Presidency

Kokoshin's in, Baturin's blasting off?
President Yel'tsin has chosen Deputy Defense Minister Andrei Kokoshin to replace Yuri Baturin as Secretary of the Defense Council. (Interfax, 28 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-240) Kokoshin will also head up a newly-created State Military Inspectorate within the presidential administration. Yuri Baturin, who retains his position as a presidential aide, is said to have been tasked with looking into the situation aboard the Mir Space Station. While some reports indicate that Baturin has undergone cosmonaut training (ITAR-TASS, 26 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-238), it seems unlikely that he will be carrying out an on-site inspection. It would appear that supervision of the crisis-ridden space station has become the administrative exile once represented by oversight of the agricultural sector.

President Yel'tsin has also once again postponed the meeting on military reform from mid-September to October. (ITAR-TASS, 18 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-240)

Apparat

General Dima (Yakubovsky) gives rambling prison interview
Dmitri Yakubovsky, currently imprisoned on theft charges, provided his unique insights into Kremlin intrigues in an interview published by Moskovsky komsomolets (1 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-245). Claiming his arrest was politically motivated, Yakubovsky blames former presidential bodyguard and security services' chief Aleksandr Korzhakov for his imprisonment. Korzhakov and former
FSB head Mikhail Barsukov are also responsible for the bloody confrontation with
the parliament in 1993 and the war in Chechnya, according to Yakubovsky.

Yakubovsky, who may be best known for his involvement in the whirl of
corruption charges that spiraled around former Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi
and several other top Kremlin officials in the Spring and Summer of 1993, claims
authorship of a plan to resolve the conflict between the president and parliament.
His suggestion was to woo opposition members over to the president's side.
Korzhakov and Barsukov however, corrupted his recommendation: "They took
the mechanism proposed and instead of switching people over, they simply
destroyed them."

Beyond expressing his bitterness over his imprisonment and his hostility towards
"Sasha and Misha," Yakubovsky raises an interesting issue in his discussion of
the Russian criminal court system and investigatory agencies, specifically in the
vast authority of the MVD. Citing the MVD's responsibilities in "The prison
system, the investigation, and the operatives," Yakubovsky suggests separating
out control of the prisons from the investigatory bodies. He also notes the
ineffectual supervisory role of the procuracy, which frequently works with the
MVD in investigations. He further warns of a revanche of anti-presidential forces,
particularly within the procuracy.

GOVERNMENT
Rosvooruzheniye's reorganization detailed
The state arms trading company, Rosvooruzheniye, has apparently received
more than just a new general director (Yevgeni Ananyev); it will also be
substantially reorganized. Dividing the company according to three of its main
functions, two new companies are to be founded with a revamped
Rosvooruzheniye maintaining control over the sphere of major contracts and
weapons exports. Of the two new companies, "Promexport" will sell older
technology armaments and spare parts and "Russian Technology" will deal with licensing. (ITAR-TASS, 24 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-236)

It also appears that Rosvooruzheniye, which previously was administered by the presidential apparat, has now firmly been established as a government-run organization. Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has recently had supervisory control over the organization, and the president's decrees on reorganization seem to acknowledge this relationship.

**Nemtsov acknowledges problems with privatization, discusses Chubais**

In an interview with Moskovsky komsomolets (19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-233), First Deputy Premier Boris Nemtsov described the differences among the government’s top leaders as providing a reflection of the "current state of Russia: Chernomyrdin, who represents Russia Is Our Home, Chubais, who to a certain degrees represents Russia's Choice, and I, as a non-party person who is nevertheless close to the Yabloko bloc." Nemtsov apparently would not consider the party array visible in the parliament as perhaps more representative of the "current state of Russia."

When asked about the conduct of privatization auctions, both this summer’s much-disputed Svyazinvest and Norilsk Nickel tenders as well as previous auctions, Nemtsov sounded his now familiar theme of moving on from mistakes in the past. "All that was once created on the basis of exclusivity is now receding into oblivion and is being replaced by natural rules."

