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The ISCIP Analyst

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1998-02-19

# The ISCIP Analyst, Volume III, Issue 3

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**THE ISCIP ANALYST**  
**Volume 3, Number 3 (February 19, 1998)**

**Russian Federation: Executive Branch**

By Susan Cavan

**PRESIDENCY**

**Presidential granddaughter interviewed**

Moskovsky komsomolets (9 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029) reprinted excerpts of an interview Yel'tsin's granddaughter Katya gave to Paris Match in December. While Katya provides some minor insights into the president's behavior, including his avoidance of the Osennaya Ulitsa residence in favor of the Gorki-9 dacha, the primary political point of the interview seemed to be a reiteration of the family's desire that Yel'tsin not seek re-election.

When asked what had been the most difficult period for the Yel'tsin family over the past few years, Katya perhaps surprisingly skipped over the president's bypass surgery, citing instead the June 1996 dismissal of Korzhakov and Barsukov. "The entire family was in a state of shock," claimed Katya, "and it took us a long time to recover from the blow."

**APPARAT**

**Tarpishchev back at center court?**

Former presidential tennis coach and confidante Shamil Tarpishchev has re-emerged through increased press attention following the dismissal of Boris Berezovsky and, perhaps, the waning of Anatoli Chubais' influence in the Kremlin.

In an interview with Moskovskaya pravda (6 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029), Tarpishchev noted a "coincidence" in the timing of his regained prominence and Berezovsky's ouster, but declined to connect the events, claiming he shares no

common areas of interest or activity with Berezovsky. Any ill will Berezovsky may hold for the tennis pro Tarpishchev explained as the clash between his role as a prominent sports figure and the interaction of politics and sports.

Tarpishchev's appointment last year as an adviser to Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov apparently provided a suitable platform for his renewed involvement in national sporting events. In addition to captaining the men's Davis Cup team, Tarpishchev is also once again in (at least partial) control of the Kremlin Cup tennis tournament. This position provides significant access to Kremlin personnel, and indeed Tarpishchev cites presidential chief of staff Valentin Yumashev as one of his "friends left in the government."

On the subject of another of his well-known associates, Tarpishchev believes Aleksandr Korzhakov remains loyal to the president, despite the scandalous memoir he penned last year. Tarpishchev notes, perhaps ominously, that Korzhakov did not "cover even one-tenth of the information" in his possession, and adds that he himself has many suitcases of compromising material that could someday form his own memoir.

Tarpishchev also weighs in on the subject of the Chechen war and Korzhakov's alleged hawkish role in the decision to resort to military intervention. According to Tarpishchev, Yel'tsin announced the decision to send troops into Chechnya during a dinner with Korzhakov, at which Tarpishchev was present. Korzhakov's response was emphatic disapproval of the idea. The truth of this testimony is difficult to gauge unfortunately, especially given its context in an interview, in which Tarpishchev's possible political agendas are only thinly veiled.

### **Borodin profiled**

Pavel Borodin, the Kremlin administrative manager, was the feature of an unusually flattering piece in the government organ Rossiyskiye vesti (23 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-027). While noting the vast amounts of property, businesses,

services and employees encompassed under Borodin's Administration of Affairs, the article's author suggests that "Borodin quite possibly has no equal in terms of influence on the political, administrative, banking, and economic leadership."

Borodin had kept a low profile since last year when he clashed with then newly appointed First Deputy Boris Nemtsov over the procurement of Russian, rather than foreign-made, luxury cars for administration officials. In a reference to the conflict with Nemtsov, Borodin is quoted as saying, "If I am ordered to do so, I will make officials use Volgas or even reindeer." It might be interesting to follow up and see just how many officials complied with the president's instructions and traded in their Mercedes for a Volga (or reindeer).

The RV profile provides quite complimentary insights of Borodin such as he "is a born organizer" and he has "a keen perception of Russia's culture." If Borodin's administrative position required public or legislative oversight, this article might have reflected a perhaps heavy-handed public relations initiative. Borodin, however, serves at the pleasure of a president, who has just recently announced his intention not to seek re-election. This article may therefore best be interpreted as a reminder to future presidential candidates of the potential power and influence of the man who administers the Kremlin's perks.

## **SECURITY SERVICES**

### **Streletsky's turn on the book tour circuit**

Valeri Streletsky, former chief of the Anticorruption Department of the Presidential Security Services, former head of the National Sports Foundation and former all-around deputy to Aleksandr Korzhakov, is poised to publish his own memoir of compromising material. Judging from a recent interview with Sobesednik (Dec 97, No. 47; FBIS-SOV-98-029), look for Streletsky's book to focus on the various financial scandals connected to the figures along the financial-banking-privatization political axis.

Streletsky also bemoaned the fate of the Presidential Security Service in the wake of his and Korzhakov's departures, claiming that its "entire skeleton is gone." He likewise saves a few choice words for Yevgeni Savostyanov, deputy chief of the Presidential Staff who supervises personnel selection: "He is also a member of the 'banker's team', and does only what he is ordered to."

