PRESIDENCY

President finds accommodation with Duma

President Yel'tsin met with Duma representatives this week and reached a compromise on various issues of contention between the executive and legislature. At the core of this negotiated cooling of tensions are agreements by the president to withdraw the government's Tax Code bill, sign the Duma's Law on the Government, establish an advisory council (yet another!) to consist of regional leaders and government members, and a promise to work at reconciling opposing views on the Land Code and housing reform. For their part, the Duma opposition, led by the Communist faction, has agreed to remove the "no confidence" vote from its agenda. The Duma's request for the removal of first deputy prime ministers Anatoli Chubais and Boris Nemtsov was also rebuffed. (The Moscow Times, 21 Oct 97; NEXIS)

There are several interesting aspects to this sudden outburst of cooperative negotiation, not the least of which is the institutional. Yel'tsin revived the dormant "Council of Four" to shape the first round of talks on October 20. This council, created just prior to his bypass surgery last year, was originally intended to provide a forum for discussion between the executive and legislative branches while the president was unable to serve as personal arbiter. The original composition of the council consisted of the speakers of the Federation Council and Duma, the prime minister, and Anatoli Chubais representing the president. Its operation was quickly derailed over the legislative leaders' refusal to accept Chubais as the president's proxy during his convalescence. This most recent
convocation of the council, with Yel'tsin's prominent participation, has re-invigorated the council, which is now slated to convene twice monthly.

The second round of executive-legislative negotiations occurred the following day as Yel'tsin met with representatives of the seven Duma factions, as well as several members of the presidential administration. (ITAR-TASS, 21 Oct 97; NEXIS) Evidently, the president's assurances during this conciliation session convinced participants that the advisory council of regional, executive and legislative leaders would have a major role in policy formation. Its first session is slated for November 22 and agricultural land ownership tops its agenda.

Much print space has already been devoted to the questions of who backed down and who gave in during the spiraling confrontation between president and parliament this Fall. Once again in Russian politics, the vagaries of the agreement need further elucidation before the winners and losers can be tallied. Did the president agree to a Law on the Government, which provides for parliamentary oversight (and dismissal powers) of the government? Did the Duma opposition, most notably the Communists, give in to presidential threats to their parliamentary perks? (See, among others, The Boston Globe, 22 Oct 97)

The question of who most benefited from the compromise solution is controversial. If the opposition Duma factions (opposition only in reference to the executive branch) could expect stronger support from a disillusioned populace, then they would seem to have a powerful incentive to provoke new elections. If the executive's threat of revising election rules was thought to jeopardize opposition support, then a maintenance of the status quo, with caveats, would benefit the opposition.

Yel'tsin's decision to tone down his threatening rhetoric on dissolution and compromise with the Duma is seen by some as a tactical retreat in the face of broad opposition encompassing the Communists, many regional leaders, and
Yabloko. According to this scenario, Yel'tsin will work to weaken the opposition coalition and move against them with a stronger hand. (See comments by Stanislav Menshikov on Johnson's Russia List, #1307, 22 Oct 97) There has already been a backlash in the Duma with Sergei Baburin leading a small faction of deputies calling the compromise a "strategic mistake." (Agence France Press, 2 Oct 97; e-news@clari.net)

A final assessment will have to wait for an implementation or re-interpretation of the elements of the executive-legislative accord. The critical issues of the Law on Government, Tax Code, land and housing reforms will provide the litmus tests to gauge the performance of the cooperative councils. At least this Autumn's display of brinkmanship ended peacefully.

**Russian Federation: Foreign Relations**

*By Chandler Rosenberger*

**Russia befriends Germany and France, snubs US and UK ...**

Emboldened by his success in luring France into a controversial $2 billion deal to develop oil fields in Iran, Russian President Boris Yel'tsin announced at Council of Europe meetings that France, Germany and Russia would meet annually to discuss events on the Eurasian continent.

The declaration was seen as a snub to Britain, whose prime minister, Tony Blair, had just concluded a lackluster visit to Moscow. The announcement of the trilateral meetings came two hours after Blair had left the council meeting. (Press Association, 1747 GMT, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-WEU-97-283).

The announcement also had an anti-American tinge, coming a week after Yel'tsin had decried condemnation of the oil deal in the American press and White House pressure to expand European institutions through NATO enlargement. In a thinly
veiled reference to "Uncle Sam," Yel'tsin had said that "We do not need an uncle from elsewhere. We in Europe can unite ourselves." (Reuters, 8 Oct 97; Johnson's Russia List #1269).

**Yel'tsin highlights common stance with Europe on executions, rights ...**

In his speech to the Council of Europe, Yel'tsin highlighted Russia's moratorium on capital punishment as evidence that his country was meeting European norms of justice, and suggested that the rebellious province of Chechnya was not meeting such standards.

"Russia has imposed a moratorium on the execution of capital punishment. We strictly fulfill this obligation," Yel'tsin said. "I know that the European public has been shocked with the news of public executions in Chechnya. The Russian leadership takes all the necessary measures to localize such manifestations of Middle Ages barbarity."

The emphasis on capital punishment also drew a line between the countries of Continental Europe, which do not execute any criminals, and Britain and the United States, both of which have capital punishment provisions in their law.

