the economy. The cardinal said that the population programs are being pushed by international agencies that have "their own materialistic objectives and use their command of funding and aid to pressure nations into dancing according to their tune."

● **BOSNIAN SERB** leader Radovan Karadzic was made a Knight of St. Dennis of Zante by the archdiocese of the Greek Orthodox Church, for his efforts "in the cause of peace." The award was presented to him at a ceremony at the Serbian military headquarters in Pale, by businessman Mladin Zarubica, born in Los Angeles of Serbian parents.