

International Intelligence

Argentina's Peronists win in mid-term election

In mid-term congressional elections on Oct. 3, the Peronist Judicialist Party won over 40% of the vote, giving President Carlos Menem the victory he had anticipated. But even with 127 seats in the lower house of Congress, Menem still doesn't have the two-thirds majority required to pass a constitutional amendment which would allow him to run for reelection. However, he expressed confidence that he would be able to garner support from some members of the opposition Radical Party and a couple of smaller parties to obtain the necessary votes.

One significant change in the voting patterns was that the Radical Party lost control of the capital city of Buenos Aires for the first time, which political analysts attribute to support for Menem's free-market economic policies among the city's largely middle-class population. The fairly new Modin party, run by former military "nationalist" Aldo Rico, did well in the province of Buenos Aires, constituting itself as the third political force after the Peronists and the Radicals.

Menem announced that he would now study the possibility of calling a plebiscite on the constitutional reform issue, and indicated that he is very much interested in seeking reelection.

WJC denounces German presidential contender

Edgar Bronfman's World Jewish Congress announced on Oct. 8 that it is launching an international protest against the ruling Christian Democratic Party's nomination of Steffen Heitmann as the next President of Germany. Heitmann is now the justice minister of the eastern state of Saxony. The WJC has called on affiliates in 80 nations to mobilize against the nominee. The WJC claims that Heitmann is unacceptable because he "had not displayed the moral sensitivity for such an important post."

Heitmann said in a recent interview that after the end of the Cold War, the reunified

Germans must formulate a national identity not defined "into eternity" by simplistic interpretations of the Nazi period as allegedly a produce of the German national character.

Speaking to a conference of the Christian Social Union, the Bavarian sister party of his own Christian Democrats, Chancellor Helmut Kohl said that Heitmann was being victimized in a "malicious and sometimes base campaign." He said Heitmann was "a decent person" who should not be reproached for lacking a westerner's sophistication in handling the news media.

Kohl added angrily that "there are some among the critics of Steffen Heitmann who have kissed the ring of Erich Honecker," a reference to the fact that WJC president Edgar Bronfman went to East Berlin in October 1988 to receive the East German state's gold medal from the hands of communist dictator Honecker.

At a news conference, Heitmann said he had never advocated forgetting the Nazis' attempts to wipe out the Jews. He said it was a unique and terrible event, but one which belonged in an era which finished with the end of the Cold War.

The WJC attack even provoked Ignatz Bubis, mafioso chairman of the Council of Jews in Germany, to protest, saying it would have been better had the WJC not raised its voice, because the nomination of presidential candidates was entirely a domestic German affair. Bubis himself opposes the Heitmann nomination.

NATO assembly refuses admission to Poland

Loic Bouvard of France, president of the North Atlantic Assembly, the legislative arm of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, announced on Oct. 8 that while NATO has a long-term goal of granting membership to eastern European countries such as Poland, it could not do so now, for fear of alienating Moscow.

"What is the point of creating security for Poland but adding insecurity further east?" asked Bouvard at a press conference opening a three-day meeting in Copenhagen of the assembly. "It would be disaster to

build a new Iron Curtain farther east. . . . Russia is still a very, very big European power and we must take its views into account. Our dialogue with Russia is uppermost in our mind. . . . We will work toward enlargement of NATO, but not in a way which endangers relations with our other eastern friends."

Bouvard praised Boris Yeltsin's actions on Oct. 3-4, the storming of the Russian Parliament building. "We are all shocked by the violence and the loss of human lives in Moscow, but we are very relieved at how the crisis ended. We cannot reproach Yeltsin. He waited as long as he could before using force. Now we must wholeheartedly support Yeltsin. NATO will do all it can to support democracy and economic reform in Russia."

German Defense Minister Volker Ruehe took a similar line during a trip to Prague, by stating that eastern European countries wishing to join NATO must first join the European Community.

Iraq appeals for lifting of sanctions

Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Said Al-Sahhaf, in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Oct. 7, called on the international community to lift the economic sanctions which have remained in force against Iraq since the Gulf war. "We hereby call upon all countries of the world," he said, "to support our initiative for dialogue and understanding to prevail between the [Security] Council and Iraq, so that this may lead without delay to the lifting of the unjust and iniquitous blockade imposed on our country, instead of resorting to the methods of coercion, threats, and aggression.

"A single power, i.e., the United States of America, has sought to control the manner in which the U.N. addresses international issues and steers it in accordance with U.S. interests," he charged. The United States has "not found it enough to perpetrate the military aggression it launched against Iraq on Jan. 17, 1991."