Streletsky is currently an assistant to Duma Deputy Aleksandr Korzhakov.

### **Baturin ready for takeoff?**

Believe it or not: Former Defense Council Chair Yuri Baturin is apparently in training for a space mission to Mir and may join an expedition later this year. According to the head of the Cosmonauts Training Center, Lt. General Petr Klimuk, "Baturin is working hard" and his possible space mission "is not a caprice." (ITAR-TASS, 23 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-023)

A final decision on Baturin's participation in an upcoming space flight is due later this month.

## **SECURITY SERVICES**

### **Stepashin announces reintegration of border services**

Justice Minister Sergei Stepashin, who once headed the security services, announced the re-subordination of the Federal Border Guards to the Federal Security Service. Stepashin characterized the reorganization as "quite normal," and added that the initial decision to separate the border guards from the security organs "was dictated by political reasons." (Interfax, 27 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-027)

The Border Guards were separated out from the security ministry in December 1993, at the same time the ministry itself was "disbanded" and reorganized as the Federal Counterintelligence Service (FCS). At the time, President Yel'tsin called the security ministry "unreformable," and its dissolution was believed to be

a repercussion of its poor performance during the September-October confrontation between the executive and parliament. Sergei Stepashin became first deputy director of the newly formed FCS in December 1993, but quickly became director when Nikolai Golushko was dismissed some three months later.

## Russian Federation: Foreign Relations

By John McDonough

### **Primakov positive on EU talks**

"Everything we expected from meetings within the Russia-EU Cooperation Council in Brussels has come true, it was a successful day," Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov told an ITAR-TASS correspondent on his arrival in Paris on a working visit. The minister pointed out that there was no need for any hierarchy, but there is a need for the OSCE to coordinate the activities of all other organizations operating in this sphere -- NATO, the Council of Europe and others. Primakov concluded, the formation of an independent European center is under way and Russia needs to be "sufficiently close to this center." (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1749 GMT, 27 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-027)

### **US-Iraq confrontation sparks Russian responses**

Ultrnationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said on Friday, 30 January, that his Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) planned to demand severing diplomatic relations with the United States as a response to US plans to use armed force against Iraq. The LDPR would present a demand to that effect to President Boris Yel'tsin, Zhirinovskiy told Interfax. Zhirinovskiy also said that, when the State Duma reconvenes on Wednesday, 4 February, LDPR deputies "will demand severing diplomatic relations with the United States, recalling our ambassador from that country and expelling the US ambassador from the Russian Federation." (Interfax, 1842 GMT, 30 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-030)

In a more diplomatic vein, Primakov said at a meeting with correspondents in Moscow that the situation concerning Iraq "is taking on an ominous character, because there is more and more information to the effect that a strike against Iraq may become a reality. We think that this might be a very serious error that will produce many negative results affecting not only the region, but also the whole system of international relations." According to Primakov, Russia favors the destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. "But we think that, at present, this aim can be achieved by diplomatic means," the minister said. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1318 GMT, 2 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-033)

In its statement on the situation around Iraq, the State Duma "decisively condemns attempts to blackmail Iraq by threatening to employ nuclear weapons, regardless of who is making such attempts." In the resolution on the aggravation of the situation in Iraq, the State Duma once again condemned the use of force in the region and said that "in case military force is employed against Iraq without a UN Security Council's authorization, Russia will consider itself free from its commitments under UN Security Council's resolution on sanctions against Iraq." Meanwhile, Primakov said he opposed the resolution's provision concerning Russia's unilateral withdrawing from the regime of sanctions. (ITAR-TASS, 1742 GMT, 3 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-034)

### **Primakov: Russia backs 'PLO Line' on self-rule**

Moscow backs the PLO line toward more Palestinian self-rule and further talks with Israel, Primakov said during a meeting with the secretary of the PLO executive committee in Moscow on Friday, 6 February. The sides agreed that the key to progress at Palestinian-Israeli talks is "scrupulous compliance with the earlier-reached accords and commitments, especially those related to the redeployment of Israeli troops on the West Bank of the Jordan." Warning against unilateral actions, "above all on settlement projects," the Russian and Palestinian delegations called for "effective Palestinian-Israeli interaction in coordinated

areas, including the crucial area of guaranteed security." (Interfax, 1533 GMT, 6 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-037)

## Russian Federation: Domestic Issues and Legislative Branch

By Michael Thurman

### **REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

#### **New head of Krasnoyarsk legislature elected**

Aleksandr Uss, the leader of the "Union of Deed and Order" movement, was elected chairman of the Krasnoyarsk territorial legislature. The legislature had its first session after the elections of December 1997. Uss defeated a candidate of the Russian Communist Party by five votes. Before the election as the legislature chairman, Uss was the vice-governor of the Krasnoyarsk territory. (ITAR-TASS, 1933 GMT, 9 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-009)

### **FEDERAL ASSEMBLY**

#### **Duma expresses concern over NATO membership for Baltic states**

The anti-NATO commission of the Russian State Duma has voiced "deep concern" over US support for the Baltic states membership in NATO. The Duma also sees such "support" as evidence of Western plans for further expansion of NATO eastward.

