

Soviet 'devil's plan' has only just begun

The Soviet troops who massacred 14 Lithuanians on Jan. 12-13 were brought in to Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, following ultimata by Mikhail Gorbachov and Baltic Military District Commander Gen. Col. Fyodor Kuzmin. They demanded that Lithuania renounce its March 1990 declaration of independence by Jan. 13. The massacre came within hours of the U.S. Congress giving its approval for Bush to use force against Iraq.

Lithuania's President Vytautas Landsbergis described the Soviet crackdown as the "devil's plan," timed to proceed while the "world's attention is directed at the Gulf crisis." Landsbergis appealed to Bush and other Western leaders not to go to war. He warned that starting a war in the Gulf means that the West will "fall into a Russian trap," because "Russia will use the war as a cover to come down on Lithuania." In a press conference in London on Jan. 15, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas underlined that "the Second World War between East and West is still going on in Lithuania. You cannot begin a third world war between North and South without finishing the Second World War."

Landsbergis, Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin, and others have pointed to the grim 20th-century precedents for the Soviet action: 1) June 1940, when Moscow invaded and annexed the three Baltic republics while Hitler was conquering France; 2) the 1956 parallel between the Suez Crisis, the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt to occupy the Suez Canal, and the deployment of the Red Army to crush the Hungarian Revolution; 3) the 1968 Red Army march into Prague, while America was immersed in the quagmire of Vietnam.

Gorbachov's war cabinet

The crackdown in the Baltic republics, which *EIR* has long forecast, is the result of the consolidation of power in the Soviet Union by a hardline policy grouping that we have identified as the "Third Rome" faction, a post-

Bolshevik Russian-chauvinist tendency that sees Moscow as becoming the capital of a new "Roman Empire."

This tendency can also be seen in Gorbachov's Jan. 14 appointment of key figures in his new presidential cabinet government. The most senior cabinet members after Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, formerly U.S.S.R. finance minister, are the two new first deputy prime ministers, Vitali Dogushiyev and Vladimir Velichko. Both are members of the Soviet Union's arms industry leadership. Velichko was Minister for Heavy Machine Building. The new deputy prime minister with special responsibility for the defense industry, is Yuri Maslyukov, for many years a leading figure in the military-industrial complex, and till now head of Gosplan, the state planning agency.

On Jan. 15, the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet confirmed Gorbachov's appointment of Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, the Soviet ambassador to Washington, as new foreign minister, replacing Eduard Shevardnadze. This choice suggests that Gorbachov expects to continue armed repression "in sync" with the U.S. government, as George Bush puts it.

On Jan. 15, Gorbachov broke his silence on the Baltic situation to blame the Baltic leaders for the crisis, accusing the Baltic leaders of being "dictators," and blaming Landsbergis, with his "hasty proclamation of independence," for the "events in Vilnius." Echoing his Defense Minister Yazov and Interior Minister Boris Pugo, Gorbachov repeated the lie that the Lithuanians had "fired first," with the Soviet Army "returning the fire." One recalled in this the infamous broadcast by the Nazis, Sept. 1, 1939, when Hitler invaded Poland: "Starting at 5:45 our troops returned the fire."

Then, Gorbachov turned his invective against Russia's President, Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin had condemned the Red Army intervention in Lithuania, and issued a call for Russia to have its own army and for no Russian soldiers to fight against the governments of other republics. Gorbachov accused Yeltsin of a "deliberate provocation and gross violation of the U.S.S.R. Constitution," representing a "challenge not only to the supreme federal authorities, [which] also heightens confrontation in the already explosive situation in the country."

Repression set to go

As of Jan. 16, in at least five of the six non-Slavic Christian republics of the U.S.S.R., the situation was poised at razor's edge. In the three Baltic republics (Estonia,

special unit, flown in as provocateurs. Either the crowd of 500,000 was too big for them to handle, or the organizers of the funeral found ways to neutralize this threat; no provocations occurred that day.

Now, as of Jan. 17, Vilnius is calm—"the calm before the storm," the inhabitants say. They had gotten credible

reports of even an air attack against the parliament, by helicopters and paratroopers stationed in Minsk, the capital of nearby Belorussia. An air or tank attack on the Lithuanian parliament is thought imminent. "Since the Americans started the war in the Gulf last night, there is not much hope left; the Russians will not miss this chance which the stupid and

Latvia, Lithuania), the republic of Moldavia bordering on Romania, and the republic of Georgia in the Transcaucasus, the deadlines set by Moscow for using the Army to crush the republics, had passed. Each of the republic governments had been issued an ultimatum to submit to the Red Army a "detailed list" of draft evaders, with their whereabouts.