Later in the speech, Yel'tsin also took a swipe at the Baltic states for allegedly not living up to European standards of language rights and citizenship. "Our country cannot put up with the fact that hundreds of thousands of people, including our compatriots, have no citizenship in modern Europe," Yel'tsin said. "I hope that this issue will be settled in Latvia and Estonia." (RIA Novosti, Rossiyskiye vesti, 14 Oct 97; Johnson's Russia List #1283)

**...and landmines**

In an apparently impromptu gesture, Yel'tsin also announced that Russia would sign the Ottawa Convention banning the use of land mines. His comments came
after his speech and just after a meeting with French president Jacques Chirac, a supporter of the ban.

Russian commentators found Yel'tsin's off-the-cuff declaration to be of a piece with other slights to the United States. "There is an impression that the European factor is starting to dominate Russian foreign policy," Itogi, NTV television's weekly analytical program, reported. "In fact, all Yel'tsin's initiatives had a strong anti-American flavor." (Reuters, 14 Oct 97; Johnson's Russia List #1284)

But the Russian military quickly soft-pedaled Yel'tsin's comments. An unnamed high-ranking military officer told Nezavisimaya gazeta that Yel'tsin's announcement was nothing more than pure "populism," and that it violated Russian national interests. (Monitor, 15 Oct 97).

**Bulgarians blast alleged Russian recruitment of spies, destabilization**

Bulgarian journalists and government officials have condemned alleged efforts by the Russian ambassador to recruit a circle of pro-Moscow "agents of influence" in the capital.

The Standard, a daily close to the pro-Western Bulgarian government, on 6 October accused Russian ambassador Leonid Kerestedzhiyants of using the embassy as a base for a secretive organization, "Association on Friendship with Russia." The paper also accused Gazprom, the Russian gas firm, of planning to disrupt gas deliveries to Bulgaria in an attempt to destabilize the government. The Russian embassy denied all accusations. (ITAR-TASS, 1351 GMT, 7 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-280)

**Russia repays one-third of debt to Slovakia in part with weapons**

Between 1995 and 1997, the Russian Federation has repaid one-third of its $1.7 billion debt to Slovakia with shipments of goods worth $560 million, according to
Russian Deputy Finance Minister Mikhail Kasyanov. A large but unspecified amount of the goods were arms, according to Interfax.

Russian Finance Minister Vladimir Babichev praised the political, economic, and military technical cooperation of Moscow and Bratislava, claiming it differs for the better from Russia's relations with other Central and East European countries. He said the many-sided cooperation is of a strategic nature. (Interfax, 1101 GMT, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-283)

**Tense Russo-Japanese relations as Moscow cancels meeting**

Russia called off a planned meeting on the Sakhalin region a mere 24 hours before its scheduled start on 9 October.

Russian officials claimed that the meeting had been canceled because members of the Japanese delegation had failed to comply with unspecified requirements. (ITAR-TASS, 1045 GMT, 8 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-281) But the decision came just as the Russian Foreign Ministry was scheduled to begin talks in Moscow with another Japanese delegation on fishing rights near the disputed Kuril islands.

The ministry had complained that the Japanese were insisting on adding too many political dimensions to an agreement that Moscow had hoped would be merely commercial. (Interfax, 1154 GMT, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-286)

**Russian legislators introduce bill to strengthen ties to Taiwan**

Bucking the pro-Chinese policies of the Russian foreign ministry, members of the Russian Duma on 3 October introduced a bill to formalize Moscow's ties to Taipei.

The bill, modeled on the American Taiwan Relations Act, was promoted by Alexei Mitrofonov, chairman of the Geographical Policy Committee of the State Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament.
Wang Wei-chieh, director of the West Asian Affairs department in the Taiwanese Foreign Ministry, acknowledged the bill stood little chance of becoming law. Russian parliamentary rules mandate that the bill must be approved by the Foreign Affairs Committee before it is referred to a plenary session for a second reading. During a public hearing on the bill in July, Russian foreign ministry officials voiced strong opposition to the bill. (Central News Agency WWW (Taiwan), 0859 GMT, 3 Oct 97; FBIS-CHI-97-276)

Comment
Safe European Home?
Perhaps Boris Yeltsin was wrong to insist that Russia needed a new ideology to replace Communism. After all, a country that has a scant sense of itself can change its colors to suit its audience.

In April, Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov won the hearts of Asian leaders by espousing the virtues of non-Western traditions. And yet when Boris Yeltsin attended the Council of Europe meeting in Strasbourg six months later, he took every opportunity to highlight his government's commitment to common (Continental) European values, such as rejection of the death penalty and, less appealingly, development of "pragmatic" economic ties with pariah nations such as Iran.

There is, of course, a common theme running through these disparate, even contradictory, statements. Disgruntled leaders of countries that have run afoul of US foreign policy, be they Asian dictators or beleaguered Eurocrats, may celebrate Moscow's insistence that the United States has too much influence in world affairs.

The Council of Europe is little more than a discussion club. But Yeltsin's success at its recent meeting demonstrates the importance of rhetoric in international
affairs, and the inability of the Clinton Administration to put forward a compelling vision of internal security that might dampen the appeal of Moscow's resentments.

The bellwether of future alliances will be Britain, a traditional US ally. Prime Minister Tony Blair was deeply disappointed that his visits to Moscow and Strasbourg did not earn him anointment as the next spokesman of Europe. The United States has great interest in seeing Blair’s appeal spread across the Continent, since his Labor Party promises to lead a center-left reform of its crumbling welfare state. If buoyed by broad international appeal, this effort might well be emulated by social democrats on the Continent, ensuring the stability of the region's political economy.

