

Boston University

OpenBU

<http://open.bu.edu>

Institute for the Study of Conflict, Ideology and Policy

The ISCIP Analyst

2003-10-24

The ISCIP Analyst, Volume VIII, Issue 17

<https://hdl.handle.net/2144/12009>

"Downloaded from OpenBU. Boston University's institutional repository."

Russian Federation: Executive Branch

By Susan Cavan

Time-tested methods

We have been told often, throughout the last decade, that the tools of Sovietology are no longer applicable in today's vibrant Russian state. The leaders of today, while perhaps not fully committed to democratic transparency, are nonetheless, more willing and better equipped to face both domestic and international scrutiny. Even when a shadowy silovek emerged as Yel'tsin's political heir, even after suspicious apartment bombings in Moscow re-sparked the Chechen war and catapulted the grey colonel to the Presidency, still Russia's path to democracy, while perhaps considered arduous, was accepted as somehow irreversible.

War against Chechnya, the subjugation of the media, (Has anyone forgotten the note Gusinsky was forced to sign by Press Minister Lesin? Sign over Media-MOST or go to jail.) Economic, legal and Kompromat attacks on (admittedly bloated) oligarchic entrepreneurs, the quiet once again present in Russian kitchens, where political conversations have been banished. The list is too long to review in full; a new entrant however, makes interesting fodder for the Kremlin-watching klatches.

Novaya gazeta (NG, 02 Oct 02 via eastview.com) presents excerpts of a press conference with President Putin that were published in various western media, but not made available for Russian domestic consumption.

On Chechnya:

Peter Baker of the Washington Post quotes deputy assistant U.S. Secretary of State Steven Pfeiffer [as trans.] as declaring that "Moscow's black and white vision of the Chechen conflict...exercises a bad influence on the Russian-American relations in general."

Putin replies: "I would not like to comment on the statements of the "small" bureaucrat.

But we have a saying in Russia: "In every family, there will be someone ugly." So, if anyone wants to cast a shadow on the Russian-American relations, it is not hard to do."

"We have an understanding for your "fellows," who are carrying out their uneasy mission in Iraq...Are you sure that everything is fine there on the human rights front? Or is it worth digging into and [trying to] improve our interstate relations? Should I remind you about the tragic events which are taking place there? How are we supposed to define the status of those, who are being held in Guantanamo bay, at the Cuban base? Who are they? Are they protected by the humanitarian or international law?"

Baker later inquires about the hostage crisis in the Dubrovka theater, asking Putin if he had any regrets, given the number of casualties.

Putin responds "These people did not die as a result of us using the gas, because the gas [itself] was not harmful. [These] people became victims of several other circumstances..."

Not a single security service in the world has [ever] conducted a similar operation in analogous conditions...And, when everything is behind us, we can say that not a single hostage suffered during the operation. Many died not because of the gas [poisoning], but because doctors did not know how to treat [these] people, and let

us say, a person who should have been placed on his belly, was placed on his back: his tongue would stick [inside] and people would get suffocated." Do you suppose the officials in charge of the operation could have informed the doctors of what chemicals were to be used and how to treat those affected? It seems certain many Russian citizens would be asking the same questions, given the opportunity!

From the same incident, we have a Putinism on freedom of the press: "You mentioned the law, which limits the mass media [in reporting] elections-related events (...) NTV filming served as an excuse for it. The events right before the storming (of the theatre on Dubrovka) were filmed. A TV correspondent bribed a policeman, sneaked on to the roof and was filming from the roof. Right before the beginning of the storming, the correspondent mentioned some movement, which looked like a coming storm [of the theatre]. What was this done for? For the sake of the freedom of expression? No, it was done because they wanted to get ahead of their competitors, who did not bribe the policemen."

Lest foreign investors or domestic upstarts forget the pressures placed on Yukos, which Henry Kissinger temporarily seemed to lift from the oil giant's shoulders, the campaign is mounting again. Putin's remarks make clear his commitment to democracy and transparency.

Noting that the arrest of Yukos' Platon Lebedev may have caused some minor damage to the Russian market, Putin emphasizes that Lebedev is not a political figure. He is then asked why Lebedev was held in jail for three and a half months "for allegedly economic-related crimes," leading some to believe he was a political prisoner.

Putin: "Should we say then, that all people who spent three months in prison are political prisoners? What about those who spent there two or four months - are they not political figures anymore?" Huh?

"I talked to the Prosecutor General on this issue. I asked him: "Why was it not simply enough to interrogate him?" He said: "Mr. President, we are ready to use this method. But Mr. Lebedev was hiding from us. We found him in an average military hospital in Moscow region. There are many high-class clinics in Moscow, where people can be treated if they want to. Why was he there? Because he was hiding from us."

This sounds like a bad "New Russian" joke with a security service twist. Unfortunately for Lebedev, neither the question of actual legality nor of criminality received a serious answer.

Now why do you suppose this information was not transmitted to a domestic audience? Different reasons in each case, I suppose. At least Novaya gazeta decided to buck the trends and attempt to bring light to the shadows.

Russian Federation: Security Services

By Fabian Adami

New cooperation between FSB and Afghan security organizations?

Early in October, FSB Deputy Director Viktor Kolmogorov traveled to Afghanistan, where he met with Afghan Defense Minister Mohammad Fahim, Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs Aref Noorzai, and National Security Adviser Yunis Qanuni. (RBC NEWS, 8 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

Although Russia does not share a border with Afghanistan, the Kremlin apparently views the country as a major security concern, since one of the major drug-trafficking routes into Russia runs through Tajikistan, which does border Afghanistan. In any case, the drug trade was a topic of discussion at the meeting. The FSB's press release on the visit stated that Afghan and Russian Security

Services had "realized the need for joint work on specific cases and facts connected with the activity on Afghan territory of international terrorist groups," apparently referring to possible impact on Chechnya (BBC MONITORING, 8 Oct 03; ITAR-TASS via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

The result of the meeting was that the FSB provided equipment to the Afghan security services. The FSB press release added that "the Afghan experts will be given assistance in handling the equipment." (ITAR-TASS, 8 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1008 via World News Connection)

This can only mean that the FSB intends to have operatives of its own working with, training, and possibly controlling indigenous Afghan security forces: something that should be a deep cause of concern for the United States and its allies, as they try to control over warring elements in the country. Based on the FSB's closeness to the Russian President, one cannot discount the possibility that the FSB is being used as a conduit of sorts, in an attempt to regain a foothold in Afghanistan, to increase the opportunities for Russia to assert control in areas of Central Asia and other parts of the Near and Middle East.

Are GRU & SVR running illegal operations in Germany?

