

International Intelligence

War looms between Russia and Georgia

A military confrontation between Russia and Georgia will result from the Abkhazian conflict, the President of Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, warned in a statement in Tbilisi on Feb. 23. Shevardnadze called for a last-minute summit meeting with Russia's President Boris Yeltsin, to avoid the military escalation.

The warnings came in direct response to a Russian air raid on Feb. 23 on Sukhumi, the capital of the Abkhazian province that wants to secede from Georgia and align with the Russian Federation. Shevardnadze declared that all Russian troops must be withdrawn from Georgian soil, otherwise there would be a general mobilization of the armed forces of Georgia.

In reply, the Russian Defense Ministry ordered Russian forces in Abkhazia and Georgia to "shoot to kill" any Georgian troops that get in the way of any activities or operations.

On Feb. 24 Russian Defense Minister Gen. Pavel Grachev declared that Abkhazia can never be relinquished by Russia, because of the question of "access to the Black Sea." This same argument could be applied to Ukrainian Crimea.

Russian media have been filled with accounts of Abkhazians, Russians, and Georgians facing famine in towns cut off and surrounded by Georgian forces in Abkhazia. Russia could easily use the plight of these people as the humanitarian cover for military intervention.

Bombs hit French Education Ministry

Unidentified attackers set off bombs at Education Ministry offices in the southern French cities of Toulouse and Aix-en-Provence on Feb. 28. The National Front for the Liberation of Corsica (FLNC) claimed responsibility for the incidents and said in a statement that it wanted to protest against

the restricted teaching of the Corsican language.

The powerful pre-dawn explosion in Toulouse destroyed three offices, damaged a dozen parked cars, and shattered windows not far from the headquarters of an Army paratroop division specializing in overseas missions.

Another device, thrown into the grounds of the building in Aix-en-Provence, broke windows but caused only slight damage.

Parejo to campaign for Colombian presidency

Former Colombian Justice Minister Enrique Parejo González formally announced his candidacy for the 1994 presidency on Feb. 28, with a call for peaceful civil resistance to the present government's open-market, or "neo-liberal," economic policies. Said Parejo, "Colombians in general, and especially workers, have the right to rebel against these measures," which have taken a brutal toll on living standards in the country. Parejo is the only one of Colombia's several announced candidates to denounce the freemarket model promoted by the International Monetary Fund.

Dr. Parejo also charged that the Gaviria government's free import policy was destroying Colombian agricultural production, and that privatization was deliberately skewed in favor of a handful of economic groupings: "No to the government's neo-liberal policies! No to savage capitalism! No to the sale of the country, which appears to have been put on the public auction block!"

In response to the latest wave of drug cartel bombings, Parejo denounced the Gaviria government's appeasement policy of negotiating amnesties and plea bargains with the narco-terrorists. It was precisely such a government policy which allowed drug lord Pablo Escobar to slip through the authorities' fingers last year: "One cannot hope for Colombia to retake the moral road, if the President himself makes deals concerning the law that should be applied to criminals."

Parejo is one of Colombia's few surviv-

ing anti-drug heroes, having taken up that mantle from his close friend and collaborator Rodrigo Lara Bonilla after the latter's 1984 assassination at the hands of the Medellín cocaine cartel. Parejo himself barely survived a 1987 assassination attempt while ambassador to Hungary. His return to Colombia in 1991, after abandoning protective exile abroad, has placed him at the top of the drug lords' hit list.

Former Soviet officials: SDI caused policy shift

Former top Kremlin officials, speaking at a Princeton University conference on the end of the Cold War, said on Feb. 26 that the implications of former President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative and the horrors of the Chernobyl nuclear accident combined to change Soviet arms policy and help end the Cold War.

The statements by the two former officials have bearing upon the numerous published Soviet attacks on Lyndon LaRouche at that time, and will be the subject of an upcoming *EIR* feature.

According to Reuters on Feb. 27, "the officials said ex-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was convinced any attempt to match Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) of 1983 to build a space-based defense against missiles would do irreparable harm to the Soviet economy. . . ."

"The 'Star Wars' initiative was announced by Reagan a month after a secret Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) assessment showed a considerable arms build-up in the Soviet Union. . . ."

"The author, CIA analyst Lawrence Gershwin, said, 'We didn't see much prospect of any arms control agreement and we projected a vigorous increase in Soviet build-up.'"

"He said that from the U.S. view a Soviet increase in defensive forces would 'give them a big advantage.'"

