
International Intelligence

Russia's Ivashov Warns Of 'Global Civil War'

Russian Col.-Gen. Leonid Ivashov (ret.), who is now vice president of the Geopolitical Studies Academy, warned that a U.S. invasion of Iraq could trigger a global civil war, against the United States and its new doctrine of unilateral empire. In an interview to *Vek* on Oct. 18, he linked the Iraq war drive to the collapsing U.S. economy: "The U.S. is experiencing a serious economic crisis," he said, "and it sees a solution to this in seizing the world's key oil deposit regions. The launch of aggression against Iraq will signal that the battle over redistribution of global energy resources has entered its decisive stage."

Ivashov warned that, no matter what the outcome of a U.S. military action against Iraq, the "consequences will be very serious," because the U.S. action will end the global security system erected at the close of World War II. "The United States is usurping the right to decide the fate of any state which it finds to be unsatisfactory, for whatever reason. This could lead to the world sliding into chaos. According to our analysts, the world will see a new phenomenon: global civil war."

He also stated that the instability on the world oil markets, resulting from a unilateral U.S. takeover of the Persian Gulf reserves, would be bad for Russia, because wild fluctuations in price would undermine stable, long-term economic planning and investment.

Australian PM Pushes Fascist Legislation

Australian Prime Minister John Howard is rushing to impose fascist and neocolonial "anti-terror" laws, in the wake of the Oct. 12 bombing in Bali, Indonesia, in which many Australian citizens were killed. New laws were rushed through Parliament on Oct. 23, after a personal appeal from Howard to Labor leader Simon Crean, when the government realized "a technical waiting period in

July's anti-terror laws meant they would be powerless to detain al-Qaeda suspects until mid-December," according to *The Age*. The UN is expected to pronounce the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) group as an outlawed terrorist organization, allowing the Australian government to indict its members, with penalties including life imprisonment. (Indonesia, however, has *not* linked the group to the Bali bombing.)

Then on Oct. 30, Australian police and intelligence agents raided homes of Indonesian Muslims, in a nationwide hunt for members of Jemaah Islamiyah. Armed with submachine guns and wearing helmets, flak-jackets, and masks, they smashed their way into two homes in pre-dawn raids in the Perth suburb of Thornlie in Western Australia. Agents in Sydney arrested a 31-year-old man on alleged visa offenses during the search of a home belonging to another Indonesian, Ali Basri, whose son Jaya was the target of a similar raid on Oct. 27. Officials confirmed that two other homes were raided by members of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) and Australian Federal Police in a hunt for agents of JI.

The raids were the first since the Bali bomb blast. No arrests were made, but videos, computers, computer discs, mobile phones, and other material, including passports, were taken in the raids, police said.

Prime Minister Howard has also taken steps toward declaring colonial-style extraterritoriality in Indonesia (see article in this issue).

Polarization Grows In Venezuela

Tensions are rising in Venezuela, as President Hugo Chávez attacked his military opponents as criminal coup-plotters. Chávez had been silent for the first three days after a group of 14 generals and admirals declared themselves in rebellion against the regime, and took over the main plaza in Altamira, Caracas on Oct. 21. But on Oct. 24, he accused the officers of committing "criminal acts," and promised that the government would take action. The next day, he charged

that the military officers were preparing "a military insurrection," and said he would repress them by force of arms, should any coup attempt occur.

Chávez argued that the military has no right to take recourse to Article 350 of the Constitution—which grants the right to civil disobedience to restore democracy, if a government is violating it—because his government is the democracy.

Chávez's appearance dispelled rumors that he had left the country, or was meeting with Cuba's Fidel Castro on some Caribbean island.

On the other side, the opposition movement has been gaining political steam. An estimated 200 military officers have come out in support of the rebellion, most of them staying in the Altamira Plaza, in order to avoid arrest. The civilian and military opposition leadership have agreed that neither will take action separate from the other.

Malaysia Rejects IMF, Globalization

Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi lashed out at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), in Mexico on Oct. 25. The designated successor to Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, when he steps down next year, Abdullah is normally more reserved on such issues, but now appears to be picking up Dr. Mahathir's approach.

"Globalization is not the universal and unmitigated good that it was once portrayed to be," he said. "Malaysia does not believe in the prevailing orthodoxy of the Washington Consensus and the IMF. We should not use ailing institutions to heal sick economies. Malaysia advocates a policy of 'prosper thy neighbor.' Such an approach benefits all in the long run. Economic problems cannot be solved by economics alone, as the damage caused by IMF remedies has proven. . . . Another financial crisis can wreak havoc on countries. There is no guarantee that such turmoil will not recur in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis."