

International Intelligence

Soviet forces in Germany on alert

Units of the Soviet Armed Forces in East Germany have been put on special alert, according to source reports from West Berlin which were covered front page in the Nov. 26 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Reporting on mass arrests of oppositionists in East Germany, the West German daily stated that the command of the Second Soviet Guard Army, one of five stationed in East Germany, ordered servicemen and officers to stay in their barracks for the time being.

The specific reason for the alert is not clear, but may be related to the upcoming extraordinary Soviet party Central Committee plenum in Moscow, or to the situation in East Germany itself, which, with party boss Erich Honnecker ill, is characterized by intensifying succession fights inside the SED party organization.

Then, there is the unstable situation in Poland; the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG) is not confined to East Germany, but also has strong forces stationed in the western parts of Poland. Fourth, is the possibility of military action against Western Europe. The GSFG exists first and foremost for offensive action against the West.

Informed of the report of a state of alert, a senior British expert on the U.S.S.R. made the background evaluation that the Soviet army is in a "jittery" state after the deaths of Soviet soldiers in the Transcaucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan).

"The army would be jittery, and, considering that the Soviets may have to be using troops soon in the Baltic states, for example, this could be an occasion to test out the alert, down to the barracks level. . . . The army has been in difficulty in the Transcaucasus, and an alert in East Germany might have the dual purpose of dealing with the psychologically jittery feelings, diverting attention in a certain way, while also testing out the alert in case of an actual movement of troops. They want to know the state of readiness of units, formations, and

headquarters, on a spot alert basis. The alert has been decreed in the GSFG, on the front line, so to speak, but it could also be involving other commands, inside and outside the U.S.S.R."

He suggested investigating parallels between patterns of alerts now, and patterns of alerts in the period leading up to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Europeans mend fences with Mideast radicals

West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, a Soviet asset, arrived in Teheran, Iran Nov. 27 to further economic ties between West Germany and the mullahs' dictatorship. Only one day earlier, Libya's number-two, Abdel Salam Jalloud, arrived in Rome for a series of high-level political meetings, possibly including a short audience with the Pope.

Both diplomatic events are consistent with all of the European countries trying to mend fences with the radical Mideast countries.

Along the same lines, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, began a series of denunciations of Iraq in the House of Lords on Nov. 23, particularly on its alleged use of chemical weapons, as a further goodwill gesture toward Teheran. This was followed by a series of articles in the *Financial Times* denouncing Iraq. On Nov. 23, a commentary said, for example, that Iraq's support for a Palestinian state was "obscene" in light of its treatment of the Kurds.

Foreign Minister Genscher was expected to focus his talks in part on the issue of Western hostages in Lebanon, in the hands of gangs effectively controlled by the Iranians. He has already announced that a German-Iranian joint economic commission will meet in both December and February.

Economic issues are also at the top of the agenda in Jalloud's visit to Rome. Libya may seek to use the leverage of its sizeable investments inside Italy to receive privileged trade treatment.

Chinese minister visits Moscow

Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen began an official visit to the Soviet Union Dec. 1-3 at the invitation of Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, the *China Daily* reported Nov. 26. Talks will focus on Kampuchea and other issues of Sino-Soviet bilateral relations, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Nov. 25.

"If the talks go smoothly, then it should be possible to arrange a meeting between the top leaders of the two countries [Mikhail Gorbachov and Deng Xiaoping] at an earlier date than previously thought possible," the spokesman said.

Chou En-lai was the last mainland foreign minister to visit the U.S.S.R., in 1957. Andrei Gromyko, accompanying Nikita Khrushchov, was the last Soviet foreign minister to visit China, in 1959.

Thousands may have been killed in Sri Lanka

About 400 people have been killed by the ethnic Sinhalese extremist JVP organization, and their opposite numbers, the Tamil guerrillas, in Sri Lanka in one month's time, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Vincent Perera, announced in Parliament Nov. 24.

According to Britain's *Guardian* newspaper, the latest official figures are 439 killed in violence in the 30 days before Nov. 15, and 70 killed in the following week. But rumors say that thousands have died.

During 1988, some 700 government officials and ruling party supporters have been killed by the JVP in the country's south. The terrorist organization is a majority-Sinhalese racial chauvinist party.

Parliament overwhelmingly approved a request by Perera to extend the country's state of emergency by one month.