The commission's statement points to the partnership charter between the US and the Baltic states recently signed in Washington, and the Baltic states' refusal of Russian security guarantees as evidence of NATO's expansionist tendencies. The commission believes the Russia-NATO cooperation agreements are actually a "smoke screen for the Western [countries' re-drafting] of dividing lines in Europe."

The commission's statement points to the development of "apartheid systems in Latvia and Estonia where thousands of people are denied political rights on ethnic grounds" [read ethnic Russians].

If the history of Russian/Baltic states relations is not enough to explain Baltic hesitance in embracing Russian security "guarantees," the Duma's hostile attitude toward their internal affairs certainly should be. (Interfax, 1054 GMT, 15 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-015)

### **Kremlin asks Federation Council to support election reform**

Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroeve has agreed to support a first-past-the-post or plurality system for electing all deputies to the State Duma.

Stroeve explained that the reason for the present 50/50 system of elections (50 percent elected by single-member districts, and 50 percent seated by national party lists) is that, when drafting the present system, the young Russian democracy desired to rid itself of single-party communist rule. But Stroeve argues that the system has gone too far the other way and has effectively eliminated any party order. The proposed changes would make the Duma more responsive to the will of the people and more democratic. It should also be noted that such changes would end the representative role of parties in Russian politics, and mean the construction of a system of geographic representation akin to the American House of Representatives.

Second only to the question of land reform, the reorganization of the system of elections is probably the most important "structural" problem left to be resolved. It is equally clear that the present members of the Duma, especially the communists and the followers of Zhirinovskiy, will do everything possible to prevent any changes in the system of elections that would mean the end of their dominance in the Duma. Not surprisingly, the Communist Party of the Russian

Federation (CPRF) leader G. Zyuganov has already stated that the Duma will never allow the existing procedure of electing its deputies to be changed. For this reason, Yel'tsin is attempting an end run of the Duma by soliciting the support of the regions through the Federation Council and by courting leaders of various regions directly.

Also, Yel'tsin's appeal to the less-than-independent judicial system for constitutional "clarification" can be understood as an attempt to change the electoral system without involving the Duma. The fact that the present system of elections is the result of laws drafted subsequent to the ratification of the Constitution and, therefore, is not a constitutional question, would seem to suggest that the Constitutional Court cannot really be involved in this process. But a presidential decree supported by the regions and the Federation Council, and "legitimated" by a ruling from the Constitutional Court, could, possibly, be enough to change the system of elections, or at least provide cause for a nationwide referendum on the question. (Moskovskaya pravda, 16 Jan 98, p. 1; FBIS-SOV-98-019)

### **Duma rejects bill on national symbols**

The Russian State Duma has turned down the national flag, emblem and anthem proposed by President Boris Yel'tsin mainly because the dominant communists were committed to the former Soviet national symbols.

Only 108 deputies supported the constitutional bill submitted by the president where 300 votes were required for passage. The white-blue-and-red flag was proposed as the national flag, a two-headed eagle was proposed as the national emblem and music from a song by Mikhail Glinka was proposed as the anthem (Interfax, 1228 GMT, 23 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-023).

While national symbols are very important, debates over their forms can also be very divisive. At this point in the development of Russian democracy, a battle

over symbols can serve only to polarize the legislature, making it nearly impossible for the real business of the country to continue. In fact, with an executive branch proven ready and willing to rule by decree, now is not the time for the legislature to paralyze itself over an issue of little concern to the average citizen. Luckily for everyone involved, the Big Four (the consultative council which includes the president, prime minister, speaker of the Duma, and chairman of the Federation Council) have agreed to table the debate by referring it to an independent commission for further study. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1133 GMT, 29 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029).

## Russian Federation: Armed Forces

By CDR Curtis Stevens

### **Sergeev visits Germany**

Defense Minister Igor Sergeev completed a two-day visit to Germany on 29 January 1998. Although the visit was well received by both militaries, Marshall Sergeev denounced German, Polish and Danish plans for a joint corps. (Interfax, 1958 GMT, 29 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029)

### **Spacecraft numbers affected by planned budget cuts**

Russian Space Agency head Yuri Koptev said the number of Russian orbiting spacecraft would be slashed by about 30% in the next two to three years. He cited financial hardships, changes in the world military and political situation and market reforms concerning military and commercial uses of spaces as the reasons for the cutbacks. (ITAR-TASS, 1928 GMT, 29 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029)

### **Troop movements on Dagestani-Chechen border**

A 342-men battalion of paratroopers took up combat positions along the Dagestani-Chechen border at the end of January. Colonel General Georgei