Prompted to comment on Anatoli Chubais, Nemtsov calls him "one of the finest administrators that I have ever seen." While ascribing the dislike for Chubais to his red hair, Nemtsov also acknowledges that Chubais "is a hostage to the economic and social situation in the country," whose reputation is likely to remain linked to changes in people’s living standard.
Russian Federation: Foreign Relations
By Chandler Rosenberger

U.S. hopes pacts on theater missile defense will help Duma pass Start II
American arms control negotiators are hopeful that recent breakthroughs on short-range anti-missile defense systems will encourage the Russian Duma to ratify the Start II treaty on nuclear warheads and delivery systems. But Republicans in the U.S. Congress are concerned that the United States has given away too much, objecting especially to the pledge not to develop space-based anti-missile systems. Negotiators from the U.S. and four ex-Soviet republics completed the texts of five agreements at a meeting of the Standing Consultative Commission (SCC) that ended on 21 August. Russia, Ukraine, Kazakstan, Belarus and the U.S. are members of the SCC. The commission's largest task has been to find language that allows the development of theater-based anti-missile systems without violating the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Treaty. The SCC's member-states agreed in March that target missiles used in testing such weapons may only travel at about three miles per second and may only have a range of 2,200 miles. The agreement also states that no nation may develop, test or deploy a space-based missile defense system, long a favorite of Republican congressmen. (Reuters, 31 Aug 97; Johnson's Russia List #1162) On 2 September, Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeev called on the Duma to ratify the Start II Treaty promptly. (Associated Press, 2 Sep 97; Johnson's Russia List #1168).

Russia, suspected of testing a nuclear bomb, claims "earthquake" detected
Monitors of nuclear explosions suspect that Russian may have detonated a device near the Russian island of Novaya Zemlya on 16 August, in violation of a five-year-old self-imposed moratorium. But Russian officials claim that the seismic activity was an "underwater earthquake." Unsatisfied with the Russian denial, the U.S. government, through its embassy in Moscow, asked for a full
explanation of the event on 28 August. Officials familiar with the monitoring of nuclear tests told The Washington Times that the international monitoring system was designed to filter out earthquakes. The seismic event was detected at ground zero, rather than beneath the surface where most earthquakes occur. Russia imposed its own moratorium on nuclear tests when it signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1992. The treaty has been signed by 140 nations but has not yet come into force. Neither the U.S. Senate nor the Russian Duma has yet ratified the treaty. The Clinton Administration intends to submit the treaty for ratification this fall. (Washington Times, 28 Aug 97) Analyzing the Russian denial, the Jamestown Foundation pointed out that Viktor Mikhailov, Russia's minister of atomic energy, led a team of military and civilian experts to examine the site at the end of July, at which time American spy satellites and seismic monitors also detected suspicious activity. (Monitor, 3 Sep 97).

**Lebed says Russian government has lost more than 100 "suitcase" nukes**

Aleksandr Lebed, Russia's former head of national security, accused the Russian government of losing more than 100 suitcase-sized nuclear weapons. "I don't know their location," Lebed said in an interview with "Sixty Minutes." "I don't know whether they have been destroyed or whether they are stored or whether they've been sold or stolen." But they were "not under the control of the armed forces of Russia." The former general said he suspected that they may have been left in former Soviet republics, such as Ukraine, Georgia or the Baltics. Lebed's claim was swiftly denied by the Russian defense ministry and by the prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, who described it as "absolute stupidity," and "totally out of the question." Speaking at a European security summit in Lithuania, the premier said that all Russia's nuclear weapons were accounted for by the armed forces. (The Independent (UK), 6 Sep 97; Johnson's Russia List #1178)

**Primakov appointed head of commission on NATO**

At the end of August, Russian president Boris Yeltsin appointed Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov as head of an inter-ministerial commission on cooperation with
NATO. Primakov was instructed to draft a statute on cooperation among the ministries which he thought would have input into Russia's positions at monthly meetings with NATO officials, as provided for under the NATO-Russia "Founding Act." (Informatsionnoye agentstvo ekho moskvy, 1517 GMT, 27 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-239) Primakov was given the additional responsibilities in contradiction to claims of Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenka that Primakov would soon be fired. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 0703 GMT, 28 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-240).