In the run up to the summit between President Putin and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, various media sources in Germany ran stories about Russian intelligence activities in Germany. Their sources apparently were high-level contacts in the German Counter-Intelligence Services. (WHAT THE PAPERS SAY, 9 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

Apparently, the BundesKriminalamt (BKA)—Germany's equivalent to the FBI is not so much concerned with covert SVR or GRU officers, as with the large number of incoming immigrants. Since the end of the Cold War, large numbers of individuals have made use of Germany's citizenship laws, which allow anyone with German ancestry to claim residence and a passport. It is from within this

group, that Russian intelligence services are alleged to have recruited a large number of agents. (WHAT THE PAPERS SAY, 9 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Markets Database) This is a growing concern for the German government, since many of the immigrants are skilled workers finding employment in Germany's high-tech sector, a priority target of industrial espionage.

It seems likely that, given the atmosphere of increased friendship and cooperation between Germany and Russia, Schroeder chose to leak the intelligence services' claims through the media as a subtle way of sending a message to the Russian President, namely that "true friendship in trade and politics is incompatible with continuing to steal German secrets." (WHAT THE PAPERS SAY, 9 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Markets Database) Normally such a leak would be regarded as an embarrassment to a visiting head of state, but Schroeder may have found this avenue preferable to putting a direct question to Putin. Given the current atmosphere of geniality, the anonymous leaks allow Schroeder to confront the issue more directly with Putin should the situation not "resolve itself."

Russian Federation: Foreign Relations

By Scott Dullea

Putin and Schroeder in Yekaterinburg

On 8 and 9 October Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and his diplomatic and political entourage in the Ural mountain city of Yekaterinburg. The talks, which covered issues of non-proliferation, terrorism, international and regional conflicts, trade, energy, transportation and other issues, resulted in the signing of several agreements, prospects for future agreements, and business deals worth over a billion euros.

Some of the agreements achieved at this sixth meeting of Putin and Schroeder just this year included:

- an agreement on the transfer of German munitions and military personnel through Russian territory destined for Germany's military operations in Afghanistan;
- simplification of travel procedures for Russian and German citizens;
- agreements on the elimination of Russian decommissioned nuclear submarines; on teaching the Russian language in Germany and the German language in Russia and on youth exchanges; on the continuation of a program to upgrade the skills of Russian economic managers;
- a memorandum of understanding between Russian Railways Open Joint Stock Company and Deutsche Bahn railways for cooperation in passenger and freight operations;
- and a business deal for the German company E.ON to construct an electric plant in Russia worth five million euros, a deal worth 700 million euros for the German firm Wintershall to develop natural gas fields in Russia, and an additional gas pipeline deal worth 5 billion euros with Ruhrgas and Wintershall to be signed in the near future.

Although other topics such as Iraq were discussed, it was the economic arena that dominated the agenda. (ITAR-TASS, 9 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1009 via World News Connection) Not surprisingly the German media declared energy the most important subject of the summit (FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEIN, 8 Oct 03, #233) as Germany is no doubt pleased to join with Russia as energy business partners. The two leaders at the summit extolled the solid economic relationship that exists between the two countries: Germany is Russia's leading foreign investor and according to Putin "will remain the main foreign trading partner of Russia outside the Commonwealth of Independent States," (ITAR-TASS, 9 Oct 03, Ibid.) and, according to Schroeder, Russia is the most important supplier of

energy resources to Germany. (ITAR-TASS, 7 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1007 via World News Connection)

Despite the euphoria among German businessmen, it was the reaction of other parties that probably was more important to Putin, who emphasized that the nuclear submarine recycling agreement was living up to the standards set by the G-8 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. (ITAR-TASS, 9 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1009 via World News Connection) Moreover, the military transit agreement is Russia's first such agreement with a NATO member. (WWW.DW-WORLD.DE, 9 Oct 03)

The Russian president also took the opportunity to admonish the European Union (E.U.) for attempting allegedly to twist Russia's arm by threatening Russian accession to the World Trade Organization if Moscow did not raise its domestic energy prices. He called on German business leaders, in their own interest, to exercise influence on E.U. bureaucrats. Putin also noted that Russia may begin to pay debts owed to the Paris Club ahead of schedule, and that Moscow might start to list its energy prices in euros - a major boost for the European currency. The latter move, experts in a Moscow Times interview (10 Oct 03 via Johnson's Russia List (JRL) #7361, 10 Oct 03) agreed, is a political bargaining chip to win concessions in Russia's bid for a visa-free regime with Europe and accession to the E.U.

While the E.U., the G-8, NATO and the Paris Club may have been tantalized by such signals from Yekaterinburg, one topic they did not hear mentioned was Chechnya or the human rights situation in the Russian Federation. Schroeder and Putin traded compliments about their countries' interdependence, lasting relations, openness and political harmony. That the potential for massive profits was enough to distract the Germans from the unpleasant subject of the recent, dubious "elections" in Chechnya, demonstrates the advantageous position in which Russia now finds itself as energy-hungry nations of the developed world

try to feed themselves in hard economic times. Moscow finds itself in a position to make political and economic deals without fear of being called to task on its questionable activities in the areas of human rights and open society.

Foreign Minister in Switzerland

Although German officials may have been keen to avoid the Chechnya issue, their Swiss colleagues, with less at stake in their relationship to Moscow, insisted on a Russian explanation of the recent "elections" there. On an official visit to Bern on 13-14 October, Russian Foreign Minister Ivan Ivanov met with his Swiss counterpart Federal Councilor for Foreign Affairs Michelin Calmy-Rey for annual bilateral talks between the two countries. Ivanov also met with Swiss Federal President Pascal Couchepin and Federal Councilor for Economic Affairs Joseph Deiss.

Ivanov, answering questions from the media in Bern, linked the issue of modifications to the current Swiss-Russian visa regime to the developments in Russian-E.U. visa negotiations — perhaps as a plea to the Swiss officials to exert whatever influence they can on their E.U. neighbors. Ivanov was no doubt aware that a Swiss-German summit would follow on the heels of the Russian-Swiss meeting.

Responding to the Swiss officials' inquiries about the recent elections in Chechnya, Ivanov took the opportunity to express his disappointment that the E.U., the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe decided not to play a role in observing the recent elections there and asked the Swiss people to observe the situation in the Chechen Republic "objectively."

Following the visit, the Russian Foreign Ministry pointed to the similar stances of Bern and Moscow on the issues of reconstruction in Iraq and the role of the United Nations regarding Afghanistan and the Middle East. Other more tangible

results of the talks included Switzerland's decision to finance programs aimed at destroying Russia's remaining chemical weapons stockpiles, amounting to a pledge of 15 million Swiss francs, according to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs official website.

Additionally, the Russian Foreign Ministry was eager to publish its success in persuading Switzerland to begin paying settlements to the families of the victims of the July 2002 Tupelev (TU)-154 commercial airliner crash over Germany's Lake Constance region, a crash determined to be the fault of the Swiss air control system. Although the starting date for payments remains unclear, it appears the Russian government is satisfied with their inevitability, even as the crash investigation continues. (ITAR-TASS, 13 Oct 03; BBC Monitoring via ISI Emerging Markets Database)

Russia's relationship with Switzerland, though economically not unimportant, is not dependent on the energy market, which has become the lifeblood of Russia's recent economic upswing. Thus, while the Swiss were able to put tough questions to Ivanov on Chechnya, Moscow was also able to use the visit to Switzerland as an outlet to parade its version of the Chechnya election saga, without imperiling any potentially valuable energy profits.

Putin and Bush at APEC

President Putin and U.S. President Bush both are traveling in Southeast Asia this week. The itinerary of Bush's six-day trip to six East Asian nations has security as its focus, according to pre-trip comments by National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. (NEW YORK TIMES, 15 Oct 03) Mr. Bush is rewarding some of the U.S.'s most loyal East Asian allies in the war on terrorism. Though by no means ignoring economic issues, President Bush will focus on security issues when he attends the Asian Pacific Economic Community's (APEC) summit in Malaysia on 20 and 21 October as well.

President Putin, on the other hand, plans to seek the community's backing in his bid to join the World Trade Organization. Mr. Putin, rather than thanking old allies, is looking to gain new ones. After courting Malaysia with military hardware sales and a presidential visit to Kuala Lumpur in August of this year (see previous NIS Observed), Putin was able to win an invitation not only to attend the 10th Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit as a guest of Malaysia but also to address the conference participants.

Attempting to induce the organization's members to let Russia eventually join the OIC, Putin emphasized Russia's large Muslim population of 20 million and the more than 7,000 Islamic mosques in the Russian Federation. Putin also tempted his audience with the idea of winning Russia, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, as an ally of the Muslim World. The jury is still out on the success of Putin's speech, although Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar acknowledged the possibility of the body cooperating with Russia in the future and noted that Putin's presence would allow the organization to consider creating partnerships with non-Muslim countries. (THE STAR ONLINE (Malaysia), 17 Oct 03)

Closer ties with the OIC would be a boon for Moscow, opening economic opportunities for Russian companies in the oil-rich Muslim world, easing tensions between Russia and Muslim countries over the war in Chechnya, and winning for the Kremlin vital geo-strategic allies in the race to counterbalance U.S. and Chinese influence in Asia. Moscow, apparently capitalizing on anti-U.S. sentiment in the Muslim world, is using its influence at the U.N. Security Council by offering to play big brother to the Islamic states, as long as Russian interests are served.

Russian Federation: Domestic Issues and Legislative Branch

By Kate Martin

MEDIA

Just the flacks, ma'am

After seeing how portions of the revised electoral law, particularly the aspects affecting media coverage, are being (ab)used this election season, several media outlets and some Duma deputies have asked the Constitutional Court to review the amended legislation. Their complaint: the new law is impinging on their ability to meet their professional responsibilities. Hearings began on 13 October (ITAR-TASS, 13 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1013 via World News Connection); the court is expected to take at least two weeks to consider the much-opposed law.

At issue is the vague wording of the revised legislation, which provides ample opportunities to constrain media coverage of candidates on the broadest of grounds. This is no longer simply an abstract problem. As Duma Deputy Aleksandr Kotyusov explained, the Tula electoral commission sent a warning to one newspaper for describing individual candidates, accurately, as an "actress," a "general," and the "son of murdered Deputy Sergei Yushenkov."

(ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 14 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1014 via World News Connection) The Bryansk Oblast' electoral commission issued warnings to three local publications — for such heinous crimes as publishing poll results and interviewing a member of YABLOKO -- earning the disapproval of the not-so-staunch defender of press liberty, Media Minister Mikhail Lesin. "Many of the media are already afraid of publishing items with any bite on the election theme. Yet the 30 day period in which the toughest campaigning rules will operate has not yet arrived," Lesin observed. (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 3 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1003 via World News Connection) The Moscow Election Commission has sent several warnings to Kommersant-Vlast and Tverskaya, 13 separate

warnings over articles about Yuri Luzhkov's performance as the city's mayor, while the commission of Kaliningrad Oblast' has issued 18 warnings to local media. (VREMYA NOVOSTEI, 2 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1007 via World News Connection)

Recent statements by supporters of the law indicate that the court, and public opinion, may be leaning toward mandating revision. The president's representative to the court, Mikhail Mityukov, attempted to guide and one must suppose to limit, the court's decision. "If the Constitutional Court explained the constitutional and legal meaning of the notions 'informing the voters' and 'pre-election propaganda,' the presidential side would consider it a positive step ensuring free and democratic elections," he said. He acknowledged that the vague wording of the law can lead to abuses. (ITAR-TASS, 1642 GMT, 13 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1013 via World News Connection)

Even one of the biggest proponents of the revised law, Central Election Commission (C.E.C.) Chairman Aleksandr Veshnyakov, has admitted that the new law may need to be tweaked. However, he claims that the opposition to the law has been organized for nefarious reasons. "It is beneficial for those who wish to gain money from illegal sources during the election," in particular from the abuse of office, he said. (ITAR-TASS, 1325 GMT, 30 Sep 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-0930 via World News Connection) Subsequently he lashed critics of the law for using what he termed "subtle methods of heightening tension during the election campaign and putting pressure on the Constitutional Court." (ITAR-TASS, 1347 GMT, 15 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1015 via World News Connection) Sadly, he seems unable to see the legitimacy of opposition to legislation he shepherded through parliament.

Yet there is no doubt the media and the electorate are feeling the effects. As one paper explained: "Imagine watching a soccer match in which the commentator says nothing, the score never comes up on screen, and all the cameras show the

same angle. The fan gets no information on where the teams' strengths and weak points lie, who the star players are... or what the teams' chances are in the overall championship table... That is what is happening in our country right now with the elections." (IZVESTIYA, 15 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1015 via World News Connection)

REGIONS

The ruble stops where?

President Vladimir Putin recently signed the Law on Local Self-Government, calling it "one of the most important components of the full-scale administrative reform." (ITAR-TASS, 6 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1006 via World News Connection)

According to Vladimir Mokry, chairman of the State Duma Committee on Questions of Local Self-Government, the new law is meant to fill a vacuum with a clear demarcation of powers. "Each level of government, federal, regional, and local, should know the precise measure of its responsibility under the new law.... What is happening now? A vicious circle of irresponsibility. In the winter people are left without heat because the house manager says: 'I do not have the money; the mayor did not allocate it.' The mayor refers to how tight-fisted the governor is, and the governor, naturally, blames everything on the government of the Russian Federation. ... Now all the powers will be clearly prescribed: 'Render unto [sic] Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto the mechanic that which is the mechanic's.'" (TRUD, 1 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1003 via World News Connection)

However, it is not the unwillingness to assume responsibility, but rather the inability to pay, that is at the heart of the problems cited. The fact of the matter is that, for a variety of reasons, there are insufficient funds in the local budgets to deal with these problems, and it is unlikely that this attempt at local government reform will improve the situation. Indeed, some recognition of the budgetary

problem has been acknowledged: The law will come into force on January 1, 2006, in order to give governments time to adapt to the changes. As Putin explained, "We've envisaged a very long transitional period in order to prepare properly for implementing the law. (...) We need to submit amendments to many federal laws to parliament in good time in order to bring them into line with the revamped model of local self-government and federative relations." (MAYAK RADIO, 1400 GMT, 6 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1006 via World News Connection)