If, on the other hand, the United States does not put forward a compelling vision of European affairs, Blair may be cowed into submitting to the anti-American rhetoric now spoken in Moscow and echoed in Paris. Europe will then be left to drift back into the befuddled malaise that, prior to Ronald Reagan's tenure, shrouded the Continent in gloom.

Russian Federation: Domestic Issues and Legislative Branch
By Michael Thurman

MEDIA
Russian TV to be broadcast to North America and Europe
The broadcast company MCM International has signed an agreement with the private Russian TV company Worldwide Russian Channel (WRC) to carry WRC’s signal outside of Russia. Viewers in Europe and North America will now be able to receive transmission by means of small satellite dishes for individual use. Until
recently, the television reception of Russian programming was of poor quality. This will not be the case with this new venture due to the technology made available by the Eutelsat company. The new broadcast plans to operate twenty-four hours a day and will provide a wide variety of programming. The programming will, of course, be in Russian. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1517 GMT, 22 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-234)

Petersburg TV hands over control to Moscow
St. Petersburg Channel 5 TV has gone off the air as a result of the changes following Yel'tsin's decision to set up the all-Russia Kultura channel. Not surprisingly, this has met with considerable disappointment by the more independent-minded journalists. Channel 5 announcer Igor Strakhov claims that this development would finally centralize all nation-wide media control in the capital under the watchful eyes of the Kremlin and its bureaucrats. Strakhov notes that, without regional TV, the "voice of the people" will less likely be heard by the powers-that-be (Fifth Channel Television Network, 1230 GMT, 30 Aug 97; FBIS-SOV-97-242)

POLITICAL PARTIES
Communists and nationalists picket Duma
Radical left-wing organizations -- the Working Russia Movement and the Officers Union -- picketed the State Duma building in connection with the opening of the first plenary sitting of the parliament's lower chamber. Around 100 people took part in the action, including Working Russia leader, Viktor Anpilov. Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the chairman of the LDPR (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) was also present (Mayak Radio Network in Russian, 0900 GMT, 3 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-246).

FEDERAL ASSEMBLY
Shokhin elected leader of NDR faction
Aleksandr Shokhin, first deputy chairman of the Russian State Duma, was elected to the post of leader of the Our Home is Russia faction. He had been nominated by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and elected by 50 of 65 members of the faction. Fifteen members of the faction were not present for the vote. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1625 GMT, 3 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-246)

REGIONS
Communists wiped out in Saratov elections
Not a single leftist candidate was returned to office in the elections to the Saratov Oblast Duma even though the area was targeted for special attention by the national party bosses. In all, 40 campaign volunteers from outside the oblast were involved in the election -- including Zyuganov. In 33 of the 35 districts where the results were deemed to be valid, the winners tended to be managers of large business concerns. The governor of the oblast -- Dmitri Ayatskov -- argued that the election results were proof of the success of Yeltsin's economic and social reforms (Trud, 3 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-246)

Russian Federation: Armed Forces
By Lt. Col. Dwyer Dennis and CDR Curtis Stevens

Secret Russian Black Eagle tank demonstrated; new Sukhoi fighter flying
While not displayed at the latest Omsk ’97 arms show, the Black Eagle was demonstrated at a proving ground outside of Svetly by the administrators of the Omsk defense plant Transmash during the show held 3-6 September. The demonstration was in violation of state security directives according to Viktor Mironov, the regional FSB Directorate Chief and is under investigation. Anticipating a high level of foreign intelligence interest, the FSB had taken preventative measures, but were apparently undermined by the unauthorized demonstration. Mironov stated that 44 known foreign intelligence officers were identified and others suspected. In addition, a large contingent involved with the
M1 Abrahms tank from General Dynamics attended. While plant administrators met their goal of showing the robustness of the Russian defense industry, Mironov said that the display could undermine the successful export of other tanks and modifications which are quite competitive alternatives to the Black Eagle. The Black Eagle was described as having an ominous, camouflage-painted shape with a stealth-like roll and is equipped with Arena and Drozd systems for armor protection. (ITAR-TASS, 1403 GMT, 6 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-279)

Though denied by Sukhoi's chief designer, Vladimir Konokhov, Pravda has restated an ITAR-TASS report from 8 October which announced the beginning of testing of the Su-32, a secret, state-of-the-art "forward-swept" wing fighter. The military-industrial complex source was described as very reliable. Purportedly, aircraft designers expect unique handling characteristics as a result of the wing design. (Pravda, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-282) The US Air Force's X-29 also has a forward-swept wing design.