**Russia denies Israeli claim that it provides missile technology to Iran**

Despite the accusations of Israeli journalists, Russia is not helping Tehran develop guidance and delivery systems for long-range ballistic missiles, Foreign Ministry spokesman Valerii Nesterushkin said on 26 August. The comments followed a report on Israeli television two days earlier that claimed that hundreds of Russian scientists were at work in Iran on the project. While on an official state visit to Japan, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed concern about such cooperation. British diplomats interviewed by Izvestia warned that "unintentional" technology transfers could result from apparently civilian cooperation. (RIA Novosti izvestia, 27 Aug 97; Johnson's Russia List #1152)

**Claims of renewed cooperation with Japan despite pursuit of fishing boats**

A five-year program for cooperation between Japan and Russia's three Far Eastern regions was signed on 26 August, despite continuing pursuit of Japanese fishing vessels by Russian border guard ships. The program, signed by Hokkaido Prefecture Governor Tatsuya Hori and the administration heads of the Primorye (Maritime), Khabarovsk territories and the Sakhalin Region in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, is to open trade and cultivate business contacts across the national border. (ITAR-TASS, 1212 GMT, 3 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-246) On the day of the agreement's signing, a Russian border patrol ship chased four Japanese fishing boats away from a point off Sakhalin Island about 12 kilometers inside Russian waters. (RFE/RL Newsline, 27 Aug 97)
Russia agrees to sell China $100 million in weapons

A Chinese general visiting Moscow on 27 August signed an agreement to purchase $100 million worth of weapons, including spare parts, and discussed plans for further purchases with Russian premier Viktor Chernomyrdin. Gen Liu, a member of the powerful committee of the Chinese politburo, reportedly sought to purchase licenses to produce the powerful Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jet. (Financial Times (UK), 28 Aug 97; Johnson's Russia List #1153).

Russia signs arms deal with Ukraine as NATO enacts revised scenario

Just as NATO troops were conducting a revised version of a war game -- an earlier scenario had been a thinly veiled plan to repel Russian attacks on Ukrainian soil -- Moscow and Kiev signed cooperation agreements on military intelligence and quality of munitions. Under the agreement, signed on 26 August in Kiev, Russia and Ukraine pledged not to spy on each other. At a joint news conference, Russian defense minister Igor Sergeev said the two sides had not resolved the outstanding issue of Soviet strategic bombers taken over by Ukraine after independence. (Interfax, 26 Aug 97; Johnson's Russia List #1152). The deal came as NATO troops were conducting "Operation Sea Breeze," a rehearsal of a military response to an imagined earthquake in the Crimea. The original scenario, in which NATO troops help Ukraine fend off a grab for the Crimea by "the orange country," was scrapped when Moscow complained it was provocative. The Crimea is 90 percent ethnic Russian. (Los Angeles Times, 29 Aug 97; Johnson's Russia List #1157).

Comment

Is this the time to drop anti-missile defense?

The administration's timing might have been better. In the face of rumors of missing nuclear devices, possible illegal explosive tests and fears that Russia is helping Iran develop medium-to-long range missiles, the White House has signed an agreement limiting the range of tests the United States may conduct in
preparing an anti-ballistic rocket defense. U.S. allies such as Israel now fear not only that the United States is turning a blind eye to Russia's indiscriminate weapons sales, but that it is also dropping its own shield.

But the administration's agreement to limited anti-ballistic testing would be wrong-headed even if the headlines were not so ominous, since its premises simply defy the laws of international diplomacy. The Duma does not cling to Russia's nuclear arsenal because its Communist leaders fear an assault from "Star Wars," anymore than they oppose the expansion of NATO because they want to protect Russian soil. Both "Star Wars" and NATO expansion are, after all, defensive systems. The only thing each threatens is Russia's ability to bully its neighbors. Peace, then, will not come from the massaging of the Communists' wounded egos, but rather from the elimination of revanchism as a Russian option. Only then will democrats in Moscow have a strong case to make against futilely seeking glory in the prestige of raw power.

Russian Federation: Political Parties and Legislative Branch
By Michael Thurman

The removal of the Tver Oblast governor is under discussion
A group of citizens is collecting signatures in favor of a referendum on the recall of the oblast's governor. The governor, Vladimir Platov [a "democrat"] beat the Communist incumbent in the December 1995 election. The support for Platov was more of a vote for change than it was a vote for the "democratic" camp. The region is terribly poor and from time to time shuts down the October Railroad just to remind Moscow that the area still exists.
At issue is the [in]competence of the present governor. Within a few short years he has managed to alienate almost everyone within earshot. The now circulating petition for a referendum is the result of one of those temporary alliances between sworn enemies when a common foe crops up. Neither the "democrats" nor the communists/nationalists have any love for Platov, both having seen him as a man who has not declared his loyalty for one side or the other and is therefore mutually suspect. For all of Platov's bumbling attempts at autocratic rule making, he does seem well-intentioned.

