

ments by the Foreign Ministry and Army leaders, carried on TV and radio, denied “rumors” that Turkey was planning a “military invasion” of Bulgaria, and assured the population that “all of Bulgaria’s borders and its territorial integrity are secured.” These declarations have intensified the Bulgarian chauvinism against the country’s 1 million members of the Turkish minority, into a jingoistic anti-Turkey wave now sweeping the country.

Western media portrayals of a “more liberal” post-Todor Zhivkov regime in Bulgaria, having reversed Zhivkov’s anti-Turkish policy, and thus being in conflict with a Bulgarian nationalist opposition, are a mixture of half-truths and illusions. The post-Zhivkov regime of Petar Mladenov made, in early January, two supposed “concessions” to that country’s Turkish minority. These concessions, allowing “all Bulgarians” the right to keep their names and the right to practice their religion, are, for the Turks, meaningless, but were enough to set into motion a Bulgarian chauvinist backlash. A Bulgarian leadership statement of Jan. 7, timed with the Bulgarian Orthodox Christmas, reaffirmed that Bulgaria does not even recognize the existence of a Turkish minority, and feels itself under no obligation to grant any form of cultural autonomy to the Turks.

These realities should surprise no one. Minus the bloodshed, the Bulgarian changeover in November 1989, which dumped Zhivkov, was identical in its most essential features to how Ceausescu was toppled in Romania. As in Romania, it was the Army, acting in conjunction with Moscow, which intervened to guarantee the success of the Central Committee Plenum coup that overthrew Zhivkov.

The escalating dissolution of Yugoslavia was Moscow’s prime reason for co-managing the Bulgarian and Romanian coups. Romania is strategically located between the U.S.S.R. and the Balkan hotspots of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Moscow will demand and get from the Iliescu regime, in exchange for Soviet energy supplies to get Romania through the winter, an agreement or understanding allowing the transit of Soviet troops across Romania for the contingency of military operations anywhere in the Balkan theater. With that accomplished, Moscow would accept a post-April non-communist-led coalition government in Bucharest, under condition that such agreements be honored.

Back in 1910 when that Balkan crisis began, no one could have predicted when a global war would break out. One could only have predicted that if the causal dynamics that produced that Balkan crisis and the ensuing European strategic crisis were not arrested and reversed, then, at some point in the next years, war would occur. In 1990, the keys to preventing a fatal recurrence of the 1910-14 dynamic are at hand, if Western policy acts to ensure that the democratic revolutions in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland emerge victorious through a crash program of economic and infrastructural development of these parts of Europe. Time is of the essence.

Eyewitness Report

200,000 in Leipzig: ‘Down with the SED!’

by Volker Hassmann

It is Leipzig in the East Zone of Germany on Monday, Jan. 8. After three weeks of temporary restraint during the holiday season, citizens will be back in the streets for their legendary Monday demonstration. In discussions with friends and political organizers of the opposition groups, I am told that this will be another historic day. Will the citizens of Leipzig, whose passionate struggle had sparked the peaceful revolution, rise up again and be strong enough to confront the looming threat of a restored Communist regime? “The demo” is the talk of the town, in the hotels, in the restaurants, at the workplace.

In the afternoon, the inner city begins to get crowded. In various churches, the traditional “peace prayers” are scheduled for 5 p.m. People stream into the Nikolai Church, where the historic candlelight vigils had started, leading into the October revolution. I find a seat on the balcony, the room is overfilled. Christian Fuehrer, the priest of the parish, opens the prayer with the words of St. John: “And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:5). I look around and I see families, housewives who just came from shopping, groups of workers, some of them from the industrial cities of Halle and even Zwickau.

Pastor Fuehrer charges that the Communist regime is only regrouping, and has created a “neo-Nazi” scare to discredit the popular democratic movement. Another priest, incarcerated in 1969 by the infamous Stasi secret police in Leipzig, warns that the Communist Party, the SED, and the Stasi might provoke violence in the demonstration: “Now they are marching under the Nazi cover. Watch out, don’t get provoked! It is a decisive day!”