Arms export agreements continue to add up
Indian Defense Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav met with Russian leadership, including Defense Minister Sergeev, during a five-day visit to Moscow 6-10 October. The Russian-Indian defense and military cooperation program in the 21st century was the focus of discussions with the objective of broadening and increasing the levels of exchange. In addition to a large-scale contract signed late last year for 40 advanced multi-purpose Su-30 fighters for the Indian Air Force, projected Indian purchases included two Kilo-class submarines, destroyers and Ka-30 helicopters. Of great interest to India is the purchase of the Russian air defense missile system S-300 PMU-1 as the backbone of a large-scale anti-aircraft and missile defense to be deployed by the year 2000. Yadav described the outcome of the visit as "extremely successful" and announced India's commitment to buy all military hardware from Russia. In addition, he said that the cooperation program had evolved from arms sales to production co-
operation and joint development, offering the Su-30MKI joint R&D and the potential MiG-AT Advanced Trainer production as examples. (ITAR-TASS, 0732 GMT, 6 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-279) (Bangalore Deccan Herald, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-282)

Konstantin Makienko, Deputy Director of the Russian Center for Analysis, Strategies and Technologies, has stated that the annual volume of arms trade with India is nearly $1 billion and sees any decrease as unlikely. He describes India as "absolutely our partner in trade in arms and related services because it is the only country with which Russia has signed a long-term cooperation program in the arms trade till the year 2001." This program is of great benefit to Russia, both politically and commercially. Makienko describes India as timely in its payments, a distraction of part of China's military might, and perhaps most importantly, "a serious opponent of the Islamic world." He said that future weapon sales may also include the KA-50 Black Shark helicopter in response to the Ukrainian tank deliveries to Pakistan and most likely the aircraft-carrying cruiser Admiral Gorshkov. (Interfax, 1405 GMT, 8 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-281)

Additional arms sales/defense agreements are underway between Russia and both Ethiopia and Singapore. The Ethiopian cooperation plan will include the training and retraining of Ethiopian servicemen in Russian military schools and defense industry and provide for the service and repair of Russian-made military hardware. (Interfax, 1247 GMT, 2 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275) Singapore has announced a purchase of an undisclosed number of the Igla (SA-16) air defense missile system. The Igla is an advanced man-portable missile using an infra-red seeker head and having a range of approximately 6000 meters. (Xinhua, 15 Oct 97, Jamestown Foundation Monitor, 16 Oct 97)

Despite an active arms sales program, the Russian defense industry continues to suffer. In Russian parliamentary hearings on 13 October, it was stated that every second defense industry enterprise in Russia is near bankruptcy. (ITAR-TASS,
The main culprit appears to be the continuing non-payment for Russian defense orders. The defense ministry owes in excess of 300 billion rubles. With upcoming plans to increase the privatization of the Russian defense industry in '98, it will be interesting to see how effectively the sell-off will boost government revenues and how industry values will be set. With continued development of state-of-the art weapons such as the Black Eagle and the Su-32 and lack of payment by the defense ministry, even more aggressive arms export marketing is in the future.

**Space advertising for space exploration?**
The general director of the Russian Space Agency expressed concern about Russian space program finances in an ITAR-TASS interview conducted 2 October. Yuri Koptev said detailed terms for space advertising would soon be announced. He expected revenues to be distributed between space equipment producers, production complexes and cosmonauts. (ITAR-TASS, 0904 GMT, 2 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275)

In other space news the future of GLONASS (the Russian equivalent of the American global positioning system, GPS) is in question. The GLONASS constellation consists of 24 satellites. Currently 10 of the satellites in the constellation have reached the end of their useful life and there are no current plans to replace them with longer-life satellites. The Russians figure the satellite navigation business could be worth as much as $30 billion by 2005. But as it stands now the US will have a monopoly on the service. The Russians figure maintaining and improving GLONASS could allow them to capture about a quarter of the precision navigation business. (Rossiyskaya gazeta, 3 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-279)

**Defense minister denies Russian participation in NATO operation**
Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeev denied Western press reports that Russian peacekeepers in Bosnia assisted NATO troops in the seizure of four
Bosnian Serb television stations. "Observation from two posts--and this is all the Russian peacekeepers did--can hardly be described as participation in an operation," Sergeev said. (Interfax, 0717 GMT, 2 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275)

Strategic forces conduct major exercise
Russian strategic nuclear forces conducted a major exercise at the beginning of October in which all three legs of Russia's strategic triad participated. Northern Fleet SSBNs and Strategic Rocket Forces launched a total of six missiles to targets in Kamchatka. The mobile missile system Topel-M was employed and Russian Air Force "Backfire" and "Bear" bombers fired cruise missiles. In addition to strategic weapons duties, the Topel-M can also be employed to place civilian satellites into orbit. (Monitor, 3 Oct 97, and Interfax, 1103 GMT, 3 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-276)

Sergeev: 5-6 servicemen die every day
Visiting units in the Moscow Military District, Defense Minister Sergeev called for military reforms that will put the military on a professional footing in the future. He said the army of the future must not suffer the problems today's armed forces suffer. He made the startling revelation that five or six service men are killed every day. "We cannot put up with this. Nor can we tolerate hazing in the armed forces." (Interfax, 0620 GMT, 15 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-288).

Sergeev's comments come two weeks after the Russian Main Military Prosecutor's Office announced it was taking steps to combat hazing in the armed forces. The office was forming special teams to investigate units where hazing has been reported. About one dozen hazing cases were under criminal investigation. These actions come as the Russian armed forces started the Autumn conscription period, which has a goal of inducting 184,000 conscripts into the armed forces. General Staff Officers expressed doubts whether this goal could be obtained given the opportunities for draft deferments and the number of
youths willing to dodge the draft. (Monitor, 10 Oct 97, and Interfax, 1120 GMT, 2 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275)

Newly Independent States: CIS
By Mark Jones

CIS administration has a full week
Many of the CIS administrative structures were busy recently, working on proposals to be presented at the Heads of State summit later this month. Meetings were held by the Council of Heads of Government, Council of CIS Foreign Ministers, Council of CIS Defense Chiefs, Heads of Security and Secret Services, and the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the countries of the Customs Union.