The failure of a financial institution as well as the rather creative embezzlement of municipal bonds by a former aide, are the catalysts for this move. However, as no other person is commonly acceptable to the forces allied against Platov, he may survive as the "known evil." In fact, a wise Platov may be presented with a chance to divide and conquer the opposition presently arrayed against him in the moment of their failure. But given his wide-eyed ideas for the future, i.e., the resurrection of the zemstvo, he will most likely ignore the opportunity (Obshchaya gazeta, 10-16 Jul 97; FBIS-SOV-97-205)

Scandal surrounds Irkutsk candidates
Welcome to the wild, wild East. After Aleksandr Rossov, head of the Irkutsk Directorate for Internal Affairs, announced that candidate Ivan Shadov had been convicted on rape charges, Shadov's dacha was set on fire by an unknown arsonist. Another candidate, Viktor Mashinski, has asked the regional electoral commission to look into cases of violations in the pre-election campaign. He said that his aides and canvassers are being prevented from meeting the electorate. And finally, all posters supporing Irukutsk's current mayor Boris Govorin have been destroyed. About 50 citizens were detained by the police for breaking campaigning laws. Funny, it seems that the communist candidate was the only one to remain unaffected.
Some of this tomfoolery is clearly the result of the fact that Irkutsk seems to be a prize worth fighting for, judging by the national attention it has received. From Zyuganov to Lebed, national political figures were seen around town trying to give their candidate a boost. (NTV, 1200 GMT, 25 Jul 97; FBIS-SOV-97-206)

On 26 July 1997, former Irkutsk mayor Boris Govorin, backed by the pro-government party Our Home is Russia, collected over 50% of the votes. Only about 19% of the electorate voted for the chairman of the local Russian Communist Party organization, Sergei Levchenko. Lebed's man, the coal magnate Ivan Shadov, lost by a wide margin. The results of this election can only mean that the enlistment of persons of national reputation to support one's political candidacy has its limits -- if not detriments. Clearly, all politics are local and the more organized a candidate's campaign -- as some have noted of Govorin's -- the greater the chance for success. This seems to be a lesson that sadly needs to be repeated for many Russian political forces. (Interfax, 1033 GMT, 28 Jul 97; FBIS-SOV-97-209)

Newly Independent States: CIS

By Mark Jones

Supra-national organization expands powers
Rossiyskaya gazeta carried a story in its 2 August edition about the growing responsibilities of the CIS Crime Prevention Bureau (FBIS-SOV-97-161). The organization, initially set up in April 1993 as the Bureau for Coordinating the Fight Against Organized Crime and Other Dangerous Types of Crimes, has been expanding its functions. It recently added an analysis section and is building a database on "criminal formations, bosses...organizers of inter-regional criminal societies [and] persons hiding from the law." The bureau is headquartered, of course, in Moscow, is composed of representatives of CIS countries' Internal Affairs Ministries, and is led by a Russian major general.
ITAR-TASS carried a similar story on 29 August about plans being made for a joint meeting of "major bodies" to be held in Moscow on 2-3 December. The objective of this meeting is reported to be "cooperation in the implementation of the inter-state program for the fight against organized crime" (FBIS-SOV-97-241). The gathering will be chaired by the Russian prosecutor-general and will include representatives from the CIS Coordinating Council of Prosecutors-General, Council of Interior Ministers, Council of Chiefs of Security Agencies and Special Services, Council of Heads of Customs Services, Council of Commanders of Border Troops, and the tax police chiefs. It is hard to determine how these organizations differ in purpose from each other, or from the recently formed CIS intelligence service. All seem to be pursuing similar objectives, and these are some of the same objectives originally assigned to the 1st Chief Directorate of the KGB.

**Dates for the next CIS summit set**

The next session of the CIS Council of Heads of State will be held in Chisinau, Moldova, on 20 and 21 November (Belapan, 18 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-230). The Council of CIS Heads of Government will meet in Bishkek on 9 October (Belapan, 19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-231). This would be unexceptional news if it weren't for the fact that the CIS charter calls for these meeting to be held on specific days, and not on the whim of the Russian chairman of the council. We can also see the amount of authority, or lack thereof, that CIS Executive Secretary Ivan Korotchenya has when it comes to trying to administer and execute the provisions of the CIS Charter. Korotchenya was able to schedule the meetings only after he obtained the approval of Russian President Boris Yel'tsin and Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin. It would seem that the opinion of no other national leader, nor Korotchenya himself, matters much when it comes to the workings of the CIS executive agencies.

