

International Intelligence

Ukraine, Not Russia, Cut Gas to Freezing Europe

An economic and humanitarian emergency began across southern Europe Jan. 6, after the government-run Naftohaz of Ukraine cut the flow of Russian natural gas in three pipelines across Ukrainian territory, which supply the Russian firm Gazprom's customers in Turkey, the Balkans, and other European countries. Some affected parts of eastern Europe are in the grip of a deep cold wave, with temperatures as low as -4°F.

The dispute between Naftohaz and Gazprom escalated Jan. 1, when Gazprom stopped supplying Ukraine itself with gas, due to outstanding debt and the lack of a contract, and it has been complicated by faction fights between the Ukrainian President and Prime Minister. But the outstanding feature of the situation is that the Ukrainian government, which has left southern Europe freezing, is being advised on financial and economic policy by megaspeculator and British agent George Soros, during this same period.

British geopolitical strategy outlets, including the London *Economist*, have repeatedly trumpeted their hopes for a Russia-Ukraine showdown to force all Eurasia onto the agenda of a new empire, run through the European Union and NATO.

NATO Pays Taliban to Get Supplies into Afghanistan

Taliban militants have struck terror into the container business that handles NATO supplies passing through Pakistan on their way to Afghanistan, and have virtually crippled the operation. In December, they destroyed some 400 containers carrying food, fuel, and military vehicles. Zia ul-Haq Sarhadi, the chairman of the standing committee for the dry port of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce (the chamber for Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, bordering Afghanistan), confirmed in a

press statement that the surge of attacks on the 11 terminals in Peshawar had created so much fear that people associated with handling the containers, contractors, and drivers will not do their jobs.

The 40,000 NATO troops in Afghanistan, of which 14,000 are American, have found a convenient way to get around this problem. NATO has begun paying bribes to get the supplies across. A recent Canadian report points out that NATO is paying the Taliban to guarantee the security of these supply routes. "We estimate that approximately 25% of the money we pay for security to get the fuel in goes into the pockets of the Taliban," said one fuel importer. Another boss, whose company is subcontracted to supply Western military bases, said that as much as a quarter of the value of a truck's cargo was paid to Taliban commanders. "The Taliban come and move with the convoy. They sit in the front vehicle of the convoy to ensure security."

Indian PM Vows To Double Spending on Science

In a speech before the Indian Science Congress, held in Shillong Jan. 3, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that he has promised that the government would double investment in science to 2% of national income. "I stand by the promise," he said, as reported in the Jan. 4 *Business Standard*.

"Our civilization was built on the foundations of a knowledge-based society. . . . The challenge before us is to ensure that . . . the light of modern education touches all, and at the same time, the pursuit of excellence is encouraged and cherished." He reviewed the milestones of the government in scientific research and education over the past four years, including launching five new institutes dedicated to "teaching and research in [the] sciences. This marks a historic turning point for Indian science," he said. This year also marked the first launch of an Indian scientific satellite into deep space, the Chan-

drayaan-1 spacecraft, which is orbiting the Moon.

The Prime Minister stated that "the best science is done by young people." Thus, India's institutions "must promote younger talent and allow youth to lead. Seniority and age may be relevant in bureaucratic systems, but scientific institutions must be led by creative intellectual leaders, irrespective of their age." He urged that India "build a truly knowledge-based society and a science-based economy."

See *Economics*, however, for a report on the limitations of the Prime Minister's economic policies.

Malaysia's Mahathir: 'Close Financial Casinos'

Malaysia's former Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad marked the New Year by publishing an open letter to U.S. President-elect Barack Obama. Among other reforms, Mahathir advised the President-elect: "Stop the casinos which you call financial institutions. Stop hedge funds, derivatives, and currency trading. Stop banks from lending non-existent money by the billions."

The feisty Mahathir, known for challenging drug-pushing speculator George Soros and Al "Hot Air" Gore, opened his remarks with a characteristic "I welcome your promise of change. Certainly your country, the United States of America, needs a lot of changes."

In addition to demanding the end of derivatives, hedge funds, and the creation of fake money, he said, "Regulate and supervise your banks. Jail the miscreants who made profits from abusing the system." Sounds like Lyndon LaRouche's call for a new Pecora Commission.

"Then," he added to Obama, "the United States will again be the most admired nation. Your embassies will be able to take down the high fences and razor-wire coils that surround them."

The full text of the letter can be read at Mahathir's blog, www.chedet.cc.