And that brings up one itty bitty obstacle to the reform: Apparently, one of the items requiring amendment is the Russian Constitution. As one newspaper article recently pointed out, Article 72 of the Constitution gives the power over execution of budgets to RF subjects, that is, oblasts, krajs and republics: "[T]he creation of a highly centralized model of controlling the budget reduces the level of independence and accountability of the regional organs of power, which does not correspond to the federative policy followed by the state." (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 9 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1009 via World News Connection)

Russian Federation: Armed Forces

By Lt. Col. Kris Beasley, USAF and Paul Lyons

Russia keeping international space station manned

In contrast to the exuberance of the Chinese space program, which launched its first taikonaut into orbit last week, and the glitz of the U.S. Space Program, with its high technology and large capacity space shuttle, the Russian space program has been characterized often as a low-tech, workman-like effort. Although the Russian space program was the first to orbit a man, a woman, and a couple in space and set many long-endurance records on the Mir space station, it has been severely underfunded since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the government has had difficulty keeping the program alive. But, since the

February 2003 shuttle tragedy, it has been the continuity of the Russian space program in the form of the only-somewhat-modernized, but seemingly indestructible Soyuz space capsule that has enabled the international space station (ISS) to continue to operate.

On 20 October 03, a Russian Soyuz TM-3, carrying the Expedition 8 crew of astronaut Michael Foale of the United States and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Kaleri, successfully docked with the ISS. (WWW.CNN.COM, 17 Oct 03 & 20 Oct 03) Foale will be the new I.S.S. commander with Kaleri as his Flight Engineer; they expect to stay up for about 200 days (six months by themselves plus 10 days of overlap on each end with the other crews). Also aboard the Soyuz was European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Pedro Duque of Spain, who will stay during the 10-day transition period and then return with the Expedition 7 crew on their Soyuz that has been docked to the ISS since their arrival in April of this year. (RIA NOVOSTI, 2 Oct 03 via gazeta.ru/english)

This is the second crew of the ISS that has been sent up by the Russians since the Columbia accident grounded the Space Shuttle. Without the Russian program stepping up to the task, the ISS might have gone unmanned, with potentially dangerous results. Space stations have been left unmanned before (e.g. Mir), but getting individuals back on board is hazardous and potentially fatal. Former astronaut Charlie Precourt, now NASA's deputy ISS program manager, told Russian space officials, "I want to convey our thanks for your support during this period when the shuttle cannot fly." WWW.CNN.COM, 17 Oct 03)

Although NASA is progressing toward the resumption of the shuttle flights, at least one more flight, that of the Expedition 9 crew of Russian cosmonaut Valeri Tokarev, and American astronaut William McArthur (with Dutch ESA astronaut Andre Kuipers along for the 10 day transition program) will have to be launched from the Russian-manned space center at Baikonur, Kazakhstan. (WWW.EN.RIAN.RU (RIA NOVOSTI), 18 Oct 03). If NASA's current plan to

resume shuttle flights next Fall can't be met, then reliance on the Russian program is likely to continue as well.

Russia had agreed previously to send up fresh Soyuz crafts every six months as ISS rescue vessels, and to provide several ISS resupply missions a year; however, the strain of launching more Soyuz crafts than expected (since the shuttle accident) apparently has posed a challenge for Russian officials. In fact, Nikolai Zelenshchikov, deputy director of RKK Energiya, which builds the Soyuz, said on 17 October 03 that a lack of funding from the Federal government has delayed launch of a resupply vessel until early 2004. Fortunately, the ISS is provisioned well enough for Zelenshchikov to have insisted that the crew would not go without vital supplies. NASA spokesman Rob Navias declared likewise, "They won't be up there missing any creature comforts." (WWW.CNN.COM, 17 Oct 03)

In order to alleviate the burden imposed by the shuttle failure and to help expand the ISS capabilities, one of the key tasks of the Expedition 8 crew is the installation of docking equipment on the Russian ISS Zvezda module. The Russian built "Kursk" automated docking system will enable the new ESA-provided ATV cargo supply vessels to dock with the ISS. According to Russian Mission Control Center spokesman Valeri Lyndin, the first ESA vessel should arrive, "in the second half of 2004." (WWW.EN.RIAN.RU, 18 Oct 03)

Each country with a manned space program has developed different levels of connection between its programs and its respective militaries. The Chinese program is entirely military, the American and European programs are almost entirely civil and the Russian program is somewhere in the middle. In the U.S. and Europe, about half of the astronauts are detailed over from the military, whereas all the Chinese taikonauts are active duty fighter pilots and most of the Russian cosmonauts are active duty officers. In the American, European and Russian programs, the astronauts and cosmonauts usually stay in the program

and seldom go back to military duty, a trend which can lead to interesting situations. For example, the current I.S.S. Expedition 7 commander, Yuri Malenchenko, had a tailcoat and wedding ring quietly slipped on a cargo ship that arrived at the ISS this June. He planned an August wedding, via videoconference, with Ekaterina Dmitriev, an American citizen who migrated from Russia when she was three years old. Malenchenko however is not a civilian; he's a Russian Air Force Colonel, and under Russian Soviet law, he has access to state secrets and must have permission from his commander to get married. The tension that exists between spacefarers and regular military officials on all continents is plainly evident in the words of the Russian Air Force Chief, Colonel-General Vladimir Mikhailov, when he was told of the plan: "A cosmonaut must not behave like a movie star!" (KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA via www.cnn.com, 23 Jul 03) Despite talk of a potential five or ten year waiting period, Russian officials recovered their senses in time and allowed the happy couple to wed.

Who would ever have imagined it?

To enable appropriate debates over government spending priorities, most democracies are accustomed to explaining, in great detail, all but a sliver of their military budgets to the press, their publics, and especially to their legislatures. But military budget details have always been a state secret in Russia (as in the USSR before that), even from the legislature. In fact, western intelligence agencies have worked diligently, perhaps at the price of lives in a few instances, to determine what Russia's military budget was, both to track weapon system acquisition and also to gauge its impact on the overall economy. (Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insiders Story of Five Presidents and how They Won the Cold War*, Simon and Schuster, NY, 1996).

Thus, eyebrows were raised when Chief of the General Staff General Anatoli Kvashnin recently asked Prime Minister Mikhail Kasianov to authorize the unveiling of portions of select Russian Defense budget details to NATO, given that NATO countries share defense budget data among themselves. To quote

Kvashnin's request, "Bearing in mind Russia's interest in development of cooperation with NATO, I hereby request your instructions to the federal executive power structures to contemplate the possibility and procedures of sending statistical data on national arms expenditures to the Russia-NATO Council." (MOSKOVSKY KOMSOMOLET, 22 Sep 03 via What the Papers Say - Defense and Security, 25 Sep 03) What "statistical data" are involved is unknown; R&D data have been classified always.