"Former Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh said Soviet intelligence 'was telling almost the same story [about the

Briefly

United States]. We were told, even before SDI, the U.S. has suddenly changed course away from a defensive posture and begun an enormous build-up.'

"Then came SDI, which Soviet officials saw as 'something very dangerous.' Bessmertnykh said SDI 'made us realize we were in a very dangerous spot.' . . .

"After Chernobyl, said Gorbachev aide Anatoly Chernyaev, the Soviet leader would not entertain any 'positions based on the assumption that we would fight the Americans.'

" 'Gorbachev then assured the U.S. we would never attack.' "

Russia says Israel has 200 nuclear weapons

A new report released by Yevgeni Prima-kov, head of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, says that Israel has produced at least 200 nuclear weapons and has weapons-grade uranium stocks to last 200 years.

The study, titled "A New Challenge after the Cold War—the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction," stated that the Israeli output of fissionable plutonium is increasing by 20 to 40 kilograms per year. It also said that Israel has three plants for producing weapons-grade plutonium, each of which can produce enough material for 5 to 10 weapons a year. "Stocks of uranium in Israel are estimated as being sufficient for its own needs and even for exports for roughly 200 years," the report stated.

Israel's President makes first visit to Britain

Israeli President Chaim Herzog met British Prime Minister John Major in London on Feb. 26 and warned him of the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East. It is the first-ever visit of an Israeli President to the United Kingdom.

Herzog "emphasized the different aspect of the struggle against Islamic fundamentalism all over the Middle East, not just

in Israel but in other countries as well," an Israeli embassy spokesman quoted the President as saying. In an interview with the BBC, he said that Israel is engaged in a "major battle against Iranian-controlled Islamic fundamentalism," and this was why Israel had expelled more than 400 Palestinians in December. "It's true that there's no Soviet Union now threatening. . . . But there are all sorts of lunatic states around like Iran and Iraq and so forth which could upset the whole balance in the world."

Under his former name of Vivian Herzog, the Irish-born Israeli President served as a major in British Military Intelligence during World War II, assigned to the Mideast.

Aristide charged with plan to wreck military

The strategy of ousted Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide would be to "encircle and destroy the military institution," warned Hubert de Ronceray, a leader of Haiti's Movement for National Development, who told the IPS press agency on Feb. 18 that his party, along with 30 other political groups, are totally opposed to the return of Aristide from exile.

Instead, said de Ronceray, former Interim President Joseph Nerette must be reinstated and should organize new elections. Nerette, who served as President after Aristide's overthrow in 1991, never formally resigned from office and has recently proposed alternative solutions to Haiti's crisis, countering those offered by the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS).

De Ronceray explained that Aristide's recent call for 3,000 human rights observers to be sent to Haiti is part of the deposed President's "strategy of encirclement and destruction of the military institution with the support of the U.N. and the OAS." Aristide, he said, wants "to exterminate the 7,000 soldiers of the Haitian Army and replace it with a popular army of which 200 elements were sent to Cuba for training in 1991."

● **BORIS YELTSIN** warned about growing military involvement in the political battles in Russia, in an interview with the military daily *Krasnaya Zvezda* of Feb. 23. "I need hardly say that people are trying to fill this vacuum," he said. "There are those who want to play their army card."

● **ISRAELI** Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, after several months of secret negotiations with Syria, is offering the return of the Golan Heights as part of a secret deal, news services report. Israel has demanded total normalization of relations, including open borders and trade with Syria, which is not losing any sleep over the fate of Palestinian deportees.

● **MEXICO CITY** authorities on Feb. 26 discovered a small weapons arsenal belonging to members of the terrorist Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG). Among the weapons, which were to have been delivered to Guatemala, were nine AK-47 military assault rifles, 25 mines, 18 rocket launchers, 60 rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition, and materials to make additional rocket launchers.

● **POPE JOHN PAUL II** called for the reunification of Korea, speaking at a ceremony on Feb. 22 to receive the new South Korean ambassador to the Vatican, Noh Young Pauk. "All lovers of peace would be pleased if the two Koreas increased contacts to the maximum level," he said. "Reunification could be accomplished through love and reconciliation."

● **FINNISH** Social Democratic Party chairman Ulf Sundqvist resigned in a corruption scandal at the end of February, saying he wished to save his party from the political effects of the accusations against him. He was previously the managing director of the workers' bank SIS, the first bank to go bankrupt in the current banking crisis.