Prayer for Poland

The parish sings a chorale. A group of construction workers, right next to me, who have never been in a church before, as I am told later, first listen. Then they move their lips, and they begin to join in, as all the others do. It might not be a chorale with words to remember, but it talks about hope, and this means a lot for them. Young members of the parish have prepared the peace prayer. They pray for Poland, for the elderly and the children who will freeze this winter: “We pray for the people in Poland, who have suffered from the last war, and now are pushed once more to the edge of existence.”

They have collected money to help Poland, "because with all our problems, we are still richer than they are." Hundreds of voices join in a song for Poland, where the revolution had started, and which is now suffering most.

We leave St. Nikolai and all the streets are now filled with people, moving towards the Opera for the demonstration. The first signs and banners are unfurled: "The red scare rises again, like 40 years ago." In the central square, at least 100,000 have gathered already: a sea of black-red-golden flags. A Leipziger next to me says: "We are warming up, you know." Over 100,000 voices chant: "Down with the SED!" "Modrow, go home!" "Gysi and Co.—You are K.O.!" "No vote for the SED!" "For two weeks we were not in the streets, now the Communists raise their heads again!" Some of the slogans are sung, it's a rhythmic chant, and it fills the square like roaring thunder.

A new slogan is invented, laughter, and then it spreads, and it's one pounding voice again: "Gysi to the mineworks!" The new SED leader Günther Gysi and Prime Minister Hans Modrow are the target, the people don't want them. One sign bears the couplet: "Modrow Hans—mit Stasischwanz" ("Modrow Hans, with a Stasi-tail"). There are no speeches at the demonstration, so the people have their own rally, going through their whole creative repertoire of chants, for almost an hour.

When the march is set into motion, it finally reaches the number of 200,000. It is the most powerful demonstration of the unbroken fighting spirit of the Leipzigers, called the "heroes of the revolution." There are no organizers, no sound systems, no bullhorns. Nobody reads a roll call, the demonstration is a self-organizing process. While they march, people are chanting, and if they don't chant, they are discussing. None of the banners had been prepared or coordinated, but they all stress three issues: End Communist rule, expose the "neo-Nazi" scare, and achieve German unity. The banners which back in November defended the "German Democratic Republic" as a separate state are gone.

The marchers are absolutely determined and aggressive, but at the same time it is a spontaneous, and joyful rally. New words are created, like "de-stasi-fication." Banners read: "Never again—57 years of National Socialist and Red Socialist dictatorship in Germany were enough: reunification!" "Brown and Red: Germany's dead!" "For a Germany, without red breed and brown seed!" When somebody brings the news to the rally that the roundtable in Leipzig between the opposition and the SED proposed to cancel the Monday marches for an indefinite time, the demonstrators halt, and after a second of silence they break out into a minute-long chant of protest: "We are the people! We are the people!" It seems that some of the opposition groups are hopelessly behind the will of the people.

Contrary to the lies of media in East and West, which have done everything to black out the real spirit of this march, the demonstration of Jan. 8 is of most decisive significance.

It was echoed by a march of 100,000 in Chemnitz, calling for independent trade unions, and by marches in Halle, Frankfurt on Oder, Erfurt, and other cities. It has marked the next stage of the revolution, which now seeks to end Communist rule in all its disguises, something that will be remoralizing other Eastern European countries, where Moscow intends to rule in new colors. It has also given an example of courage and fighting spirit to the rest of East Germany, where fear and partial demoralization because of restored SED power was spreading (see *EIR*, Jan. 12, *Report from Bonn*).

Numerous discussions with citizens and leaders of opposition movements revealed that no matter what trick in the book the communists will use, they can be defeated. "And if all means are gone, we will resort to the last one: a general strike," was a remark I often heard in these days. The Leipzig leader of the citizen movement, New Forum, Jürgen Tallig, put it this way:

"First, it was a revolution against something, the SED, the Stasi, the suppression of freedom. The SED has only eliminated obvious anachronisms of their bureaucracy, instruments of power that had become useless anyway. Now there is a new generation of sly 'politburocrats.' Will our revolution now have the strength to go beyond a mere 'No'? Or do we fear what fell into our lap, without a hard fight? . . . We must not rely on the next elections. If we don't wake up now, there might be a rude awakening. The opposition must unite, and can't afford to be a 'stuntman' for the silent majority. We are the people—it is our land." And he adds the warning, not to fall into the trap of submitting to "Western finance capital," "because Hungary and Poland have shown the possible consequences."

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