The Council of Heads of Government produced 26 documents, including a convention on regulating social-labor relationships in multinational corporations. Also drafted were documents regulating the formation of a common CIS transportation space including an agreement on tariffs for freight shipments across commonwealth countries. A series of agreements on military issues was drawn up which concern the strengthening of border troops and the further development of the unified air defense system (Delovoy mir, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-287). There was, as one might expect, some degree of dissension at the meeting. The Georgian delegate refused to approve a procedure meant to increase economic integration (ITAR-TASS, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-282). Ukrainian Prime Minister Pustovoytenko agreed to sign only 13 of the documents, and three of those contained reservations (Interfax, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-283).

Hennadiy Udovenko kept faith with his colleague in the heads of government council by offering opposition at the Council of CIS Foreign Ministers conference.
Udovenko would not sign a document which would create a "committee on conflict situations." He also insisted on setting up a permanent body to monitor CIS expenditures (ITAR-TASS, 2 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275). Ukraine has become increasingly more suspicious about how CIS money and resources are being spent.

The Council of CIS Defense Ministers also had a meeting and spent most of its time discussing the development of military cooperation "in the framework of a collective security treaty." It is not yet clear whether they will call for a new security treaty or just an expansion of the Tashkent Treaty of 1992. The ministers, at the insistence of Georgian Defense Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze, discussed the situation in Abkhazia. Nadibaidze is still hoping that the Heads of State decision made at the March 1997 summit will be implemented and called for the appointment of a new commander for the peacekeeping troops. Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeev took the opportunity to introduced the new chief of staff for coordinating CIS military cooperation, General Viktor Samsonov. Samsonov until recently served as chief of the Russian general staff (Interfax, 3 Oct 97; FBIS-UMA-97-276).

The Heads of Security and Secret Services met to discuss measures to fight organized crime, weapons and drug trafficking, terrorism, and ensuring nuclear safety. Nikolai Kovalev, head of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), presided at the conference and focused on providing security for "strategic objects" on CIS territory which he defined as facilities which present a nuclear and environmental hazard (Basapress, 8 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-281, and Infotag, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-282). Kovalev went on to say that, "It is absolutely obvious also that we need to cooperate more actively in combating the operations of the intelligence services of other countries on the territory of the [CIS]. More than 400 intelligence agents, who are working on the territory of our country, have been disclosed in Russia. And it is necessary to coordinate our actions to counter them" (ITAR-TASS, 8 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-281).
The final administrative organ to meet was the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the Customs Union. The group (consisting of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia) has been unable to forge or implement policies creating a functioning union, and no other CIS states seem interested in joining until such procedures can be worked out (Mayak Radio Network, 1400 GMT, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-283).

**CIS air defense system fiscal planning outlined**

General Viktor Prudnikov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian and CIS Air Defense Troops, discussed his service's budget. To achieve a truly integrated system, the general estimates that approximately 101 billion rubles will be needed. Russia has pledged 50 billion rubles, and the remaining nine member countries will contribute the remaining 51 billion. According to Prudnikov, each state is essentially financing facilities and training on its own territory and will be able to command and control its own assets. The Central Air Defense Command Post in Russia will coordinate the actions of national command posts. The troops and facilities in Kazakhstan and Belarus, however, will continue to be controlled from Russia. (Mayak Radio Network, 1300 GMT 13 Oct 97; FBIS-UMA-97-286, and ITAR-TASS, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-UMA-97-286).

**Newly Independent States: Western Region**

**By Mark Jones**

**More claims of autonomy in the republics**

Georgia has Abkhazia, Moldova has Dniestr, Ukraine has Crimea, and now both Ukraine and Moldova might have Gagauz. Leaders of the Gagauz opposition in Moldova have issued a statement calling the 2 August 1940 decision of the Supreme Soviet to divide historical Bessarabia "anti-popular." The opposition went on to call for Gagauz residents in Moldova and Ukraine to sign up for the
"creation of a sole economic, social and cultural zone in the area" (Basapress, 1 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275).

BELARUS

Bad news for Belarus...and its leader, part 2

In the last edition we noted that the European Union Council of Ministers decided to limit political and economic ties with Belarus and that President Lukashenka was snubbed by the Council of Europe. This week there is more bad news for Belarus and its leader. The constitutional courts of Europe denied the Constitutional Court of Belarus permission to attend a conference later this year. A spokesman for the European courts said that the Belarus Court did not meet the requirements necessary for the status of full membership (Belapan, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-283).

Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov had harsh words for President Lukashenka. Nemtsov called the Belarusian Union extremely important but criticized the president, saying, "Lukashenka behaves like a young student." The remarks were made in connection with the imprisonment of ORT journalist Pavel Sheremet. Nemtsov claims that Lukashenka took revenge on Sheremet because the journalist criticized him in the past. "The feeling of resentment does not befit a politician," Nemtsov added (Interfax, 7 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-280).