Shpak, Commander of Russia's Airborne Troops, visited the battalion at the beginning of February to resolve issues arising from the incorporation of airborne troops into the patrol routine of the Interior Ministry troops already patrolling the border. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 0849 GMT, 1 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-032)

In other moves near the Chechen border, Air Force Commander Colonel General Anatoly Kornukov said nuclear weapons had been removed from the airbase at Mozdok, in North Ossetia-Alania, just 10 kilometers north of the Chechen border. Four TU-95MS Bear bombers remain at the base and the air force commander said these aircraft would be moved "if a threat arises" from the Chechens. General Kornukov was on a tour of the North Caucasus Military District to inspect air force readiness to counter terrorist attacks from Chechnya. (Jamestown Foundation Monitor, 6 Feb 98)

### **Personnel issues profiled**

Keeping forces active and ready continues to constitute a large task for the military. Fifty servicemen were killed by their colleagues in 1997. So far this year, 10 were killed in January. Official government statistics showed 1017 military personnel died from various accidents or suicide last year. These figures are questionable, however: In mid-December 1997, the defense ministry had reported 2,000 soldier deaths in 1997 from hazing. (See Editorial Digest Vol. III, No. 1) Last year over 70,000 young men failed to turn out during the Spring and Autumn conscription call-ups. In addition, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers reported more than 12,000 soldiers have deserted due to severe hazing and bullying. (Argumenty i fakty, 6 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035)

Highlighting the continuing pay problems facing the military, the defense ministry has proposed a new plan to pay junior officers. Colonels and lieutenant colonels would lose benefits such as quarterly bonuses, holiday and housing subsidies; the money would be transferred to pay junior officers. Of note is that general

officers would be not be affected by this proposal. (Jamestown Foundation Monitor, 6 Feb 98)

## Newly Independent States: Western Region

By Tracy Gerstle

### **UKRAINE**

#### **Separatist tensions erupt once again in the Crimea**

On 30 January, Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma responded rather heavily-handedly to the renewal of separatist sentiment in the Crimean Supreme Soviet and talk of another referendum on Crimea's reuniting with Russia. In an effort to reestablish control over the region, Kuchma dismissed Yalta's mayor, Oleksandr Kaylus, and the region's prosecutor for abuse of power. As justification for his decree, Kuchma cited their failure to stem the "tidal wave of crime in the town." (Ukrainian TV, 1900 GMT, 30 Jan 98; British Broadcasting Company) He gave the example of an August inspection of the finance directorate in Yalta, which found that funds from the Chernobyl Disabilities Fund were diverted to purchase an apartment for Yalta's prosecutor. (UT-1 TV Network, 1900 GMT, 30 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-031) He appointed one of his own men, Volodymyr Marchenko, as acting mayor until emergency elections could be held.

In Yalta, the city council refused to implement Kuchma's decree to appoint Marchenko as acting mayor, since council members claimed his appointment was in violation of Ukraine's constitution and their authority. Instead, 20 members of the council barricaded themselves in Yalta's city hall, which was subsequently stormed by firefighters and the National Guard armed with assault rifles. (NTV, 1100 GMT, 3 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-034) Many members of the council were subsequently detained, including several deputies from the Party of Economic Revival, which constitutes a two-thirds majority in Yalta's city council. Their

location is unknown. (ORT, 0900 GMT, 12 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company)

In addition to announcing that early elections will be held, the Ukrainian parliament made several amendments to the law "On the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea," ex post facto legalizing many of President Kuchma's decrees concerning the region over the past few weeks. Crimean MPs can now be suspended if they are recalled by their electors. The amendments also prohibit the parliament's speaker, his assistants and the committee heads from working in profitable enterprises. (ITAR-TASS, 1428 GMT, 10 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-041) However, the Crimean Supreme Council will still be elected through a mixed majority and proportional (50/50) electoral system, which will ensure that the ethnic Russians living in the region will not dominate the Crimean parliament. President Kuchma said that it was better to maintain a majority system, under which non-permanent Ukrainian residents of the region can be elected. (Infobank, 2124 GMT, 22 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-022) Oleksandr Moroz, speaker of the Ukrainian parliament, criticized the current system, noting that it "showed disrespect for the citizens of the peninsula" by stating they were not "politically ready" to choose their own representatives. (ITAR-TASS, 1946 GMT, 24 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-024)

On 12 February, Ukrainian Interior Minister Yuri Kravshenko and special troops, including the Berkut (golden eagle) and Kobra divisions, were sent in to "normalize the situation in Yalta." Kravshenko said that his forces would remain on alert until the 29 March elections. (UNIAN, 1140 GMT, 13 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company)

Comment:

Is this just a repeat of tensions in 1994 when the region nearly passed a referendum to secede from Ukraine and join Russia, or are other motives involved? Granted the Crimean parliament scheduled a vote to renew the

referendum on seceding from Ukraine last week. However, some Western diplomats and local officials have also commented that whoever controls the city will also control the privatization of 174 hotels and sanatoria scheduled for auction in the coming year. Oleksandr Kaylus, Yalta's former acting mayor, noted that these buildings "are worth a mere \$2 million...though the land they are on...is worth at least \$40 million." (Financial Times, 12 Feb 98)