Al-Sahhaf said that acts of aggression had been carried out under various false pre-

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texts, including unfounded allegations claiming there was a "conspiracy against the life of former President George Bush." He said that Iraq found itself in a situation not experienced by any other U.N. founding member, including sanctions which deprived its people of basic human needs, prevented the export of its natural resources, froze its assets, and prevented the use of its civil aircraft and ships.

Al-Sahhaf said that the sanctions were "geared toward destroying Iraqi society" and that importing even paint for school desks, pencils, notebooks, medical equipment, and hospital air-conditioning units had been barred. "The result has been a huge increase in mortality amongst children and the elderly, due to the grave shortage of medicines," he charged.

Hungarian papers libel signers of LaRouche ad

On Sept. 24, one day after an advertisement appeared in the *Washington Post* calling for freedom for U.S. political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche, articles appeared in two Hungarian dailies criticizing LaRouche and the Hungarian members of parliament who signed the ad, an appeal to President Clinton.

Nepszabadsag, formerly the daily of the Hungarian communist party, called LaRouche a "controversial figure" with a "simplified, populist" image of the world. In parenthesis, the article made the bizarre claim that "he simply called Kissinger an Arab agent." The case of LaRouche, said the article, would have remained his and America's private affair, had not a paid advertisement appeared in the *Washington Post*. Among the 300 signers from 26 countries, are Hungarian members of parliament.

Another article appeared in the newspaper *Magyar Nemzet*, another holdover from the communist era, which said that Hungarians have the right to criticize what they consider wrong in America, but LaRouche was sentenced for fraud, and his conspiracy theories say that the Queen of England is the head of the international drug mafia and Kis-

singer is a Soviet agent. "It is impossible to judge how the damage done by these signatures can be diminished," the paper concluded.

Russia said to have 'doomsday machine'

Russia has a "doomsday machine," developed by the Soviets in the 1970s, reported Bruce G. Blair, a senior fellow of the Brookings Institution in a commentary in the *New York Times* on Oct. 8. The device enables the Russian general staff to mount a nuclear attack without any orders from the civilian government, with only a small team to carry out certain mechanical procedures. "The rest of the doomsday apparatus is totally automated," wrote Blair.

Blair said his report is based on interviews with Russians who designed and operated the system, and was corroborated by U.S. officials. Electronic devices detect any break in communications with the general staff and any nuclear explosions in the vicinity, and then form an automatic order to launch, which is transmitted to special complexes located far away. There, emergency communications rockets automatically record the launching instructions and then fire themselves on trajectories across all the nuclear missile fields of the former Soviet Union.

"The doomsday machine provides for a massive salvo of these forces without any participation by local crews. Weapons commanders in the field may be completely bypassed," Blair wrote. He also reported that the United States has "its own version of the doomsday machine, with less technical gadgetry but more distribution of launching authority."

In related news, the *Washington Times* on Oct. 8 reported the disclosure by the current Russian minister of atomic energy that the Soviet nuclear arsenal in 1986 contained 45,000 warheads—15,000 more than had been estimated by U.S. intelligence. The paper quoted former Pentagon analyst Frank Gaffney that this confirms that the Soviets "perceived nuclear war as a winnable activity and amassed the forces consistent with that doctrine."

● **ITALIAN** Parliamentarian Luciano Violante, chairman of Italy's parliamentary committee investigating the Mafia, says that Russia has become "a kind of strategic capital of organized crime from which all the major operations are launched." There have been two summits since 1991 between the Russian Mafia and the Sicilian, Neapolitan, and Calabrian Mafias. They met "to discuss drug money laundering, the narcotics trade, and selling nuclear material."

● **FRANCE** rejects the concept of a NATO extension eastward, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé declared on Oct. 7. Instead, a European collective security approach should be pursued involving also the United States, Canada, and Russia, he said.

● **IRANIAN** Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati will be going to Saudi Arabia to arrange for a summit meeting between Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, according to the *Teheran Times*. This would be the first summit since the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

● **ISLAM** is "not the new enemy," said Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly on Oct. 5. "Extremism does exist within the Muslim world," he said, "much as it exists in the Christian world, the Jewish world, the Hindu world, the secular world. But to employ reductive stereotypes which demonize one-fifth of the world's population must ultimately be self-defeating."

● **YASSER ARAFAT** said on Oct. 4 that he was dismayed with the fact that the Israeli Army was hunting down members of the Palestinian groups Fatah and Hamas. "I am responsible for all Palestinian people," he said. "When we signed the accord, we did so in the name of all the Palestinian people." Since the signing of the accord, Israel has killed several members of Fatah and Hamas in the Occupied Territories.