The thoughts and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Dept of Defense or the United States government.

NAVY

New military doctrine unveiled

Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov recently unveiled Russia's new military defense doctrine, titled the "Open Doctrine of Military Modernization." This white paper, which was presented to an expanded session of the Russian military and political leadership, describes a transformation of Russia's military into a force more poised to combat the challenges of the 21st century. President Putin has emphasized a top-down approach to the transformation of Russia's military by his recent budget initiatives and by his public statements. He put the emphasis on achieving an increasingly capable force, stating, "While seeking broad cooperation with foreign states and strengthening the systems of international law, we must not devote less attention to and, even more so, abandon the development of our defense potential. In the final analysis, this potential is the guarantee of Russia's sovereignty and security." (ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, 04 Oct 03; FBIS-NES-2003-1006 via World News Connection) Most notably, President Putin and Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov have been extolling several facets of Russia's new military doctrine to the press during the promotional rhetoric - most critically, issues of pre-emptive strikes and the use of Russian military force within neighboring in support of Russian interests, broadly defined.

Military action on the territory of other CIS states

Although a detailed analysis awaits the publication of the text of the doctrine, Radio Liberty recently noted (RFE/RL NEWSLINE, vol. 7, 10 Oct 03) that Putin, after the completion of the Russo-German summit, asserted Moscow's right to "carry out pre-emptive military strikes abroad if it deems it necessary to do so." With far-reaching CIS implications, he further claimed that Russia would not relinquish control over the pipeline infrastructure across the territories of the FSU. Russia, as successor state to the Soviet Union, which built the gas pipeline system, is the only state capable of keeping the whole system working. (RFE/RL NEWSLINE, vol. 7, 10 Oct 03). Leaving nothing to chance, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov added to Putin's interpretation of the doctrine on pre-emptive military force. "The CIS is a very crucial sphere for our security. Ten million of our compatriots live there and we are supplying energy to them at prices below international levels. We are not going to renounce the right to use military power there in situations where all other means have been exhausted." (RFE/RL NEWSLINE, vol. 7, 10 Oct 03) The newly-formed air base in Krygyzstan may provide one of the means of implementing such a policy.

With the transition from conscript to contract service ongoing, the new military defense doctrine laid out by Ivanov calls for an increase in the number of permanent readiness troops as "a core priority of modernization." (INTERFAX, 02 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1003 via World News Connection). Like its U.S. counterpart, Ivanov's doctrine states that through its expanded troop base, "Russia must be able successfully to perform its missions in two armed conflicts of any type and conduct peacekeeping operations without carrying out any type of mobilization." (INTERFAX, 02 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1003 via World News Connection). Russia may get an opportunity for a major "peacekeeping operation" should the U.N. Security Council opt for an increased international presence in the post-conflict peacekeeping and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. President Putin clearly is keeping his cards close to the vest until a formal U.N.

resolution on an international peacekeeping force is adopted. In an interview with the New York Times, he stated, "concerning a possibility of sending a Russian military contingent to Iraq, we are not even discussing it prior to the adoption of the U.N. resolution." (ITAR-TASS, 06 Oct 03; FBIS-NES-2003-1006 via World News Connection).

As for the controversial use of pre-emptive force in future conflicts, Defense Minister Ivanov stated that "Russia cannot absolutely rule out pre-emptive use of force if it is dictated by its interests or commitments to its allies." He added that "use of force is a measure of last resort which is only to be used when all other means are exhausted." (ITAR-TASS, 02 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1003 via World News Connection) Ivanov's comments on the pre-emptive use of force were met with calls for clarity from NATO. President Putin, in an interview with Al-Jazeera network, attempted to clarify Ivanov's comments by stating that "What he had in mind, and this is my view as well, is this: We are against such a policy, but if other nations continue to make a priority (of pre-emptive strikes) in their foreign policy, then Russia reserves the right to act in the same way." (AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 17 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis).

Transformation and modernization

With a current army force structure of nearly 1.6 million soldiers (down from nearly 2.75 million in the early 90's), Russia's military is being forced to transform into a smaller, more agile and more capable force, similar to the U.S. model. (The armed forces at the disposal of other "power ministries" constitute a separate category.) Intrinsic in that transformation will be not only a "re-tooling" of military thought and policy, but investments in modern technologies and architectures to lead and orchestrate the force. Present at the highly-publicized unveiling of the doctrine at the Defense Ministry was President Vladimir Putin who echoed the priorities of transformation and modernization within Russia's military. Putin stressed the armed forces need "quickly and intelligently to master new command and communication systems" (KREMLIN.RU, 03 Oct 03; FBIS-

SOV-2003-1003 via World News Connection) in meeting the dynamic challenges of the global landscape.

Fourth generation submarine on the horizon

Admiralty Wharves, a Russian defense contractor, is nearing completion of Russia's fourth generation diesel submarine. The first of the class, the Saint Petersburg, has been in production since 1997 and is scheduled to commence testing and trials in Spring 2004.

The submarine is said to be similar in design to the capable German 212A submarines. The Saint Petersburg "differs from third-generation submarines in that it has one hull instead of two, a new level of systems automation and new weapons. Moreover, it can sail for up to 40 days, which allows it to sail in the oceans." (RUSSIA JOURNAL, 06 Oct 03) Key design improvements within the Saint Petersburg include a diminished acoustic signature, a fully integrated multi-array sonar suite, reduced manning, significantly improved batteries, and an enhanced combat-control system. The single hull design offers less reserve buoyancy and battle damage survivability potential than Russia's double-hull designs, but allows for greater speed and maneuverability, characteristics vital to operating in the world's littorals.

In line with Russia's high-profile Indian Ocean and Far East/Pacific operations this year, the fourth generation submarine will bring to the forefront a viable diesel submarine capable of out-of-area operations and supporting Russia's blue-water renaissance.

Newly Independent States: Western Region

By Elena Selyuk

BELARUS

New media law considered

At a press conference on 2 October 2003, President Lukashenka revealed his plans for a new media law: "We should fill in the gaps in the existing law. The law should be modern, it should embrace the whole media sphere...It is aimed at reaching quickly and efficiently to any offences in this area. This law should guarantee freedom of speech, but at the same time it should not turn into freedom of slander and provide biased coverage and facts." (BBC MONITORING, 2 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis)

For the first time, the internet will be considered a mass media source. The Ministry of Information and the Prosecutor-General's office stated that the court would have the power to intervene in the distribution of internet-based publications and sue the journalists for spreading false information. (NOVAYA GAZETA, 9 Oct 03) In Belarus, such a development is feasible due to the presence of an internet monopoly: there is only one internet provider, Beltelekom. All alternative providers are obliged to send and receive information only through its server. An ominous precedent of censoring internet publications already exists in Belarus. In 2001, when the presidential elections were taking place, it was impossible to access such internet sites as Radio Liberty, Hartiya-97, Our Freedom or dozens of other online publications. (NOVAYA GAZETA, 9 Oct 03)