Kuchma's hard-handed tactics have also given Crimeans further impetus to secede. On 5 February the Crimean Supreme Soviet supported a proposal to once again hold a referendum on secession which will be included with the 29 March parliamentary elections. (Radio Rossii Network, 0300 GMT, 5 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-036) If the Ukrainian government does not interfere in the referendum, it could possibly pass this time around. A recent poll by a Crimean political institute found that more than half of those surveyed thought Ukraine's policy toward the peninsula was "colonial".(ITAR-TASS, 1829 GMT, 14 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-045)

### **US pressure on Ukraine builds to halt nuclear technology transfer**

In the framework of the recent Kuchma-Gore Commission talks, American Vice President Al Gore told President Kuchma that, if a contract with the Ukrainian Turboatom factory to supply two turbines to the Iranian nuclear power station near Bushehr goes forward, the US will withhold all technological and humanitarian aid. This would also block a \$1.2 billion bid by America's Westinghouse Electric Corp. to complete the two nuclear stations

Ukraine desperately needs so that it may shut down the Chernobyl reactor.

Earlier the Clinton administration had offered Ukraine "a package of small business loans, Export-Import Bank credits and joint ventures" as well as expanded military and space cooperation between the two countries, to prevent the sale. (International Herald Tribune, 9 Feb 98)

Ukrainian officials said that a final decision on whether to supply the reactors will be made in the next two to three weeks. They defended the sale by stating Turboatom intends to take part only in "the electrical cycle of the Russian-Iranian contract and has nothing to do with the nuclear cycle." (UNIAN, 1510 GMT, 14 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company)

### **Russian Duma delays ratification of Friendship Treaty**

It has been nine months since President Kuchma and Russian President Boris Yel'tsin signed the Russian-Ukrainian Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership Treaty, while Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and former Ukrainian Prime Minister Pavel Lazarenko simultaneously approved another agreement on the division of the Black Sea Fleet. The Friendship Treaty has since been ratified in the Ukrainian Parliament, although it continues to be held up in the Russian Duma.

Allegations have appeared in the Russian press that the Russian foreign ministry has encouraged the Duma to delay the Black Sea agreement until the Ukrainian parliament gives its final approval to the fleet's division, which has stalled in the Ukrainian parliament.

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, Gennadi Tarasov, stated that the ministry "believes that the treaty, although not yet ratified by the Russian State Duma is already positively influencing the general atmosphere of Russian-Ukrainian relations" (ITAR-TASS, 1745 GMT, 12 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company) and that parliamentary hearings on the treaty are scheduled for 3 March, after which it will be referred to the Duma for ratification.

## **MOLDOVA**

### **Talks between Tiraspol and Chisinau start up again**

Anatol Taranu, an advisor to the Moldovan president, has resigned as the head negotiator for Chisinau in talks with Tiraspol, so that he may run in the March parliamentary elections. He has been replaced by Moldovan Deputy Foreign Minister Vasile Sova. (Basapress, 1634 GMT, 13 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company) This is in contradiction to a report in the last digest, which stated that talks would be delayed due to Mr. Taranu's candidacy. Evidently Chisinau decided that the talks have reached a crucial stage and could not be delayed further, having only recently resumed after a two-month hiatus. Moldova's negotiating team may have also been willing to continue in order to prevent Dniestr's troops from taking over the security zone patrolled by the two sides and a peacekeeping corps.

To further accommodate Tiraspol, Chisinau also removed one of its negotiators to whom Dniestr officials had objected: Vitalie Bruma, a deputy in the interior ministry.

The talks were almost halted before they could even resume due to a proclamation of statehood by the Dniestr authorities, which Chisinau sees as a direct violation of prior normalization agreements signed in Moscow. A meeting scheduled between Moldovan President Petru Lucinschi and Dniestr's leader Igor Smirnov was halted, so that Moldovan officials and their Russian, Ukrainian and OSCE moderators could prepare a reply. (Basapress, 13 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company)

This was the culmination of several retaliatory measures between the two which began on 1 February, when Moldova began to delay freight entering into the Dniestr region. (RIA, 1134 GMT 13 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company) In response, Smirnov decreed on 7 February that all foreigners, including Moldovan citizens, arriving in the region who do not reside there permanently will have to register within a three-hour period and pay a ten dollar duty. (RIA, 1037 GMT, 7

Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company) He also imposed a tax on all goods coming through the region to Moldova. (ITAR-TASS, 1523 GMT, 12 Feb 98)

### **Future hopes for reunification of Moldova and Romania foiled?**

On 13 February, Moldova and Romania concluded another round of talks on a basic bilateral treaty which the two sides had initiated in 1992. Radio Bucharest reported that Romania had wanted a "fraternity treaty" between the "two Romanian states"; however, Moldova objected to this terminology, preferring to call it a treaty of "good-neighborliness." The next round of negotiations are scheduled from April-May 1998 after Moldova's parliamentary elections. (RFE/RL Newsline, 16 Feb 98)