**1992 defense policy revisited**
If the new Russian defense minister has his way, there will be a "single defense space in the CIS." According to him, "There is no other way out at present" (Interfax, 23 Aug 97; FBIS-UMA-97-235). Igor Sergeev made the comments while observing tactical exercises in North Ossetia. This "single space" policy is, of course, the exact defense policy Russia tried to impose immediately after the creation of the CIS in December 1991.

**New Russian minister for CIS affairs appointed**

According to Interfax (28 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-240), President Yel'tsin appointed Anatoli Adamishin to fill the post of minister for cooperation with CIS member countries, the post vacated by Aman Tuleev in July. Adamishin, a 62-year-old man born in Kiev, was serving as Russia's ambassador to Great Britain before being appointed to his new duties.

**Newly Independent States: Western Region**

By Mark Jones

**MOLDOVA**

**Military cooperation planned**

Chisinau's Infotag reported on 13 August 1997 that Moldova's chief of general staff, Colonel Vladimir Dontul, would be meeting with Ukraine’s acting defense minister, Ivan Bejan, to discuss several topics. Items on the agenda include cooperation between the two nation's military ministries, training of Moldovan staff officers in Ukrainian institutions, and the possible formation of a Moldo-Ukrainian battalion for use in peace-making operations. The officials will also discuss the use of Ukrainian soldiers in the Dniester region.

Dniester authorities acting independently

Aleksander Karamen, vice president of the breakaway Dniester region, acted like a vice president of a sovereign country recently when he claimed that his "republic" would delimit its borders with her neighboring countries. Karamen
considered Ukraine and Moldova as neighbors, disregarding all internationally accepted agreements that Dniester is part of Moldova. (Basapress, 21 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-234).

Dniester officials also angered the commander of Russian troops in the area by protesting planned joint Russian-Moldovan military exercises scheduled for October. Several officials appealed to the commander not to provide equipment for the exercises, insisting that the equipment "belongs to the Dniester region and 'is temporarily in the use of the Russian Army.'" The Russian commander, in turn, issued a statement accusing local Dniester authorities of "whipping up tension" and demanded that they stop making claims on Russian property (ITAR-TASS, 13 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-225).

UKRAINE

Morozov expresses his views
Kostyantyn Morozov, former minister of defense and now the counselor-envoy of the Ukrainian Embassy in the Benelux, clearly stated his views on how to guarantee Ukraine's security. Molod Ukrayiny (10 Jul 97; FBIS-SOV-97-225) reported that Morozov said, "The guarantees of our independence lie in integration into the future architecture of the Common European Security System."

Uncertain days for Ukrainian general officers
On 27 August, UNIAR reported that President Leonid Kuchma recently signed decrees appointing 40 new generals, eleven of the whom were detailed to the staff of the Defense Ministry (FBIS-UMA-97-239). But those officers preparing to pin on stars might have been shaken when, on the same day, ITAR-TASS reported that the Ukrainian defense ministry will be reduced by 1,000 people, and more than 100 general officer billets will be abolished.
President Kuchma also signed a decree distributing and delineating powers between the defense ministry and the general staff. In particular, the order provides for the appointment of chief of general staff by a presidential decree. Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council, Volodymyr Horbulin, said that the decree defines the general staff as "an agency in charge of arranging for defense and effective troop control." He also noted that the order provides for "duplication," providing for "government and civilian control of the army" (Interfax, 28 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-240).

**Sea-Breeze and Sergeev**

Ukraine participated in the NATO Sea Breeze '97 exercises during the past few weeks. The maneuvers were condemned by Russian leaders and protested by ethnic Russians living in Ukraine, especially in Crimea. The exercises, however, went forward as scheduled and by most accounts they were successful. But this wasn't the only maneuvering going on in Ukraine. As ITAR-TASS reported (29 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-241), Russia's defense minister, Igor Sergeev, paid a "historic" visit to Kiev while the exercises were in full swing. According to the paper, Kiev gave a red-carpet reception to Sergeev and reiterated Ukraine's "strategic partnership" with Moscow. Apparently Mr. Sergeev understands that timing is everything.