Just two prior warnings are required to shut down newspapers and other media channels. A precedent for a transgression that triggered the new law was set by the Belarussian Supreme Court on 9 October, when it ordered the public association Women's Response (not a mass-media source, but a source of information) disbanded for breaching the law, namely: giving the wrong address during the registration in 2000 and using a stamp which was not in conformity with regulations. (MINSK BELAPAN, 09 Oct 03; FBIS-2003-1009 via World News Connection)

Mikhail Pastukhov of the Belarussian Association of Journalists pointed out that the new law would give authorities even more power over the media and would complicate media registration procedures. He also noted that the law required all media outlets to register within one year. Percy Bratt of the Swedish Helsinki Committee of Human Rights likewise has concerns about the clause, which prohibits the media from disseminating information on behalf of unregistered organizations, thus substantially restricting their freedom of expression. (MINSK BELAPAN, 07 Oct 03; FBIS-2003-1007 via World News Connection)

Unsurprisingly, the new media law was written without public input. Valeri Levkov, a journalist for Belorusskaya delovaya gazeta, said that the draft media law "was certainly not discussed with the journalists of Belarus. Maybe it was discussed with Pavel Jakubovich, the editor in chief of Sovetskaya Belarussiya, which is an official newspaper of the presidential administration." (RFE/RL, 10 Oct 03) Levkov also pointed out that the draft media law was supposed to be sent to European institutions for evaluation.

The new media law is yet another in a long line of attempts to restrict freedom of speech in Belarus. In the last two years, approximately twenty independent political newspapers have folded in Belarus, either due to direct interference by the authorities or to the discriminatory economic measures of the state. (WWW.INDEXONLINE.ORG, 22 Sep 03) The Belarussian Association of Journalists (BAJ) has been awarded the 2003 Golden Pen of Freedom award for its courageous resistance to the repression of the media by President Lukashenka. "The BAJ is fighting bravely against what is probably the most repressive regime in Europe," said the Paris-based World Association of Newspapers, when presenting the award. (WWW.INDEXONLINE.ORG, 27 Oct 02)

Public opinion polls in Belarus

According to a public poll conducted by the Independent Institute for Socioeconomic and Political Research (IISPR) in Belarus, 48.8% of Belgians are dissatisfied with government policy. Over 1,500 people participated in the Institute's poll, which also indicated that 70% of Belgians were planning to vote in the 2004 parliamentary elections, 42.4% did not believe that the election would be free, while 38.5% expressed the opposite opinion. The Belgian Women's Party was the most popular among respondents (7.5%), followed by the Party of Communists of Belgium (5.2%). (MINSK BELAPAN, 13 Oct 03; FBIS-2003-1013 via World News Connection)

UKRAINE

Ukraine-E.U. Yalta Summit

The most recent summit between the 15 member European Union and Ukraine took place on 7 October 2003 in Yalta. At the end of the summit the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, along with the former Italian Prime Minister and current E.U. President Silvio Berlusconi both expressed hope that Ukraine could join the E.U. in the future. No date for Ukraine's accession to the E.U. was set at the summit, and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma stated that the country would not be ready to begin accession negotiations until 2011.

The members of the E.U. delegation made a statement following the E.U.-Ukraine summit, in which they recognized Ukraine's economic achievements and the stability of the national currency. The issue of compensation to Ukraine as a result of the economic impact of E.U. enlargement was raised at the summit as well. Ukraine is seeking an estimated \$580 million for the loss of trade.

(AGENCE FRANCE PRESS, 14 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis) In 2004, Ukrainian trade with the new E.U. members is predicted to drop by 10%, thus, substantially complicating the achievement of its market economy status, which is one of the Copenhagen criteria for joining the Union.

Recent visa restrictions on Ukrainian citizens trying to enter new E.U. member states erects both a physical and an emotional barrier between the E.U. and Ukraine, limiting Ukrainian citizens' opportunities to visit their relatives in the new E.U. member states.

Does Ukraine have a real chance to join the E.U. some day? Maybe, but the prospects seem bleak. Before even proceeding to the discussion of Ukraine's ability to survive economically in the E.U., Ukraine has to improve its human rights record, assure freedom of speech to its citizens (difficult with the high-profile murder of a journalist still unresolved) and fix its chronically-slanted elections. The recent signing of the Single Economic Space Agreement with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan also has not helped to give the E.U. assurance that Ukraine is seriously intending to join the Union. But even if Ukraine miraculously does fulfill all the conditions, is it a safe assumption that a 27 member E.U. (the current membership target) will still be prepared to accept it?

MOLDOVA

Seeing assistance from the Council of Europe

Moldova has applied to the Council of Europe for assistance in resolving disputes between Moldova and Romania. This move came as a result of Romania's refusal to sign a treaty confirming Moldova's present borders. (DEUTSCHE PRESSE-AGENTUR, 13 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis) The exact words of the Moldovan Foreign Ministry were: "these problems and absence of progress in their resolution pose a threat for the existence of the Moldovan state, destabilize the situation in the country, considerably retard the process of final settlement of the Dniester conflict and affect negatively the process of European integration of the republic." (ITAR-TASS, 13 Oct 03; FBIS-2003-1013 via World News Connection)

Ghiorghi Prisacaru, the head of the Romanian Parliamentary delegation, criticized Moldova's statement, saying that Moldova's position was regrettable

because it constituted an attempt to transform a bilateral issue into a multilateral one. Prisacaru noted also that Romania's position on the issue was clear — Romania recognizes Moldova's independence and sovereignty.

Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin stated in a television interview on Sunday that: "The Romanian thesis of two Romanian states is unacceptable. We have our own country. We are ready for cooperation, but without interference in our internal affairs." (DEUTSCHE PRESSE-AGENTUR, 13 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis)

In 1940, as a result of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, Romania lost Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina and Hertza to the USSR. When the pact was signed, the territories between Prut and Dniestr belonged to Romania. Since the recognition of the Republic of Moldova as an independent state a lot has been said in Romania about the necessity of eliminating the consequences of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. In June 1991, Romania's Parliament adopted a declaration in which the pact was declared null and void. (STUDINT.ONG.RO, 30 Oct 94) Romania, which was the first state to recognize the Republic of Moldova upon the proclamation of its independence, has never signed an agreement with Moldova defining the two countries' frontiers.

Newly Independent States: Caucasus

By Ariela Shapiro

AZERBAIJAN

The October 15 Azerbaijani presidential election, which, as expected, brought Ilham Aliev to power, signified a continuation of former President Heidar Aliev's foreign and economic policies. However, significant opposition unrest both to the election process and the choice of Aliev, indicates that the authoritarian regime created and repressively enforced by Heidar Aliev is no longer viable in the increasingly open Azeri political scene.