The treaty recognizes the common language and historical heritage of the two states. Moldova insisted that no references be made to the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which led to the annexation of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina from Romania to form the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (now Moldova), since this would in effect question the validity of the Moldovan state. (Basapress, 1757 GMT, 14 Feb 98; British Broadcasting Company)

## **Newly Independent States: Central Asia**

By Monika Shepherd

### **TAJIKISTAN**

#### **Tajik, Uzbek governments come to terms on debt restructuring**

During Uzbek Prime Minister Utkir Sultanov's recent (4 February) one-day working visit to Dushanbe, he and President Rahmonov signed an agreement on the precise terms of Tajikistan's debt rescheduling. The Tajik government now owes Uzbekistan between \$151 and \$199 million, which is to be repaid over the course of the next 15 years (Interfax, 1743 GMT, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035). The Tajik government is not required to begin making interest payments on its

debt until 1999, at which point the interest rate will be set at 2.8% (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1114 GMT, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-036).

Several other agreements were also signed on such issues as: water and energy use; cooperation between the two countries' interior ministries on narcotics smuggling and other border area crime; and on reciprocal recognition of each others' customs documents and security (ITAR-TASS World Service, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-036). Plans for President Karimov's upcoming visit to Tajikistan were also finalized, and Tajikistan's entry into the Central Asian Customs Union (currently consisting of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan) was further discussed (Interfax, 1743 GMT, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035).

### **Comment**

Following his meeting with President Rahmonov, Prime Minister Sultanov told journalists that no political issues had been discussed this time, only matters of economic and legal importance; however, the agreement between the two countries' interior ministries on crime fighting in the border regions could prove to be quite politically sensitive. Although he is no longer making headlines, Col. Mahmud Khudoiberdiev, to the best of anyone's knowledge, is still encamped in Uzbekistan with his supporters, and according to his own words in an interview with Nezavisimaya gazeta some months ago, has not yet given up on the idea of returning to Tajikistan. It is not inconceivable that some of his supporters occasionally do cross the border back into Tajikistan either to obtain or unload supplies. If the Tajik and Uzbek interior ministries should capture a few of Khudoiberdiev's supporters trying to cross the border, this would surely have a most undesirable effect on the two countries' relations, which are still somewhat tentative. Furthermore, there is the issue of Leninobod, Tajikistan's northern oblast', where strong opposition to President Rahmonov's government exists. Leninobod oblast' maintains good relations with Uzbekistan and there are suspicions that the Uzbek government might be supporting this opposition. Will border violations along the Uzbek-Leninobod border be penalized or ignored?

Uzbekistan has also recently been accusing Tajikistan of harboring "Wahabi terrorists" and of providing them with a safe haven and training camps for their raids into Uzbek territory. The Tajik government seems to be dealing with these charges by simply ignoring them, but this may yet change, especially if Tajik citizens crossing into Uzbekistan are arrested and held as terrorists. Then again, President Karimov's charges could provide the Tajik government with a pretext to crack down on opposition activists on its own territory, especially in areas close to the Uzbek border (e.g. in Leninobod and in the vicinity of Tursunzade).

### **UTO, Tajik government release more POWs**

In an interview on 6 February with an Iranian news agency, Davlat Usmon, the United Tajik Opposition's (UTO's) military chief of staff, announced that all but 17 of the Tajik government troops taken prisoner by the opposition during the war (principally since 1995) had been released. Under the tutelage of a UTO delegation headed by Said Abdullo Nuri, Mirzo Ziyoev, the UTO commander in charge of the area surrounding Tavildora (a town east of Dushanbe, close to Gorno-Badakhshon Oblast'), released 69 prisoners who were flown to Dushanbe on 1 February. Seventeen of the prisoners decided not to return to Dushanbe, according to Usmon (Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1600 GMT, 6 Feb 98; FBIS-UMA-98-038).

On 11 February the Tajik government freed 109 opposition prisoners, and Tajik presidential adviser Mizrob Kabirov informed journalists that this was the last group of opposition POWs that was eligible for release under the terms of the general amnesty which was signed in August 1997 (Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 0330 GMT, 12 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-043).

### **Tajik president names four UTO members to cabinet**

On 12 February, presidential spokesman Zafar Saidov announced that President Rahmonov had signed decrees naming four leading opposition figures to cabinet posts. Davlat Usmon was named minister of economics and foreign trade,

Davlatbek Makhsudov was appointed minister of water resources, Khudoberdy Khuliknazarov was named labor and employment minister, and Rakhmim Karimov was appointed chairman of the Tajik Customs Committee (Interfax, 1213 GMT, 12 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-043).

