

## Russian military shapes Yeltsin's imperial policy

by Konstantin George

The release on Nov. 3 of unclassified selections of a new military doctrine for the Russian Federation fully bears out *EIR's* analysis of the imperial turn in Moscow's policy, especially since Boris Yeltsin's bloody massacre at the Parliament building on Oct. 3-4. The unveiling of carefully excerpted portions of the 23-page document occurred at a Moscow press conference given by Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and Deputy Secretary of the Russian Security Council Valeri Manilov. Despite pious assertions to the contrary, the doctrine is anything but "defensive," and indeed, concerning its external applications, can be rightly called a second Brezhnev Doctrine, legitimizing the use of armed force to keep neighboring nations within the Russian imperial sphere of influence. Beyond that, the doctrine for the first time in modern Russian history "legally" gives the Armed Forces the right and the duty to intervene *internally* to protect and maintain the security, integrity, and unity of the Russian state.

The doctrine's release was accompanied on the same day by statements from President Yeltsin. First, he declared that in the new Constitution, the "autonomous republics" of the Russian Federation will no longer be characterized as "sovereign," thus reducing their status to that of mere regions. Then, he made official what he had all along intended: not to hold presidential elections during 1994, saying that he intended to remain President until his term expires in 1996.

The main points of the new military doctrine, as announced, are:

1) The Russian Armed Forces are assigned the mission of intervening outside the territory of Russia or the Community of Independent States "to defend the life and death interests" of Russia, its CIS partners, or any country allied with

Russia on a bilateral basis, such as Georgia.

2) The doctrine emphasizes Russia's right to first use of nuclear weapons, specifically in the case of "defending" itself or any ally against "aggression" employing conventional weapons, if the country concerned is the ally of a nuclear power. This aspect of the new doctrine constitutes, for one thing, a virtual ultimatum warning NATO member Turkey not to intervene into the Caucasus. It is also a dramatic escalation in the Russian blackmail against the nations of eastern Europe not to join NATO. It tells Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia that joining NATO will put them on the nuclear target list. Valeri Manilov, who presented this to the press, was unambiguous: "The Russian Armed Forces will use all means at their disposal to repel an attack on Russia or its allies, and defeat the aggressor."

3) The new doctrine makes official a policy first verbally proclaimed in July, when Yeltsin, at Defense Minister Grachev's prodding, ordered the Russian Army to intervene in Tajikistan, with Yeltsin declaring then that the "external border" of Tajikistan, and all other "external borders" of CIS states, constitute "the border of Russia" as well. Manilov declared that any notion of defense that was limited to the borders of the Russian Federation itself was "extremely expensive" and inconceivable. Defense of the "borders" meant the borders of the entire CIS, and there could be no talk of Russian forces ever withdrawing to just the territory of Russia. Minimally, this means the permanent basing of Russian forces in all the CIS states, including Georgia, the latest addition to the CIS. In effect, this part of the doctrine already includes the independent Baltic states of Estonia and Latvia, where Russia has stopped its agreed-upon troop withdrawals

and insisted on the permanent stationing of troop contingents there.

4) Finally, the official role of the Russian Army has been vastly expanded, to include its use in maintaining internal order and security. This new role, in which the Army serves as the pillar of a dictatorship, includes the use of the military to suppress any separatist or opposition tendencies in the regions and autonomous republics of the Russian Federation.

### **The transitional dictator**

Going into the long Russian winter, Yeltsin is walking a tightrope, trying simultaneously to please both the military, to which he owes his present status as dictator-autocrat, and the vicious western-backed practitioners of "shock therapy," the so-called reformers led by Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar and Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov. It is a dictatorship of the military and security forces that is actually ruling the country, with Yeltsin as their point man. He cannot go on forever taking measures that please both groups. If he breaks with shock therapy, then he has the chance of greater longevity. Should he continue to promote the shock therapy course and thereby plunge Russia into its worst destabilization since the post-1917 period, then his uniformed benefactors will begin the search this winter for a replacement.

Sensing the extreme fragility of the current situation, and the threat to his own position, right before the unveiling of the new military doctrine, Yeltsin launched into a tirade against "the government"—forgetting to note that "the government," after all is *his* government—for having allowed the crisis to nearly go out of control. The attack, issued, Nov. 2, confirmed that the possibility of forming a new government is now on the agenda. It also gave the most recent and strongest indication that the present Russian government is being torn apart by frictions, and will not survive the Dec. 12 elections (which, as *EIR* has underlined, will hardly be democratic). Sometime soon thereafter, if not before, it will fall.

The language of Yeltsin's tirade provided clear evidence of the strain he is under. First, using the language of the military and security forces, Yeltsin, accused the government of underestimating the "danger" of "political terrorism," both before and since the Oct. 4 events. "It must be admitted that we underestimated this danger and showed unforgivable complacency," he said. He called for tough new emergency measures, criticizing the law enforcement authorities for having allowed "armed groups" who had backed the Parliament to operate "in the open," further accusing the government of having mishandled the "rebellion." "We now need emergency measures—political, legal and organizational—to curb political terrorism," he said, and those "responsible" for the bloodshed will be "prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law"—evidently not in reference to himself.

On other matters, clearly showing that he will wait before committing himself to a particular faction of the government, Yeltsin spoke out of both sides of his mouth, attacking both

the shock therapy and anti-shock therapy groupings. He first lashed out at the government's "slow pace" of "reforms," but then also criticized its inattention to the "social needs" of the population, saying that this policy—meaning shock therapy, but without using that term—had "fueled the rebellion" of the Parliament.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is already talking like a lame duck. After Yeltsin spoke, the prime minister stated that he himself will not be a candidate in the elections, and has "little interest" in who will be named prime minister after Dec. 12.

### **Government disarray**

With the fall of the government inevitable, all factions are maneuvering to dominate or control the next cabinet. The pro-International Monetary Fund (IMF) faction in Moscow has joined the fray, with Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov declaring war on the Chernomyrdin regime. The situation, however, is so volatile, that what yesterday were coherent policy factions, are today torn by acute personality clashes, adding to the chaos as winter approaches.

The Fyodorov enunciations illustrate this. In a statement released on Nov. 1, an angry Fyodorov said he would not be part of any "coalition government" emerging after the Dec. 12 elections, and for the first time also attacked his own factional allies as well. He noted that the government of Viktor Chernomyrdin is filled with political and personality clashes, and is incapable of implementing reforms: "I don't have the intention of working with a government that doesn't share my convictions, and which doesn't work in a cohesive and professional manner. . . . I don't understand why amateurs are running around with many problems, and why the number of ministers and departments has grown so much that it's already impossible to keep in one's head the names of the government's members."

The brawl in the government has gone way beyond a scrape between the IMF crowd as such and the Chernomyrdin group. Fyodorov lashed out at "those ministers" who are devoting most of their energies to the election campaign instead of to their government work. This was an unmistakable jab at his pro-IMF political bedfellow Yegor Gaidar, who heads the "Russia's Choice" electoral bloc, and also at Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai, who heads the Russian Unity and Concord electoral bloc. Fyodorov declared: "I deeply denounce this election campaigning, this struggling for future positions, these attempts to postpone important decisions."

How Yeltsin handles the question of forming a new government will determine whether or not he, too, joins the same lame duck category that the cabinet now has. On this basis, the real controllers of the Russian military dictatorship will make up their minds how fast to move and dictate their own succession agenda, starting with the present dictator-autocrat, Boris Yeltsin.