Opposition unrest began on the evening of October 15, with accusations by the Musavat Party of massive ballot fraud in favor of Ilham Aliev. (AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 16 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis) Protests continued into the following day and culminated in two open clashes between supporters of Isa Gambar, of the Musavat party, and police in Baku. The first scuffle arose with riots by several thousand Gambar supporters (WHAT THE PAPERS SAY, 16 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Databases) in which, according to statements by the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan party, two persons were killed. (ASSOCIATED PRESS, 16 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis). The second, by most accounts, resulted from police aggression and left over 50 civilians badly injured. (AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 17 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Databases)

In the aftermath of the elections and resulting violence, there has been a marked polarity in statements by various government officials and by observers as to quality of government demonstrated by the election process and violence. According to Giovanni Kessler, head of delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and Human Rights Watch (WWW.HRW.ORG/background/eca/azerbaijan/index.htm) the election was undemocratic and the violence resulted from the lack of governmental control over the police. (ASSOCIATED PRESS, 16 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis; Financial Times, 17 Oct 03; BBC Monitoring via Lexis-Nexis) On the other hand, the Turkish, Russian and Iranian governments openly congratulated Ilham Aliev on his victory. (FINANCIAL TIMES, 17 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis; ITAR TASS, 16 Oct 03; What the Papers Say via ISI Emerging Databases; FINANCIAL TIMES, 18 Oct 03; BBC Monitoring via Lexis-Nexis). The U.S. government has been silent so far, thus attempting to distance itself from the undemocratic means used to solidify Ilham Aliev's ascendancy to power while at least tacitly acknowledging Aliev's presidency.

The reactions of the Turkish, Iranian, Russian and U.S. governments are not particularly surprising given their stakes in the international and multi-national corporate competition for Azerbaijan's vast natural gas and oil reserves. At present, Azerbaijan's has 1.2 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, as well as vast potential reserves in undeveloped offshore Caspian fields.

(GEO.YA.COM/travelimages/az-oil.html) The major oil companies invested in these oil fields and the various export pipelines include British Petroleum, Chevron Texaco, ConocoPhillips and the EU, through the TRACECA program to rehabilitate and upgrade the Caspian seaport near Baku. The proven natural gas reserves stand roughly at 4.4 trillion cubic feet, in which several multi-national corporations, including Exxon Mobil, are also invested. (Ibid.)

The Iranian government is still anxious to renew talks over a proposal to transport oil from Baku via a proposed 300km pipeline to Tabriz in northwest Iran, where it would also connect with the existing Iranian pipeline network and refineries. (Ibid) On the other end of the spectrum, Washington has noted the tense relations between Baku and Teheran over disputed oil fields in the Caspian and might be inclined to support Azerbaijan militarily as a counterpoise for Iran. Additionally, the U.S. is keen to seal the alliance of Azerbaijan with Georgia and Turkey with the help of the \$2.9-billion Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and a parallel gas pipeline to the northern Turkish city of Erzurum. (BBC Monitoring, 15 Oct 03 via Lexis-Nexis)

The fruition of these investments depends on Ilham Aliev's ability to maintain control over the country. Indeed, doubts persist whether President Aliev can count on the unanimous support of the ruling elite. A number of Azeri government officials depend on patronage from the Aliev regime for their privileged positions (AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 13 Oct 03 via ISI Emerging Databases), constituting the main reason for Ilham Aliev's current support within the state structure and among the Yeni Azerbaijan party. However, it is unclear whether Ilham possesses the authority, or the support within the government

apparatus, to maintain his father's balancing act of allowing limited political freedom while committing human rights abuses which keep Azerbaijan on the hook of international criticism. Therefore, until Ilham Aliev defines a political course (one which, most believe, will eschew balance in favor of a stark choice between authoritarianism or democratization) the loyalty of the ruling class can be purchased by the highest bidder.

GEORGIA

The new Russian military doctrine which specifically endorses Russian preventative military strikes constitutes a clear statement of warning for any CIS country attempting to free itself of economic and political dependence from Russia, e.g. Georgia. Indeed, although the doctrine originated, supposedly, as a result of the perceived need for action, inter alia, against "terrorist factions" (ITAR-TASS, 12 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1012 via World News Connection), in reality this document contains a barely veiled Russian message to Georgia that, one way or another, Moscow plans to regain the power it lost after the fall of the USSR. Indeed, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov's statement concerning the permissibility of Russian resort to force was countered by Georgian President Shevardnadze's censure of Russia's doctrine and his statement that preventive strikes were incompatible with international law. (GEORGIAN TV, Oct 10 03 FBIS-SOV-2003-1010 via World News Connection)

On the other hand, Georgia has shown signs of weakening lately. Under U.N. auspices, a Georgian-Abkhaz meeting opened on 8 October with the participation of the Abkhaz "Foreign Minister" Sergei Shamba and the Georgian Minister for Special Assignments, Malkhaz Kakbadze, with the objective of reducing tensions between Georgia and Abkhazia. (ITAR-TASS, 8 Oct 03; BBC Monitoring via Lexis-Nexis) The fact that a member of the Georgian government agreed to meet a high Abkhaz official may be viewed as a tacit acknowledgement of Abkhazian independence. In addition, the Georgian government and Abkhaz officials have agreed on the creation of a joint venture to

fight crime (KAVKASIA-PRESS, 9 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1009 via World News Connection) creating another indicator that Georgian-recognized Abkhazian independence may become a reality.

At the same time, Russian and Georgian economic ties have deepened with the hosting of a two day economic forum in Tbilisi, (SARKE-PRESS DIGEST, 19 Oct 03; BBC Monitoring via Lexis-Nexis) which is slated to discuss joint Russian-Georgian projects worth an estimated \$10 billion in areas such as internal development of roads, links, and railways in Georgia. (ITAR-TASS , 16 Oct 03 FBIS-SOV-2003-1016 via World News Connection) In response to these talks and the obvious development of Georgian-Russian ties, Georgian President Shevardnadze stated that "Taking shelter with Russia is better than being in the cold and dark"— a clear indication of Shevardnadze's dependence on Russian sources of energy. (MTAVARI GAZETI, 19 Oct 03 FBIS-SOV-2003-1019 via World News Connection; See also recent editions of NIS Observed)

Indeed, neither the West nor its institutions have given him much of an alternative with the indefinite postponement of scheduled IMF talks, which were to discuss a three-year strategy to aid Georgia, including the rescheduling of its debts to Paris Club members, (KAVKASIA PRESS, 11 Oct 03 FBIS-SOV-2003-1012 via World News Connection) while continued Western pressure over the upcoming Georgian parliamentary elections has distracted President Shevardnadze. A stream of Western dignitaries has recently traipsed through Georgia, including Senator John McCain, General John Shalikashvili, Strobe Talbott, and James Baker, as well as representatives of the Council of Europe, and of the National Democratic Institute for Foreign Affairs (NDI) (WWW.EURASIANNET.ORG/departments/insight/articles/pp101903.shtml). These visitors have been quick to criticize, as in May, when the Council of Europe warned Georgia that it might be put on its black list due to Tbilisi's inability to curb corruption. In an increasingly tense environment, Georgia fears that the U.S. may criticize the parliamentary elections and further reduce foreign

aid. However, an additional cut in foreign assistance, juxtaposed with European and American criticism of Georgia's government would push the country further into the Russian sphere, a development that President Shevardnadze, President Bush, nor the E.U. want to encourage.