Newly Independent States: Caucasus

By Miriam Lanskoy

**ARMENIA**

**Armenia's Communist party pushes forward union plans**

A recent poll found that almost one-third of Armenians favor Armenia joining the Russian-Belarusian union. The People's Patriotic Bloc, an umbrella organization led by the Communist party, conducted the poll. The Communist parliamentary faction intends to submit the poll's findings in a draft law to the new session of
parliament and initiate legislation for holding a national referendum on the issue. (Radio Rossii Network, 1300 GMT, 16 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-228) In addition, the Communists have collected 800,000 signatures on a petition supporting a Russia-Belarus-Armenia union. (Respublika Armenia, 19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-233)

**Armenia and Russia form military alliance**

On 29 August President Yel'tsin and President Ter-Petrosyan signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance. Under the terms of the treaty, the parties will lend each other military assistance in the event of a security threat or armed attack. The states will expand military cooperation and consult each other if threatened with armed attack. They will also coordinate their military-technical policies, including standardizing military hardware production. They will continue to cooperate closely on foreign policy and joint protection of Armenia's non-CIS borders. The treaty goes into force upon ratification for a 25-year term. If neither side terminates the treaty it is automatically prolonged for 10 years. (Interfax, 1045 GMT, 29 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-241) On 1 September, Russia announced that it would lend Armenia 249 billion rubles to ensure the safety of Armenia's nuclear power station. (Interfax, 1631 GMT, 1 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-244)

Azerbaijani diplomats, who have reasons to regard their country as the treaty's primary target, rapidly aired their apprehensions. Azerbaijan's foreign minister, Hasan Hasanov, made a representation to the Russian ambassador in Baku, Aleksander Blokhin, expressing "bewilderment " and "concern" over the document which "put the main emphasis on military cooperation between the two countries." (Interfax, 1824 GMT, 1 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-244)

Two weeks earlier, Armenia agreed to participate in a tripartite (Armenia, Russia, Azerbaijan) commission to investigate this Spring's revelation that Russia transferred illegally $1 billion in military aid to Armenia since the 1994 cease-fire.
(Snark, 1600 GMT 19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-232) The new treaty suggests that those activities are now likely to be legalized.

Newly Independent States: Central Asia

By Monika Shepherd

TAJIKISTAN

Renegade Tajik colonel forced to flee as his supporters surrender

Zafar Saidov, President Rahmonov's press secretary, announced that Colonel Mahmud Khudoiberdiev's forces had been completely defeated on 19 August, following their voluntary surrender to Tajik government troops the previous day near the district (oblast') capital Qabodiyon (200 km southwest of Dushanbe, not far from either the Uzbek or Afghan borders). Col. Khudoiberdiev himself had not surrendered, nor had he been captured yet, and although Saidov was unable to pinpoint his location, he quoted unconfirmed reports which claimed that Khudoiberdiev and a number of his closest supporters (reports of the precise number range from 40 to 100) had fled to Uzbekistan (Interfax, 0822 GMT, 19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-231). According to another report, Col. Khudoiberdiev was seen approaching the Uzbek border by Uzbek guards, who alleged that he was wounded (Clandestine Voice of Free Tajikistan, 0230 GMT, 21 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-233). The Uzbek foreign ministry has denied all claims that the colonel has crossed the border into Uzbekistan (ITAR-TASS, 1412 GMT, 20 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-232).

According to Deputy Defense Minister Abdullo Habibov, at least 700 of Col. Khudoiberdiev's 1500 troops had voluntarily given up their arms and surrendered to Tajik government forces. These men were not to be punished for their actions while under Col. Khudoiberdiev's command, but would be given the choice of either demobilizing or joining Tajik government military units. Habibov also stated that he believed that Khudoiberdiev was hiding in the mountains in Tajikistan,
and that there was no possibility that he might have been able to flee into Uzbekistan, although he and 60-70 of his supporters had attempted to cross the border on the evening of 18 August, near the Uzbek village of Sangou. Uzbek border guards were able to repel Khudoiberdiev and his men, and the group then withdrew in a northwesterly direction, after which government search groups lost track of them (Interfax, 1208 GMT, 19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-231).

Col. Khudoiberdiev began moving his forces to Qabodiyon on 15 August (Interfax, 1557 GMT, 15 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-227), after having been driven out of his brigade's permanent headquarters near the town of Qurghonteppa by Tajik government troops. Khudoiberdiev left a few of his supporters in Qabodiyon, but moved his main contingent 20 km further south to the district of Shahrtuz (Radio Rossii Network, 0000 GMT, 17 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-229).