Killing of Lukashenka's friend brings harsh response

President Lukashenka vowed to punish the "slightest violation of law" after his close friend, Yevgeni Mikolutsky, was killed by a bomb placed near his apartment door. In an emotional statement at the funeral, Lukashenka said, "From now on the slightest violation of law will be punished immediately. Our inactivity costs us the loss of those close to us." He then threatened local businessmen and bankers, who he believes know who killed his friend. He demanded that they "pay all taxes" within ten days. "We shall not look for proof. The slightest violation of law will cause an immediate response from the authorities," he said. The
president then went further and demanded a crackdown on those involved in illegal businesses, such as the unsanctioned sale of cigarettes and alcoholic drinks at railway terminals and markets. "Old women selling cigarettes, picketers...all of them must be dealt with rigorously" (Interfax, 7 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-280). Lukashenka also ordered Interior Minister Valentin Agolts to place all units of the Belarusian Interior Ministry on high alert for a period of five days (ITAR-TASS, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-TOT-97-282).

ORT correspondent released
Pavel Sheremet was released from the Belarus KGB Grodno Remand Center on 7 October. Sheremet commented on the conditions of his imprisonment, noting that, "the pressure applied to me [to write a letter of repentance] was quite strong. They told me many times to write a letter to the president." He also said that, "I was kept in the same conditions as the other remand detainees in the Grodno Prison. Perhaps my only privilege was the fact that I was never struck with a truncheon..."(NTV, 8 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-281).

MOLDOVA
Power-sharing proposal drafted
Delegates from Moldova, the breakaway Dniestr Republic and Russia met in Moscow to try to resolve the ongoing conflict in Moldova. The result of their work was a document which outlines some basic power-sharing arrangements. The agreement consists of 11 articles, most of which are dedicated to defining the plenary powers of each side. According to the plan, Moldova will be responsible for making decisions on citizenship, foreign policy, border defense, and customs services. The Dniestr Republic will be allowed to have input on human rights decisions, participate in foreign policy shaping for issues relating to the Dniestr region, establish external economic ties, and refine anti-crime measures. The division of plenary powers in defense, security, and border protection will be handled later. The accord will now be forwarded to President Petru Lucinschi and
Igor Smirnov. If they accept the agreement, it will be forwarded for signature at the CIS Heads of State summit (Infotag, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-287).

Newly Independent States: Central Asia
By Monika Shepherd

KAZAKHSTAN
Kazakh president, Russian PM fail to resolve main differences
Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and President Nazarbaev were unable to smooth over the main differences still facing their two countries during the Russian prime minister's recent (4-5 October) trip to Kazakhstan, and thus pave the way for the signing of a new treaty on friendship and cooperation (the first such treaty was signed in 1992 and now needs to be revised). The two main issues which the Russian and Kazakh governments have so far been unable to resolve are Russia's failure to pay for its use of the Baikonur space launch site and Russian oil companies' right to develop Kazakhstan's offshore Caspian oil deposits in the Kurmangazy field (located in the northern section of the Caspian Sea). According to President Nazarbaev, Russia owes the Kazakh government $460 million for its lease of the Baikonur facilities during the past four years, and has yet to pay for its use of military training sites in Kazakhstan (Interfax, 0954 GMT, 4 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-277).

The two governments' disagreement over the development of the Kurmangazy oil deposits began when Russia's Fuel and Energy Ministry unilaterally decided to start accepting bids for the field's geological exploration (see Editorial Digest on Central Asia, 9 October 97). Since the Kazakh government considers this field to be in its national sector (a point which President Nazarbaev reiterated), the Russian ministry's action constitutes a violation of Kazakhstan's territorial sovereignty. Although President Nazarbaev did not bring this issue up during his joint press conference with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, he did state that the
matter had to be resolved before any agreements could be signed on allowing Russian oil companies to develop the Kurmangazy oil field (Interfax, 0954 GMT, 4 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-277).

President Nazarbaev and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin also have differing views on the extent to which Russian oil companies should be involved in the Kurmangazy field's exploitation. The Kazakh president favors granting tenders to those companies which offer the best terms, whereas the Russian prime minister would prefer that Russian companies be given priority in the field's development. Russia's Lukoil and Kazakhstan's Kazakhoil companies are considering drawing up a joint agreement to exploit the Kurmangazy field's deposits, but the deal has not yet been finalized (Interfax, 0954 GMT, 4 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-277).

President Nazarbaev hopes to have his government's disputes with Russia settled by June of next year, in time for President Yel'tsin's visit to Kazakhstan, which is planned for the first half of 1998, primarily for the purpose of signing the new Kazakh-Russian treaty on friendship and cooperation (Interfax, 0954 GMT, 4 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-277).

Kazakhstan ready to export oil, gas to world market via any corridor
At a joint press conference with Ukrainian President Kuchma on 14 October, President Nazarbaev announced that his government is willing to export its oil and natural gas resources via any route, including through Ukrainian territory. Kazakhstan currently produces 25 million-26 million tons of oil per year, of which only 15 million tons are for domestic consumption. By 2005, Kazakhstan plans to expand its oil production to 100 million tons, by 2010 to 140 million tons, and by 2017 to 170 million tons. At peak capacity, the Caspian Pipeline Consortium will be able to handle only up to 67 million tons of both Russian and Kazakh oil, creating the need for new pipelines and transport routes. President Nazarbaev expressed interest in shipping Kazakh oil to Ukrainian refineries via Russian territory, and mentioned that, at the present time, Kazakhstan must transport its
oil by rail to the Baltics, from where it is exported to Western markets (Interfax, 1612 GMT, 14 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-287).