Newly Independent States: Central Asia

By David Montgomery

Trade and the persistent issue of borders

It can be argued that the existing border disputes of Central Asia have roots in the incongruity between the historical khanate boundaries and the boundaries created by the 1920s Soviet delimitation project. Controversy over the post-independence borders periodically presents itself as a challenge for diplomacy and many of the regional trade negotiations are negotiations in fact concerning state sovereignty and external influence. As the European Union, Russia, and the United States all vie for economic and security-related influence, the national borders of Central Asia become increasingly reified and the awkwardness of the ethno-linguistic boundaries of Soviet construction requires negotiation within an internationally accepted state system.

Much of the renewed international interest in Central Asia relates to the "fight against terrorism." To this end, the U.S. and allied forces have established military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and Russian troops have increased their presence in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. October 23 is the date scheduled for the opening ceremony of the Russian airbase in Kant, Kyrgyzstan, which contractually will be operable for 15 years with the possibility of extending the agreement for five year terms and will host over 500 personnel and 20 aircraft, including the Su-25, Su-27 low-flying attack planes, and An-26 planes as well as Mi-8 helicopters. Four MiG-29 fighters arrived at the base on 15 October, where they joined two Su-25s and four L-39s already present. (ITAR-TASS, 0718 GMT,

14 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1014; 0736 GMT, 15 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1015 via World News Connection)

According to Maxim Peshkov, Russian Ambassador to Tajikistan, Russia is in the process of negotiating an agreement with Tajikistan transforming the Russian 201st motorized infantry division "into a Russian military base" that would have responsibilities under the Collective Security Treaty Organization and continued responsibility for guarding the Tajik-Afghan border. (ITAR-TASS, 1531 GMT, 10 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1010; 1339 GMT, 14 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1014 via World News Connection) The proposed transformation of the Russian 201st comes after the September announcement by Nuralisho Nazarov, a senior Tajik official, that Tajikistan no longer required the presence of Russian border troops.

Russian troops along the Tajik-Afghan border routinely report the exchange of artillery fire and the confiscation of drugs being smuggled across the border, including a recent cache of 929 kg of opium, 111 kg of heroin and 19 kg of marijuana. (ITAR-TASS, 0816 GMT, 8 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1008; 0648 GMT, 6 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1006; FBIS-SOV-2003-1006 via World News Connection) Tajik border troops have a less impressive reputation of stopping drug traffickers and Nazarov's comment was most likely a statement made to express Tajik dissatisfaction with Russia's recent crackdown on Tajik migrant labor and Tajikistan's exclusion from the core of the CIS Unified Economic Space established at the September summit in Yalta.(WWW.EURASIANET.ORG, 22 Sep 03)

Relations between Russia and Tajikistan have been more strained since the U.S. dramatically increased its presence in Tajikistan, after 11 September 2001. And the connection between Nazarov's comment and economics may seem a stretch until one considers both the stabilizing presence of Russian troops in Tajikistan and the impact of Russia's restriction of migrant workers has on the Tajik economy. Remittances from Tajiks working abroad totaled close to \$250 million

in 2002, an amount that parallels the country's annual budget; most of those workers go to Russia. According to a commentary in the Tajik newspaper Asia-Plus: "Putin has given the 'green light' to about half a million Kyrgyz labor migrants in exchange for a military base [Kant] and the deployment of 500 servicemen in Kyrgyzstan." (WWW.EURASIANET.ORG, 7 Oct 03)

By implying a relationship between preferential treatment for Kyrgyz migrant laborers over Tajiks wishing to work in Russia, and security via the military base, a legitimate observation is made about the complexity of relations within the region. The Kazakh newspaper Ekspress-K recently carried an article entitled "Good protection for big oil," wherein it reported the U.S. Department of Defense would financially support the construction of a military base in Atyrau, Kazakhstan. (EKSPRESS-K, 0001 GMT, 7 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1007 via World News Connection) As this would be the first such base in the Caspian region, the Kazakh press was making a connection between U.S. interests in the oil rich region and military support aimed at protecting American investments abroad.

As Russia and the U.S. vie for influence through support of various defense initiatives, interdependent trade relations are seen as an equally important aspect of regional security. The European Union will continue the implementation of its Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Kyrgyzstan, a project aimed at improving cultural, economic, legal, political, scientific, and social cooperation. The E.U. plans to develop more PCA projects with both Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. (TIMES OF CENTRAL ASIA, 26 Sep 03 via www.times.kg) Tajikistan is actively taking steps to expand trade with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, in hopes of gaining greater stability and influence along borders. (ITAR-TASS, 0821 GMT, 11 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1011 via World News Connection) Russian President Vladimir Putin has expressed interest in deepening ties with Uzbekistan along areas of mutual interest and Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister and Economics Minister, Rustam Azimov, described Russia as Uzbekistan's "main trade

partner." (ITAR-TASS, 1132 GMT, 13 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1013; 1326 GMT, 10 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1010 via World News Connection)

The recent development of the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) project, the shortest ground route for transporting goods from Europe to Asia, is aimed at creating stability by fostering a mutually beneficial route for trade and tourism. This "New Silk Road," as it is unofficially called, is being developed out of an E.U. initiative aimed at bringing Europe and Central Asia closer together. (TIMES OF CENTRAL ASIA, 10 Oct 03 via www.times.kg) But there are hurdles ahead for developing relations with Central Asia.

It has been only since 15 October that Uzbekistan's national currency (the Uzbek Sum) has been convertible on the world monetary market without restrictions. (ITAR-TASS, 2028 GMT, 15 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1015 via World News Connection) While this makes it the last of the former Soviet countries to remove currency restrictions and thereby remove one obstacle to foreign investment, a recent survey of 133 countries by the London-based NGO Transparency International placed Tajikistan as 124th on its Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), ranking it among the most corrupt countries in the world. On the whole, Central Asia ranked very high regarding corruption, with Kyrgyzstan ranking 118th on the CPI whereas Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were 100th on the list. Turkmenistan was not included in the index, but certainly it would not have fared well and would fit in the rankings of its Central Asian neighbors. (TIMES OF CENTRAL ASIA, 16 Oct 03 via www.times.kg)

Given the levels of corruption and the continued disagreement over delineated borders (KABAR, 0927 GMT, 7 Oct 03; FBIS-SOV-2003-1007 via World News Connection), it bodes well for the countries of Central Asia that issues of defense and influence can be combined with trade.

Copyright Boston University Trustees 2003

Unless otherwise indicated, all articles appearing in this journal were written especially for *Analyst*. This article was originally published at <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/digest/vol8/ed0817.html>.