A new dimension to the terror war opened

Briefly

when three foreigners were killed by 25 JVP terrorists in military uniform who raided a sugar factory the night of Nov. 23.

Most of the island nation is now a disaster area, a source in the capital city, Colombo, he told *EIR*. The Northern and Eastern provinces, where a majority are Tamils, that is, of Indian extraction, have somewhat stabilized, with the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) having reduced to 1,000 fighters by an Indian peacekeeping force. Vital infrastructure like water supplies and transport are being restored, he reported.

But the south is under constant attack from the the JVP, whose model for bringing down the government of Junius Jayewardene is the 19th-century "Narodnik" anarchists of Russia. They are destroying bridges, railway tracks, the water supply system, transport, and communications to the point that it is a rare occurrence to receive or make a telephone call, said the source.

People are hungry, even starving, in the southernmost part of Sri Lanka, the *Guardian* reported. The paralysis imposed by the JVP is so complete that food supplies are short and gasoline not obtainable. Buses run only with large groups of guards to keep the drivers from being shot. Banks are only open an hour at a time. Government officials must be driven to work by the army to protect them from assassination.

In one case in Hambantota, JVP guerrillas ordered that the widow of a police officer they had killed should not bury her husband for five days. When she went ahead with the burial, the JVP dug up the decaying body a few days later and dumped it on her doorstep.

Salinas pledges return to growth

Incoming Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari told his nation in his inauguration speech Dec. 2, "The priority will no longer be to pay [foreign debt], but to return

to growth. . . . We are transferring abroad 5% of our national product each year [which] is unacceptable and unsustainable.

"I will avoid confrontation [with creditors], but I declare emphatically and with conviction that the interests of Mexicans are above the interests of creditors."

The *Wall Street Journal* commented that the new President's "rhetoric was tougher than anticipated, though his proposals weren't specific." It reported that U.S. bankers were split over whether this was just rhetoric, or whether political pressure might push Salinas to take real action.

"His aims don't make a whole lot of sense to me," said one banker, noting that Salinas wants to reduce the transfer of resources, reduce the debt, and still get banks to lend new money.

Salinas and his technocratic colleagues "have got a lot to prove politically. That could be really dangerous," commented another banker.

Indian, Pakistan expel diplomats

India arrested Pakistan's military attaché in New Delhi Nov. 30, on charges of spying. The arrest was reportedly the result of a months long investigation. The Indians claimed they had caught the attaché, Brig. Zhair-ul-Islam, red-handed with a sensitive defense document as he was meeting with his Indian contact point.

The attaché was declared *persona non grata* and put on a plane for Pakistan. The Indian Foreign Office refused to contact the Pakistani ambassador, who is being informed of events surrounding the arrest only through the TV news.

In retaliation, Islamabad Dec. 1 expelled Indian diplomats from Pakistan.

The incident comes at an awkward point—given the creation of a new government in Pakistan by Benazir Bhutto. Pakistani fears of Soviet-instigated Indian aggression were already at a high point.

● **MOSCOW'S** new ambassador to Dhaka, Vitali Stepanovich Smirnov, has expressed his government's extreme displeasure at the way the Bangladesh official media "engage freely in anti-Soviet propaganda." The envoy noted with "pain and concern" that while his country's relations with the U.S. and China are improving, "Bangladesh perhaps has not taken into account or appreciated the changed Soviet policy."

● **BANGLADESH**, reeling from the worst floods in history, has now been hit by drought. There has been almost no rain since the floods. Water available from surface sources is full of salts. Containers in which villagers traditionally collect and preserve rainwater for storage under the earth were destroyed by the floods. Drinking water is scarce everywhere, including the capital, Dhaka, a city of 6 million.

● **REAGAN** administration officials are attempting to help the Soviet Union gain the release of over 300 troops believed to have been captured by mujahideen resistance fighters in Afghanistan. The State Department welcomed a Nov. 27 meeting between Soviet diplomats and resistance leaders to discuss a prisoner exchange.

● **A WEST GERMAN** parliamentarian privately reported that, when he was in Moscow recently, he spoke with laser scientist Yevgeni Velikhov, vice chairman of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, who said, "I know you have been a good friend of America for many years now. But just think of all that which unites us with you—a common culture: Dostoevsky, Tchaikovsky, Beethoven. And what kind of culture do the Americans have? McDonald's hamburgers!"