### **Comment**

According to the terms of the general peace agreement signed between the Tajik government and the UTO last summer, the UTO is to be granted a 30% share in the new government. Originally, President Rahmonov agreed to cede at least one of the "power ministries" to the opposition, but he has yet to announce this decision publicly. The cabinet posts that he has thus far allotted to the UTO are not any of the more prestigious positions, and it remains to be seen whether he will agree to appoint UTO representatives to some of the most influential posts, and whether the UTO will be satisfied with the appointments that it does receive. Of course, President Rahmonov is hardly the most impartial arbitrator in this situation. Perhaps he should not be the one to make the final decisions on which posts are granted to the UTO. According to the peace agreement, the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) is responsible for forming a transition government. Since both sides enjoy equal representation on the NRC, perhaps this body's decisions should carry somewhat more influence in the naming of a coalition cabinet.

## **Newly Independent States: Caucasus**

By Miriam Lansky

### **ARMENIA**

#### **Petrosyan's 'party of peace' defeated**

President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, who led the Karabakh movement since 1988 and has served as president since 1990, resigned on 3 February . His resignation was triggered by the defection of cabinet and parliamentary members

to the opposition. These events ended a five-month struggle over Armenia's position on the OSCE Minsk group proposals for the settlement of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Petrosyan supported the international initiative which would have required Nagorno-Karabakh to return conquered regions of Azerbaijan proper to Azerbaijani jurisdiction during the first phase of a three-step process. Petrosyan faced formidable opposition from Robert Kocharian, who was the president of Nagorno-Karabakh before he was appointed Armenian prime minister in 1997. Kocharian and other Armenian and Karabakh officials publicly dissented from the presidential position and essentially portrayed the president as a traitor to the Karabakh cause, someone who was willing to give up hard-won military victories without receiving equivalent concessions from Baku.

Nagorno-Karabakh has rejected the phased approach and a package deal that would have resulted in a formal subordination of the region to Azerbaijan. A 7-8 January joint meeting of the Nagorno-Karabakh leadership and the Armenian Security Council ended in deadlock over the issue and pointed to deep fissures among the Armenian leaders. Defense Minister Vazgen Sarkisian and Karabakh-born Interior and Security Minister Serzh Sarkisian sided with Kocharian and the Nagorno-Karabakh leadership. (RFE/RL Newline, 14 Jan 98)

Two weeks later, unsuccessful assassination attempts against three Petrosyan allies--the head of the presidential security service, Major General Romik Ghazarian, General Artsrun Markarian, the commander of the Internal Troops, and Ruben Hairapetian, the leader of Yerevan's Avan district--further aggravated the situation. (Jamestown Foundation Monitor, 22 Jan 98) Those allied with the president advised him to discipline insubordinate members of the government, called for the imposition of a state of emergency, and chided the government for its indifference to those crimes. (Snark, 23 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-026) The opposing side accused presidential supporters of staging the incidents to gain

public sympathy. Rumors of Kocharian's resignation, of a Dashnak coup, and of the distribution of arms to Yerevan residents contributed to extreme tension in the capital.

On 24 January, Defense Minister Vazgen Sarkisian made a statement in which he promised not to bring the military into the domestic dispute but also accused the presidential side of staging the assassination attempts. He declared his support for the opposition by saying, "When accusations are made against him [Kocharian] because of some people, then, at the end of the day, these people can be replaced...." Answering charges that Karabakh had taken the lead in formulating Armenian policy, Sarkisian called for unity and said that the only thing to be feared from Karabakh is an influx of refugees. (Noyan Tapan, 24 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-026) Five days later, the leader of the National Democratic Union (DNU), Vazgen Manukyan, began to campaign outright for the president's resignation. (29 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029.) At the same time, the president's former supporters, including the foreign minister and the head of the Central Bank, began to submit resignations, and deputies formerly aligned with the ruling Armenian Pan-National Movement (APNM) defected to the opposition.

On 3 February, Petrosyan appeared on television to tell the nation that "bodies of power" had demanded his resignation and that he had decided to comply to forestall a deeper crisis. "The party of peace has suffered a defeat" he said. "All the same, sooner or later peace will blaze its trail." (Noyan Tapan, 3 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035)

According to the Armenian constitution, the parliamentary chairman was to become acting president until new elections could be held. However, since the parliamentary chairman, Babken Ararktsian of the APNM, resigned, Prime Minister Robert Kocharian took over as acting president. Elections are scheduled for 16 March. (Interfax, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035)

On his first full day in office Kocharian made amply clear that Armenia's conciliatory stance was a thing of the past by telling journalists that he doubted whether Armenia should conduct intensive negotiations within the confines of the OSCE Minsk group. However, he also indicated that Armenia's new position should be articulated by the new president. (Interfax, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035) On the same day, the defense minister said that he did not expect the war to resume in the next two years and that he would like Armenia to "freeze the status quo in Nagorno-Karabakh." (Interfax, 4 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-035) On the following day Kocharian characterized the present situation, where Armenian forces occupy 20% of Azeri territory, as the most stable and added that the formulation of a package settlement agreeable to all the sides could take as long as 10 to 15 years. (Snark, 5 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-036)

On 5 February Vazgen Manukyan announced his candidacy in the presidential race. Officially, he garnered 41.29% percent of the vote in the 1996 elections. However, because results of that election were under deep suspicion (Petrosyan's party falsified the results), Manukyan has claimed to be the real winner of that poll. (Interfax, 5 Feb 98; FBIS-SOV-98-036) Kocharian is not an Armenian citizen so he may not be eligible to run for president.