There were reports that Yaqubjon Salimov (the former chairman of the national customs committee, who was driven out of Dushanbe by Colonel Suhrob Qosimov of the Tajik Interior Ministry during the first half of August -- see Editorial Digest on Central Asia for 1-15 August 1997) was trying to mobilize some 500 of his forces in southern Tajikistan, in order to come to Col. Khudoiberdiev's aid (ITAR-TASS, 0705 GMT, 16 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-228), but apparently his endeavors were unsuccessful.

**Tajik government forces launched a large-scale operation against**

Khudoiberdiev's group in their new location. Due to Khudoiberdiev's inability to rally the local population to his support, defections from his ranks to the government troops, and the government forces' overwhelming strength in numbers and military equipment (ITAR-TASS, 1921 GMT, 17 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-229), the colonel's defeat seemed imminent by 18 August, when government troops destroyed his camp in Qabodiyon and then attacked his supporters in Shahrtuz, of whom there were purported to be not more than 100 left (according to Deputy Defense Minister Habibov) (ITAR-TASS, 1928 GMT, 18 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-230). Col. Khudoiberdiev's own whereabouts were already
in question at this point in time -- perhaps his men gave up without too much resistance because their commander and his officers were no longer in the area.

Comment
Colonel Khudoiberdiev's whereabouts were still unknown by the end of August, and it is not at all unlikely that he was able to escape the country and take refuge in either Uzbekistan or Afghanistan. Khudoiberdiev served in Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan war, and has controlled a significant portion of the Tajik-Afghan border for the past few years. Thus, he must know this area of the country very well and still has many allies there who would protect and support him. The colonel is also fairly well-acquainted with the Tajik-Afghan border area near Qurghonteppa, and there has been a great deal of speculation that he has allies in Uzbekistan who have been supplying him with weapons and other forms of aid. In fact, ITAR-TASS reported that the Tajik government suspected that Khudoiberdiev had received several large arms shipments from outside the country during his encampment in Qabodieyvon and Shahrtuz (ITAR-TASS, 0924 GMT, 18 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-230). In all of its official statements the Tajik government continued to affirm its faith in the ability and determination of the Uzbek border guards to keep Khudoiberdiev from crossing the border. In reality, however, there seem to be a number of people in the Tajik government who distrust Uzbekistan's intentions, and this will probably continue to provide a source of considerable tension for some time to come.

**National Reconciliation Commission's arrival in Dushanbe delayed again**
The National Reconciliation Commission, which originally was to arrive in Dushanbe at the end of July in order to begin implementing the steps set out in the inter-Tajik peace treaty, has postponed its arrival yet again, this time for security reasons. United Tajik Opposition (UTO) leader Said Abdullo Nuri's deputy, Davlat Usmon, announced on 27 August that the National Reconciliation Committee (NRC) delegates’ arrival has been postponed indefinitely because the UTO battalions which are to guard the NRC representatives during their work do
not have adequate housing. A group of experts came to inspect the buildings which the Tajik government had designated as the UTO troops' barracks on 21 August and concluded that the buildings were unsuitable for the UTO battalions' use, due to "military-technical" inadequacies and lack of security (ITAR-TASS, 0903 GMT, 27 Aug 97; FBIS-UMA-97-239).

200 UTO troops were slated to arrive in Dushanbe on 25 August from Tavildara (located east of Dushanbe, close to Gorno-Badakhshon Oblast'; it has become the UTO's in-country headquarters since December 1996). An additional 260 UTO troops were expected to be transferred to Dushanbe from Afghanistan shortly thereafter, and Nuri himself (who is to chair the NRC) planned to arrive before the end of August, whether or not the second group of UTO forces had arrived (Interfax, 24 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-236).

Rezvon Sodirov responsible for another kidnapping

Rezvon Sodirov is once trying to put pressure on the Tajik government, this time in order to force them to release his brother, Bahrom Sodirov, who is being held on criminal charges (he and his supporters took a number of Russian journalists, UN observers, Red Cross workers, and Tajik government officials hostage last February). In July, Sodirov kidnapped the two sons of Mufti Amonullo Negmatzoda, the head of the Muslim Center of Dushanbe, and on 24 August he took the mufti himself hostage, after luring him to a secret meeting outside Dushanbe (Interfax, 0638 GMT, 29 Aug 97; FBIS-TOT-97-241). Sodirov then issued an ultimatum to Tajik authorities, demanding the release of his brother by 30 August, in return for freeing the three hostages (ITAR-TASS, 0843 GMT, 29 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-241).

