

established by Madison, Patrick Henry, and Jefferson. But this was not the case.

And it is absolutely incomprehensible to me, how people can be doing business, can enjoy their income, how they can even think about anything, if they have dissidents, and prisoners of conscience are sitting in prison, and, what's more, it's on falsified charges about non-payment of taxes. And, by the way, it's just simply not a good thing, to give people years-long prison sentences for non-payment of taxes. This is base. It means that for the sake of a dollar, the state is prepared to strangle somebody. This is incomprehensible to me.

And it is obvious that, apparently, in the United States, all is not well with civil society. A civil society would never allow such things. And I can't imagine Jefferson, who said that no government would ever be able to preserve freedom in the country unless it knows precisely that the citizens are prepared to give their lives for that freedom, and the Founding Fathers in general having in mind that such things could happen. As far as I know American history, and I know it not too badly, this is just a complete degradation of the idea. Why this has happened, I don't know, because the idea was a good one. Probably it has to do with the fact that at the point of the angle was that "commonwealth," the striving for happiness. Striving for freedom is more than striving for happiness, and happiness is not found in the increase of production and raising the level of one's income. Happiness is found in completely different things.

I think that material undercurrent, consumerism, in fact kills the idea of democracy in the entire world. Just as today it is killing everything in Russia and holding people back from rising any higher than questions of subsistence, when there is not anything to subsist on. Whereas in the United States, it seems, everything is all right as far as food goes, and people have cars. But, forgive me, if people are going to make it their ideal to buy four cars instead of three, or to change from one brand of car to another, or to buy a new cooking range, then God created man in vain, if man ends up as such an abomination.

And I think that the Schiller Institute and Lyndon LaRouche are trying to return man to his spiritual base, or at least to those ideals which Christ preached, and also Jefferson.

As for the death penalty, any country that employs the death penalty and does not abolish it unconditionally is not democratic.

#### Notes

1. Yemelian Pugachov led a violent uprising against Catherine the Great in the 18th century, claiming that he was her murdered husband, Peter III.
2. J.R.R. Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*.
3. In 1945, the Yalta agreement among Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill was concluded. In 1956, the western powers stood by as Soviet tanks crushed the Hungarian revolution against communist rule. In 1968, Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia, undeterred by western countries.

## Central Asian conflict gets bloodier

by Ramtanu Maitra

Recent reports indicate that the armed assault by the pro-Moscow faction on Dushanbe, the capital city of Tajikistan, to capture power and reinstate ousted President Rahman Nabiyev, has failed. The pro-Islam leadership of Akbarsho Iskandrov is in control of the capital, although reports of heavy fighting in and around Dushanbe are filtering in. Meanwhile, Washington has closed its embassy in Dushanbe and asked American travelers to stay away from Tajikistan until further notice.

The conflict in Tajikistan, one of the Community of Independent States (CIS), is now in a full-blown state, with Islamic militants poised to strike for power. The armed forces of the Hizb-i-Nuzhat-i-Islami, a secret organization for 15 years until it was officially recognized on Oct. 26, 1991, have gained strength significantly in the cities of Kurgan-Tyube, Karategin, and partly in Kulab and Dushanbe. The Hizb-i-Nuzhat, independent of the Qaziat in Tajikistan, is considered the most organized of all opposition groups. To the north, Khojend, whence President Nabiyev hails, is a hotbed of the communists, and the Communist Party, which was registered again in January 1992, is consolidating its position with the help of Uzbeks.

### Impact of the Afghanistan crisis

In neighboring Uzbekistan, there is fear of ethnic conflict between Tajiks and Uzbeks. During a recent visit of the Indian foreign minister, R.L. Bhatia, his Uzbek colleague Abdul Razzakov expressed concern at attempts by external forces to destabilize the region through the flow of funds and arms in support of terrorism.

What Foreign Minister Razzakov was referring to is the adverse impact of the Afghan crisis. In Afghanistan, the pro-Islam Mujahideen leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is locked in a power struggle with the Afghan leaders Gen. Abdur Rashid Dostum and Ahmed Shah Massoud. Dostum is of Uzbek origin and Massoud is a Tajik, ethnically, and both are considered moderates on religious issues. Dostum had visited Uzbekistan recently, trying to forge an alliance with the Uzbek leaders in order to carve out an autonomous part within Afghanistan bordering Uzbekistan. Hekmatyar, in his effort

to upset the apple cart, is funding and arming Islamic militants in both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, hoping that they would reject both Dostum and Massoud because of their secular views.