Kazakhstan recently concluded an agreement with the China National Petroleum Company (see Editorial Digest on Central Asia, 9 October) under which the construction of two new pipelines is planned: One pipeline is to run from Kazakhstan to Turkmenistan and another pipeline is to run from Kazakhstan's Aktyubinsk oil field to China's northwestern border. The Chinese company owns 60% of the shares in the Aktyubinsk field, which is estimated to contain reserves of 130 million tons and an annual crude oil output of about 2.6 million tons (Xinhua, 1429 GMT, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-CHI-97-283).

President Nazarbaev has also begun considering plans for exporting Kazakh oil to Japan. At a news conference on 3 October with a group of Japanese editorial writers, he mentioned that he had already discussed the possibility of shipping oil to Japan via China at the recent signing of the Kazakh-Chinese oil development contract (Kyodo, 0227 GMT, 4 Oct 97; FBIS-EAS-97-279).

**Kazakhstan selling explosives to Tajikistan**

According to a report by Moscow NTV, the Kazakh company Almaatavzryvprom, which manufactures components for explosive devices, has developed a new apparatus for the mining industry that reportedly is capable of producing 500 kg of an extremely explosive substance in 30 seconds. This apparatus is being sold to Tajikistan and apparently Russia also intends to buy a manufacturing license for this device. The explosive substance produced by the new apparatus is currently being used by researchers of the national nuclear center at Semipalatinsk to destroy radiation-contaminated silos. The main advantage of this explosive material is its low price: $200-220 per ton, compared to $700 per ton for similar substances in the United States (NTV, 1000 GMT, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-286).
Comment
Unfortunately, the Moscow NTV report did not give the name of either the new equipment or of the explosives which it produces.

Kazakh metal workers go on hunger strike after police bar their march
On 1 October approximately 1,000 miners and other workers from the Achpolimetal metallurgical plant (located in Kentau, a town in southern Kazakhstan about 900 km from Almaty) who had begun a march to Almaty in order to confront President Nazarbaev over the issue of their unpaid wages, were stopped by 250 police near the town of Turkestan, after completing only 30 km of their journey to the capital. The police used trucks to block the workers' path and they were forced to spend the night near Turkestan. The workers have not been paid for the past 10 months (Interfax, 0908 GMT, 2 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-275). The workers blame President Nazarbaev's economic policies for nearly destroying Kazakhstan's mining industry, and for impoverishing them and their families (ITAR-TASS, 0920 GMT, 6 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-279). As of 13 October, another 1,000-2,000 people from surrounding towns and villages had joined the original group of workers, who had established a camp near the Arys River. 500 of these demonstrators went on a hunger strike between 11 and 13 October, and the march participants have declared that they will not return home until they have been paid in full (ITAR-TASS, 1505 GMT, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-286). President Nazarbaev has denied the demonstrators' request to meet with him and tensions are rising (NTV, 0800 GMT, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-286). The demonstrators' path across the Arys River is cut off by police and anti-riot troops (ITAR-TASS, 1505 GMT, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-286).

TAJIKISTAN
Rezvon Sodirov's group continues to harass the Tajik government
On 2 October Rezvon Sodirov and his remaining supporters kidnapped two relatives of Presidential Guard commander Ghaffur Mirzoev in Dushanbe and transported them to an unknown location (ITAR-TASS, 0741 GMT, 3 Oct 97;
FBIS-SOV-97-276). On 9 October the Presidential Guard launched an operation to obtain the hostages' release (Sodirov has been holding a number of other hostages since summer, including the two sons of Tajikistan’s state religious leader, Mufti -- see Editorial Digests on Central Asia for 25 September 1997 and 9 September 1997), and General Mirzoev announced that three of Sodirov’s supporters, who had recently been arrested near Dushanbe, claimed that all of the hostages were still alive (Interfax, 0644 GMT, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-UMA-97-282). Sodirov is believed to be holding ten hostages (ITAR-TASS, 0605 GMT; 11 Oct 97, FBIS-SOV-97-284).

On 11 October General Mirzoev announced that three more of Sodirov’s supporters had been captured in a suburb of Dushanbe, and that Presidential Guard units had been conducting intensive searches for the rest of Sodirov’s party in the mountains near the capital (ITAR-TASS, 0605 GMT, 11 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-284). Two days later, General Mirzoev reported that more of Sodirov’s supporters had been arrested and that bases believed to belong to the militia group had been found in the mountains near Dushanbe. One of the hostages was also found dead during the search operation. It is believed that he was shot to death by Sodirov and his men (ITAR-TASS World Service, 1420 GMT, 13 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-286).

US to provide additional $35 million in aid to Tajikistan

At a meeting with National Reconciliation Commission Chairman Said Abdullo Nuri (who is also chairman of the United Tajik Opposition) on 7 October, Grant Smith, the US ambassador to Tajikistan, announced that the US government had decided to provide the Tajik government with an additional $35 million in aid. These funds are to be used specifically for the revitalization of Tajikistan's industrial enterprises, as well as to foster the development of the country's small business sector. The ambassador emphasized the US government's interest in aiding Tajikistan's rapid economic recovery (ITAR-TASS World Service, 0838 GMT, 8 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-281).
President Rahmonov to be final arbiter on allocation of ministries

Ibrohim Usmonov, a senior member of the Tajik parliament and chair of the political subcommission of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), informed foreign news agencies (BBC and ITAR-TASS) in early October that President Rahmonov will make the final decision on which ministries and government posts will be granted to the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). The Tajik president will also have final authority over which UTO members are appointed to these government positions. The UTO representatives in the NRC may nominate candidates to the various posts, but President Rahmonov will have ultimate approval. Once the UTO representatives have issued their final list of nominations, President Rahmonov will meet with the NRC's chairman, Said Abdullo Nuri, and following their meeting will make his final decision via decree. This decree is then to be submitted to Tajikistan's parliament (ITAR-TASS World Service, 0937 GMT, 2 Oct 97, 1254 GMT, 16 Sep 97; NEXIS).