## Newly Independent States: Baltic States

By Kate Martin

### **ESTONIA**

#### **General Staff, ministry feuding continues as cooperation agreements are signed**

In an ironic twist, the General Staff took to the media to protest the fact that members of the defense ministry had publicly aired disagreements in the media. The dispute centers around the public utterances, by Defense Academy leadership and the head of the defense training office at the ministry of defense, about the officer training system. A procedure envisaged in laws and other

legislative acts to resolve issues, and is not done through media channels, the spokesman announced through media channels. (Radio Tallinn Network, 1800 GMT, 27 Jan 98; FBIS-UMA-98-027)

Estonia has been fairly open-minded about officer training, seeking out assistance from many sources. At the end of January the government signed a military cooperation accord with Finland on military training and materiel aid (Baltic News Service Daily Report, 1100 GMT, 27 Jan 98), and an agreement with Hungary that is aimed at acquiring experience gained by the Hungarian defense forces as they attain interoperability with NATO countries. According to Minister of Defense Andrus Oovel, Hungary's plans to combine its defense ministry and General Staff into one entity will be studied. (Radio Tallinn Network, 1800 GMT, 27 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-027). Given the current animosity between Estonia's defense ministry and General Staff, which has simmered since before the mutual laying of blame for the September 1997 Kurkse disaster, such a combination of forces would prove most interesting.

## **LATVIA**

### **Defense forces receive criticism, offer of help**

Latvia's defense forces are also under international examination, and the reports are not great. Swedish Minister of Defense Bjoern von Sydow told journalists from his country that he was unimpressed by the progress, or lack thereof, made in the development of the Latvian national defense. (Radio Riga Network, 1700 GMT, 29 Jan 98; FBIS-SOV-98-029) The following day, the US Green Berets arrived to provide military instruction. While presumably the Swedish defense minister would have no problems with the capability of the Green Berets, the level of training planned does lend credence to statements that the Latvian defense system is a long way from NATO readiness: Instruction will be provided in basic marksmanship, force protection in peacekeeping operations, small-unit infantry tactics, and staff procedures. (BNS Daily Report, 1100 GMT, 30 Jan 98)

### **Demographics down; rights violations not limited to non-citizens**

Recent statistics from the Justice Ministry Vital Registry Department demonstrate a dramatic decrease in demographics. The number of births registered in 1997 was 19,740, less than one-half the rate of ten years previously, when 42,000 babies were born. Death rates were also down, although not as precipitously: 34,386 in 1997, compared to 30,000 in 1987. (BNS Daily Report, 1700 GMT, 30 Jan 98)

Those who are in Latvia face possible rights violations, according to a recent report by the US Department of State. The report criticized the poor situation in prisons, a weak judiciary system that "is independent but not well trained, efficient or free from corruption," as well as widespread sexual harassment and domestic violence aimed at women. (BNS Daily Report, 1400 GMT, 2 Feb 98) Apparently Russian complaints about discrimination against Russian speakers in Latvia do not encompass the whole problem.

## **LITHUANIA**

### **Ethnic minority issues remain**

While complaints concerning ethnic minorities are often heard about Latvia and Estonia, chiefly by Russian authorities, treatment of non-indigenous persons in the third Baltic state leapt to the fore recently with the second session of the Lithuanian-Polish Interparliamentary Assembly. Spurred by the conflict over allowing the use of the Polish language in Vilnius region (see Editorial Digest, 5 February 98), the smooth proceeding of the Assembly session stalled over a draft resolution which would allow the use of ethnic minority institutions "on a parity basis," according to a Lithuanian proposal. According to one member of the Lithuanian delegation, Kazimiera Prunskiene, both delegations attacked the other country's treatment of ethnic minorities, with varying degrees of heat. (BNS Daily Report, 1700 GMT, 28 Jan 98) "Poland has not adopted any law on either the official language or ethnic minorities. We do not want a situation where

Lithuania must do its utmost, while Poland is watching, passively," said Mecys Laurinkus, chairman of the Seimas Foreign Affairs Committee. (BNS Daily Report, 1100 GMT, 28 Jan 98) The Lithuanian parliament currently is considering amendments to remove contradictions between the Lithuanian law on ethnic minorities and the law of language, which terms Lithuanian as the only official language in government institutions.

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*Analyst*. This article was originally published at

<http://www.bu.edu/iscip/digest/vol3/ed0303.html>.