Hekmatyar, in a statement issued from Charasyab headquarters in Afghanistan, has also warned the two Central Asian republics, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, of dire consequences in case they did not stop interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs. He claimed that he had ample proof to show that these two CIS countries had extended military supplies to what he described as the "unholy alliance" of northern Afghanistan. He alleged that both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were devising plans with the Uzbek Gen. Rashid Dostum for the division of Afghanistan, and were extending military aid to Dostum to do so.

The veracity of Hekmatyar's claim is a matter of conjecture, but all regional countries are becoming deeply involved in each other's affairs. Since the air link between Pakistan and Uzbekistan has been established, there are reports of planeloads of Jamaat-e-Tulaba, the Islamic teachers, traveling to Tashkent with the purpose of reinvigorating Islam of the Sunni-Deobandi variety. The Saudis, meanwhile, have sent planeloads of religious material, ostensibly to promote Islam.

Meanwhile, Kazakhstan is fighting Islamic revivalism in this multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-religious nation of 17 million. Groups of parties, like Adilat and Altash, which are vigorously reviving Islam, have turned mosques into centers of their activities. Here, too, external factors are looming large. Public donations are mostly coming from Turkey in the form of building mosques. Missionaries and teachers, such as Tulabas, are flocking in from Pakistan, Jordan, and Morocco, one report indicates. Meanwhile, non-Kazakh ethnic groups are becoming aware of their separate identity for the first time. The fear is that inter-ethnic confrontation is slowly creeping into Kazakhstan as well. Already, the decision to make Kazakh the national language has made the non-Kazakhs uneasy. The large Russian presence in northern Kazakhstan and vast areas of non-Kazakh settlements, in case of an inter-ethnic conflict, could throw the country into perpetual chaos.

President Nursultan Nazurbayev's adoption of the free market system is bound to create further conflicts within the country. In the first six months after the free market was introduced, prices have jumped up by 675%, and the gap between wages and prices has widened. The GNP has gone down by 19%, and the 20 million tons of grain that has reportedly been harvested, is not reaching consumption centers due to inadequate infrastructure. In addition, 2,000 enterprises have been privatized and land laws have been changed to allow private landholdings. In the market, there are few items to buy.

Throughout the Central Asia republics, the relatively new problem of drugs and arms smuggling is also posing dangers.

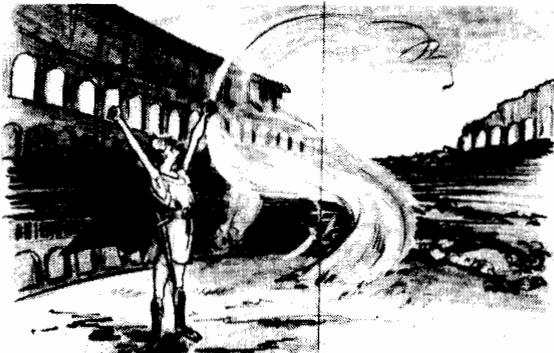
At a recent seminar in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, drugs and arms smuggling from Afghanistan was given prominence. It is one of the reasons, perhaps, why President Islam Karmov has temporarily suspended air service between Tashkent and Dushanbe.

### Can a collective security system emerge?

The question of collective security under the present circumstances has already been brought up. The Presidents of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan had proposed a military alliance, in case the Tajik violence begins to spread across the region. However, this would require the aid of the Russian Army, and Moscow's opinion on this issue is far from clear. President Akayev of Kyrgyzstan did not succeed in convincing his parliamentarians to send 400 peacekeeping troops to Tajikistan. The proposal was mooted at the CIS summit in Bishkek in early October and passed unanimously. However, the proposal was rejected out of hand by the Kyrgyz Parliament.

Some point out that if the Europeans have so much trouble setting up a collective force of intervention in Bosnia, it is highly unlikely that in the current mosaic of conflicts, the former Soviet republics, without developed institutions, can build a common defense policy.

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