Comment

As the ultimate judge not only of which ministries and government posts are granted to the UTO, but also of which UTO members are appointed to these positions, President Rahmonov will have considerable influence over the new government, as well as being able to exercise a great deal of leverage over the UTO's current leadership. Rahmonov has been accused in the past of trying to destroy the UTO's unity by splitting its leadership (the UTO is made up of three different groups); perhaps he is once again trying to achieve this aim.

Prosecutor-general's office completes assassination investigation

On 3 October, the Tajik Prosecutor-General's Office announced on Tajik radio that its investigation into the assassination attempt on President Rahmonov on 30 April 1997 (see Editorial Digest on Central Asia for April 1997) had been completed, and that the case would be passed on to the Supreme Court. The Prosecutor-General has accused 15 people of having been involved in the
attempt on the President Rahmonov's life, including Abdulhafiz Abdulloev, brother of former Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdullojonov, who is now the leader of the National Revival opposition bloc (based in Khujand, a city in northern Tajikistan) (Tajik Radio First programme, 0800 GMT, 3 Oct 97; NEXIS).

Comment
It is difficult to interpret the Prosecutor-General's accusation against Abdulhafiz Abdulloev as anything other than a political move against his brother, Abdumalik Abdullojonov. There has been strong political opposition to President Rahmonov in Khujand since the early days of his presidency in 1993; in the spring of 1996 there were a number of demonstrations against his government. In the fall of 1997 the National Revival Bloc made an appeal to be included in the inter-Tajik peace negotiations, and their request was supported by the UTO. President Rahmonov, however, refused to let any of their representatives participate in the peace talks. He has thus far been unable to destroy Abdullojonov's party, although he and his supporters have tried to discredit it publicly on more than one occasion.

Newly Independent States: Baltic States

By Kate Martin

LITHUANIA

Presidential campaign begins
A surprise announcement and allegations of KGB collaboration helped to start the 1997 presidential campaign season with a bang in early October. Despite a strong showing in a late September popularity poll (Interfax, 1545 GMT, 22 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-265), President Algirdas Brazauskas has chosen not to run for re-election, reinforcing earlier statements that he believes younger politicians should be given a chance to govern. (Interfax, 1856 GMT, 23 Jun 97; FBIS-SOV-
Brazauskas has been in office for five years. His term expires in February 1998.

The other seasoned politician campaigning for the post, parliamentary chairman Vytautas Landsbergis, remains in the race, although he is facing lower poll standings (Interfax, 1724 GMT, 30 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-273) and allegations that he collaborated with the KGB--charges leveled by MP Audrius Butkevicius, who is himself facing charges of grand fraud and bribery (ELTA, 0939 GMT, 1 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-274). Landsbergis and Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius, both members of the conservative Homeland Union party, have called the charges against the Seimas chairman lies and provocations. The allegations, confirmed by six ex-KGB officers (ITAR-TASS, 2040 GMT, 6 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-279), were investigated by a special parliamentary commission and found to be "groundless slander," according to commission head Algimantas Sejunas (ELTA, 1124 GMT, 9 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-282).

It is unclear how much harm the charges will bring to Landsbergis' candidacy. His popularity already is lower that other contenders for the presidency, including Valdas Adamkus, an environmentalist for the US who leads most popularity polls although he had to fight hard before winning a court appeal which deemed him eligible to run (Interfax, 1611 GMT, 10 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-283), and the former prosecutor general Arturas Paulauskas. (Interfax, 1724 GMT, 30 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-273). Another candidate from the US, MP Kazys Bobelis, has received permission from the Electoral Commission to run (ELTA, 0843 GMT, 6 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-279), while a third--Professor Liucija Baskauskaite--is bringing her appeal to the Constitutional Court (ELTA, 1303 GMT, 14 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-287). In addition, the rector of Vilnius University, Rolandas Pavilionis, announced his interest in becoming a candidate (ELTA, 0903 GMT, 6 Oct 97l FBIS-SOV-97-279). Nominees have until 6 November to submit the 20,000 signatures required for placement on the ballot.
LATVIA
You better watch out...
Prime Minister Guntars Krasts continues to prove himself a hard taskmaster, fighting against disloyalty and earlier-voiced concerns that he would not be tough enough for the post. Last month he proposed a series of bills which would restrict the powers of deputies to ask questions in parliament, and warned that representation by political parties in the Cabinet would be reduced if members of those parties failed to support government decisions in parliament. (Interfax, 1631 GMT, 10 Sep 97; FBIS-SOV-97-253) This was followed by the announcement that he has a little book listing the names of deputies and ministers who have in some way acted against the government's interests. When the list is long enough, the report claims, Krasts will carry out certain, as yet unspecified, sanctions. At this point, Defense Minister Talavs Jundzis is reportedly the minister who has sinned the most (Radio Riga Network, 0800 GMT, 1 Oct 97; FBIS-SOV-97-274).