Comment

The source who released the news about the mufti's recent kidnapping to the media works in Tajikistan's interior ministry. It was also a commander of interior ministry troops who made a statement to the press in June, in which he predicted
that Rezvon Sodirov would stage another hostage-taking before the end of the summer, in order to secure his brother's freedom. This raises any number of questions about the extent of the interior ministry's knowledge of Rezvon Sodirov's whereabouts and activities, as well as bringing up the issue of why he has not yet been apprehended.

Local rogue UTO commanders breach cease-fire, attack police station

Rahmon "Hitler" Sanginov and Mansur Muakalov, both commanders of local United Tajik Opposition units stationed near Kofarnihon (a town located about 20 km east of Dushanbe), attacked the town's Internal Affairs Ministry post on 21 August as a reprisal for the arrest of three members of their units on 19 August. The battle between the opposition forces and the police lasted approximately four hours. Sanginov and Muakalov were able to take three servicemen hostage, and then demanded the release of the three opposition members. On 20 August, members of the UN mission and UTO representatives from the joint government-opposition commission which was established to monitor the implementation of the December 1996 cease-fire arrived in Kofarnihon, in order to negotiate with Sanginov and Muakalov. They were able to reach an agreement with the two opposition unit commanders to exchange the hostages for the arrested opposition members, and the exchange duly took place on 22 August (Interfax, 1150 GMT, 22 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-234).

On 27 August several UTO members were killed by Kofarnihon district police in Turkobod, a suburb of Kofarnihon (Radio Tajikistan Network, 1000 GMT, 29 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-241). Internal Affairs Ministry officials reported that a group of opposition members launched another armed attack on a militia checkpoint and that the men were killed in the exchange of fire (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1108 GMT, 27 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-239). However, UTO leader Said Abdullo Nuri informed RFE/RL's Tajik service that all of the men had been shot in the back without prior provocation (RFE/RL Newsline, 28 Aug 97). Representatives of the UN observer's mission and of the joint government-opposition cease-fire
monitoring commission were sent to Turkobod on 28 August in order to investigate the incident (Radio Tajikistan Network, 1000 GMT, 29 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-241).

**Newly Independent States: Baltic States**

By Kate Martin

**EU negotiation plans spur further talks**

Following the selection of only one Baltic State, Estonia, for negotiations with the European Union earlier this summer, neighboring countries have begun to weigh in with support for the inclusion of all three states at the same time. Working on the premise that greater Baltic Sea regional security needs supersede the very real differences between Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in terms of demographics, economies and domestic situations, Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen stated at a Nordic Council conference that Finland and the other Nordic countries share the clear goal of promoting the inclusion of the Baltic countries in the EU. (Suomen Yleisradio Network, 1430 GMT, 25 Aug 97; FBIS-WEU-97-237)

Additionally, while welcoming Estonia's invitation to begin talks, foreign ministers from all three Baltic states called for simultaneous admission. Valdis Birkavs of Latvia warned that the alternative would be the reemergence of dividing lines in Europe. "One cannot imagine a united Europe without the three Baltic states," he said. (Interfax, 1753 GMT, 22 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-234)

**LITHUANIA**

**Corruption charges leveled against Butkevicius**

Audrius Butkevicius, who as national defense minister in the early days of Lithuanian independence was responsible for reorganizing the Lithuanian army, now faces a substantial challenge to his personal and professional state-defending himself against charges of grand fraud and bribe taking.
In mid-August, the Prosecutor General's Office charged Butkevicius with accepting a $15,000 bribe in return for promising to work towards getting a criminal case involving a domestic firm dropped. (Interfax, 1532 GMT, 15 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-227) The Seimas subsequently voted unanimously at an emergency session to lift his parliamentary immunity and to permit the Prosecutor General's Office to institute criminal proceedings against Butkevicius on charges of grand fraud as well as of taking the bribe. At that emergency session, Butkevicius denied the charges and claimed instead the situation was the result of "an act of political provocation against him." (ITAR-TASS, 1110 GMT, 19 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-231)

If he is found guilty, he faces up to eight years imprisonment and confiscation of property.

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