

International Intelligence

'Democracy in Russia is over,' says German daily

An editorial in the Jan. 27 issue of *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, one of Germany's leading dailies, proclaimed that democracy in Russia is over. The editorial blames this on shock therapist Yegor Gaidar: "Gaidar, following the bad advice of the international monetary organizations, present[ed] the people with shock therapy. The slogan was 'Democracy and Market Economy.' This has failed. Shock therapy has made the ultra-nationalists and communists the strongest parties." The editorial ridicules the Gaidar claim, much promoted by western "free market" apostles, that "reforms" would "reduce the state bureaucracy."

The Munich paper wrote: "Bureaucracy is now worse than ever, with up to four times as many people in the bureaucracy" as during Soviet times. The editorial concludes by saying that Russia is heading for some form of dirigism, though not using the word as such: "Russia is moving toward a dictatorship on a capitalist basis, with state control of key industries and banks." (Are any of those "Contract with America" fanatics listening?)

Mandela invokes special ties to Nehru's India

In a speech to Indian parliamentarians and foreign diplomats on Jan. 24, South African President Nelson Mandela paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, whose example he said helped South Africa end apartheid. Mandela cut back his initially planned four-day visit to India to just two days, reportedly due to pressing parliamentary business in South Africa and health problems. But he said, upon leaving New Delhi after talks with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao on Jan. 24: "These two days in which I have been in this country are among the happiest and most exciting in my life."

Nehru, Mandela said, "taught that narrow forms of nationalism, intense and pow-

erful as they may be in awakening people to struggle, are inadequate as a basis for achieving victory or for lasting peace." In the audience was Sonia Gandhi, the widow of Nehru's grandson, Rajiv Gandhi.

Mandela said the two countries were exploring opportunities in trade and investment, as well as cooperation in other areas. "But it would be proper in this gathering, and on this day, to ask ourselves if our shared heritage does not confer upon our two countries a special responsibility, to jointly commit ourselves to contributing to the emergence of a new world order in which democracy, peace, and prosperity prevail everywhere."

India was a staunch backer of the African National Congress, and the first country to impose sanctions on Pretoria for apartheid.

Beijing increases its influence in Hongkong

Hongkong Gov. Chris Patten admits that China already has greater influence in Hongkong than Britain, the British press reported. Patten told foreign correspondents in Hongkong on Jan. 23, just before traveling to Britain for a three-day visit: "Each day, as 1997 comes closer, individuals and businesses quite naturally are not looking primarily to Britain, not to the governor of Hongkong, but to China as the future sovereign to provide reassurances. . . . There comes a point, and I suspect that it is come, when my reassurances about the business atmosphere or related matters after 1997 are rather less important to investors and businessmen than what Chinese officials say."

Patten also for the first time publicly alluded to the possible death of Chinese communist supremo Deng Xiaoping in the near future: "Whoever the principal leaders are in Beijing, they will face the same agenda here and throughout China in the next few years. I hope decisions will not be delayed or postponed, and I am sure that the leadership in China will continue with the spectacular Deng Xiaoping economic revolution."

A few days before, Deng's daughter broke all precedents by alluding to the feeble state of her nonagenarian father in statements to the press.

Mexican bishops more and more at odds with Ruiz

Bishop Emeritus Genaro Alamilla of Papanla, Veracruz, told reporters on Jan. 25 that San Cristóbal, Chiapas Bishop Samuel Ruiz is spiritually close to the EZLN—the terrorist Zapatista National Liberation Army—and that anyone with proof of his role in inspiring the EZLN should come forward.

Alamilla said that Canon Law 401 provides for retiring a bishop if there is a serious reason. "The Holy See has all the information on the conflict" in Chiapas, "and the moment will come when it sees the convenience of his retirement."

During a recent meeting of the Mexican Bishops Conference, Alamilla related to the press, he asked Ruiz where the rebels got their money and Ruiz replied, only after a long silence, "from the savings of the Indians." When Alamilla pointed out that the Chiapas bishop himself had repeatedly said that the starving Indians have no savings, Ruiz remained speechless.

Alamilla also said that it was past time for the Mexican government to put an end to the EZLN insurrection in Chiapas. "Enough weakness!" he said, noting that twice the Army had the insurgents within their grasp but was given orders to back off.

Meanwhile, Bishop Samuel Ruiz, who is widely reputed to be the real "comandante" for the insurgents, held a "synod" for theology of liberation and schismatic bishops from Paraguay, Chile, and Mexico. At a press conference on Jan. 27, Ruiz praised the EZLN for its role in changing the Mexican political system. He insisted that "achievements obtained on the way toward the emergence of autochthonous churches must be consolidated." Two weeks before, the Mexican Bishops Conference had issued a document rejecting the concept of the autochthonous church as "unviable."