In addition, the deadline set by a Gorbachov decree, ordering all Georgian militia to vacate the South Ossetian region of that republic, had also expired on Jan. 15. Georgia, which, like the Baltic states is seeking complete independence, rejected the ultimatum, and battles between Georgian militia and the Red Army airborne units and special Black Beret units of Soviet Interior Troops in South Ossetia, could break out at any time.

In each of the Baltic states, and in Moldavia, Moscow-orchestrated tensions, provocations, and ominous troop deployments, have been escalating on a daily basis.

Lithuania: Following the Vilnius massacre, where Soviet troops seized the TV and Radio Center, Lithuania has become an occupied country. Soviet troops have occupied auxiliary radio broadcasting facilities, the airports, ports, rail, and communication lines. The storming of the Lithuanian Parliament is expected soon. The command for this next escalation has been in place since Jan. 14, when two Soviet deputy defense ministers arrived in Lithuania: Gen. Valentin Varennikov, commander in chief of the Soviet Ground Forces, and Gen. Col. Vladislav Achalov, named Dec. 28 as the 13th deputy defense minister, to a new post, responsible for all deployments of Soviet Armed Forces. Achalov was, and is believed to still be, simultaneously the commander of all Soviet Airborne Forces.

Latvia and Estonia: In both republics, beginning Jan. 15, there have been mass demonstrations by the Red Army-controlled Interfront, the Russian chauvinist front for the Russian minorities which make up 40% of Estonia's population, and about 50% of Latvia's. The demonstrators demanded the immediate resignation of the Latvian and Estonian governments. Barricades have gone up in the Latvian capital of Riga and the Estonian capital of Tallinn, to try and protect the Parliament and government buildings in the center of the cities from Army attack. On Jan. 13, Gen. Col. Grigori Krivosheyev, the deputy chief of the U.S.S.R. General Staff in charge of manpower and mobilization, arrived in Estonia, to try to force compli-

ance with the Jan. 15 deadline.

Moldavia: In a Jan. 14 radio broadcast, Gen. Col. Ivan Morozov, commander of the Odessa Military District, which includes Moldavia, thundered that "the Soviet Army will do all it can to prevent Moldavia from leaving the Soviet Union." Morozov used the radio facilities in the city of Tiraspol, located on the Dniestr River, and "capital" of the ethnic Russian "Dniestr Republic" which was proclaimed by Moldavia's ethnic Russians on Oct. 28, when they, with covert Army backing, de facto seceded from Moldavia. The Odessa Military District command had given Moldavian authorities a "help us round up the draft evaders" deadline of Jan. 16, which has now passed. Quietly, over the Jan. 12-13 weekend, Soviet troops near the Moldavian capital of Kishineov were reinforced by at least one battalion, and the airborne division based with the Odessa Military District is ready to intervene as soon as orders are given.

U.S. strategic stupidity

As the Moscow shows its iron fist more by the day, the U.S. war buildup in the Gulf has stripped Germany, the key to the defense of Europe, of any credible military force. Gone are over half of the U.S. Army ground forces combat units, a much higher percentage of armor, an incredible three-quarters of all combat aircraft, leaving a mere two divisions and a handful of squadrons. One year ago, the Federal Republic had four-plus U.S. divisions and no Russian troops on its soil; today, the two remaining American divisions "coexist" in united Germany with 376,000 Russian troops.

The Soviet blackmail capability extends beyond military means. War in the Gulf means at least partial disruption of Europe's oil supplies, and a potential explosion in oil prices overnight to \$60-75 a barrel. Europe's only alternative source for oil is—in exchange for a high political price—the Soviet Union.

Morover, the Muslim republics of Azerbaidzhan and Central Asia have been exempted from any armed suppression by Moscow. There are tens of thousands of draft evaders in every Muslim republic, yet no ultimata have been presented to them. Given that the entire Islamic world is about to turn anti-American in response to Bush's attack on Iraq, the leaders in Moscow cannot help but realize that they stand to benefit from this anti-American wave.

—Konstantin George

immoral governments of the West have given them."

This is not only the opinion of the politicians in the besieged parliament in Vilnius and their colleagues in the other Baltic republics, who had warned the Western politicians time and again in the last months not to overlook the crucial indifference of the free world, which had sealed the destiny

of the Baltic republics already in 1940, as well as the fate of Hungary in 1956. That is also being said by the proverbial "man in the street" in Vilnius, who constantly puts the simple, but painstaking question to Western visitors: "When will the Western politicians and populations finally wake up? Only when it's too late, also for them?"