Briefly

Hamas leader secretly visited Washington

The *Sawt al-Sha'b* newspaper of Amman wrote in its Jan. 19 issue that despite the veil of secrecy thrown over the visit, "leaked information indicates that Dr. Abu-Mazruq, head of Hamas's Political Bureau, was in Washington" recently and met with "senior advisers of President Bill Clinton." The Jordanian newspaper wrote that this could be an attempt by the United States to convince Hamas to "join the march of political settlement."

The official spokesman for Hamas, the militant Islamist group active in the Palestinian community, Ibrahim Ghawshah, has neither confirmed nor denied the report.

Regardless of the degree of the conflict between Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority or between Hamas and Israel, Abu-Mazruq's secret visit to Washington constitutes a dramatic change in the conflict between the movement on the one hand and Israel and Washington on the other, said *Sawt al-Sha'b*.

Contact group suspends negotiations in Bosnia

Envoys of the five-nation contact group—Russia, the United States, Britain, France, and Germany—have suspended negotiations and decided to leave Bosnia and head home, the U.S. State Department said on Jan. 27. State Department spokesman Christine Shelly said that there has been "a very serious violation" of the cease-fire, with Serb forces firing rockets into Sarajevo—which she said was "substantially more than . . . reported by Unprofor." She also said the Serbs are continuing to refuse to accept the contact group plan.

The Jan. 28 *Washington Post* observed that this "marks a breakdown in the talks initiated by former President Jimmy Carter in December."

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic

was headed to Washington on Jan. 28 to press for a lifting of the arms embargo against Bosnia. There is bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress for such a move.

Meanwhile, Lt. Gen. Sir Michael Rose, back in London after ending his year-long command of the U.N. Protection Forces in Bosnia, warned on Jan. 27 that lifting the arms embargo would be catastrophic. And just as the cease-fire and all negotiations were breaking down, Rose expressed optimism that the present cease-fire could hold, saying that the two sides "have a serious intent towards peace. . . . Both sides are treating this much more than just one more cease-fire."

As reported in the Feb. 3 issue of *EIR*, Rose's exit coincides with pressures for a pullout of U.N. peacekeeping forces in the near term, and a potential military shift in favor of the Bosnian government.

Say Germany could be Russia's 'advocate'

Aleksandr Rahr of the German Foreign Policy Society wrote a commentary in the Russian newspaper *Sevodnya*, calling for Germany to be Russia's advocate in Europe. Rahr began by noting that compliance with U.S. demands, including "following the advice and recommendations of the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the World Bank . . . to the detriment of its industrial interests," had not led to integration with Europe the way Russia had hoped it would.

In the Dec. 23 issue of *Sevodnya*, in an article titled "A European Path for Russia. Moscow's Natural Partner Could Only Be Bonn," Rahr noted that the Bush-Gorbachov idea of "a new allocation of spheres of influence with the United States" had not worked. "The most promising way for Russia," insists Rahr, "is a close partnership with Germany," which "could help Russia to surmount its isolation to a large extent. But Russia's convergence with Germany here may only occur in conjunction with, not in defiance of, the European Union."

● **THE CONGRESS** Party of India is so unpopular with voters, that Muslims in Bombay prefer the Hindu chauvinist Shiv Sena, which has led anti-Muslim riots, according to a recent poll. Bombay statewide elections come up later this month. The Rao government and its Congress Party have taken a drubbing at the polls in several states, for campaigning on the strength of their "economic reforms."

● **AUSTRIA** joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program on Jan. 31, in a sharp change from its post-1955 policy of strict neutrality. It will be an important logistical transfer point by air or rail for NATO reinforcements into the Balkans or Italy.

● **ANGOLA'S** central highlands, the former stronghold of the rebel forces of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, recently fell to government troops. In late January, cease-fire consolidation talks took place there between the government and UNITA. Savimbi still controls about 50,000 troops.

● **CHOLERA** and measles have broken out in several places in La Guajira and Choco provinces and the Buenaventura port farther south on Colombia's impoverished Pacific coast, leaving at least 10 dead. Last year, cholera claimed 986 victims in Colombia; 14 died.

● **FREYA BARSCHEL**, who requested the private forensic inquiry that has led to a reopened probe into the 1987 death of her husband Uwe Barschel, woke up late on Jan. 20 when a tire was mysteriously set afire outside her home. Uwe Barschel, the state governor of Schleswig-Holstein, was enmeshed in an East-West weapons network tied to the U.S. "secret government" around George Bush.

● **HESSE**, the German state that includes Frankfurt, will hold elections Feb. 19; the Social Democratic-Green government is expected to do poorly.