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Research Memorandum

United States Information Agency
Washington, D.C. 20547



Office of Research

October 25, 1991

TURKS APPLAUD BUSH FOR GULF POLICIES; LIMITED SUPPORT FOR U.S. PRESENCE IN AREA

This report is based on a USIA-commissioned personal interview survey conducted among 1009 adults in Turkey between May 25 and June 6, 1991. Interviews were conducted by PIAR, the local Gallup affiliate, among a nationally representative sample of adults 18 years and older. This is one of several detailed reports; opinions on domestic, security-defense and international issues are published separately. Highlights have been previously published.

Key Findings:

- On the Gulf War, two-thirds of the adult Turks:
 - ✓ agreed that the defeat of Iraq was a "good" thing for Turkey, but there was no consensus on whether Turkey did enough to support the war effort;
 - ✓ applauded President Bush's handling of the crisis, but half continued to oppose the use of the NATO airbases by the U.S. during the war.
- Opinion was evenly split as to whether the U.S. military should remain in the Gulf to ensure peace; half opposed Turkish participation in a UN peacekeeping force.
- Most held Iraq accountable for the war, with large majorities agreeing that Iraq should pay to rebuild Kuwait, should compensate Turkey for the refugees, and that Iraqi leaders should stand trial for war crimes.
- At the time of the survey, half of the adult Turks believed that Saddam Hussein remained a serious threat to Turkey and that his removal from power would be necessary for securing world stability. But a slim majority doubted that a war would break out in the Middle East in the next five years (54% unlikely). Among those who felt war was likely (41%), most named Israel as probable instigator.
- Turks identifying with the ruling ANAP party generally approved of their government's decisions and actions during the Gulf crisis but were divided on the use of NATO airbases. Those identifying with the opposition parties were much more critical of the government's action and more likely to oppose the continued U.S. military presence in the Gulf.

Defeat of Iraq Seen to Have Benefitted Turkey

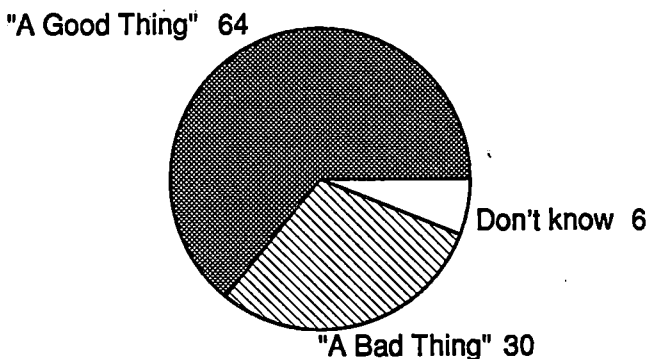
Two-thirds (64%) of Turkish adults agreed that the defeat of Iraq was a "good" thing for Turkey (Figure 1; Table 1). These sentiments were most intensely felt by residents of Adana province, which neighbors Iskedrun, the terminus of the Iraqi pipeline. In the Adana province, 85 percent agreed that the defeat of Iraq was a "good" thing for Turkey, with 64 percent agreeing very strongly. This is not surprising since the province was most directly affected by the closing of borders with Iraq.¹

But Opinion Split on Whether Turkey Did Enough to Support Effort

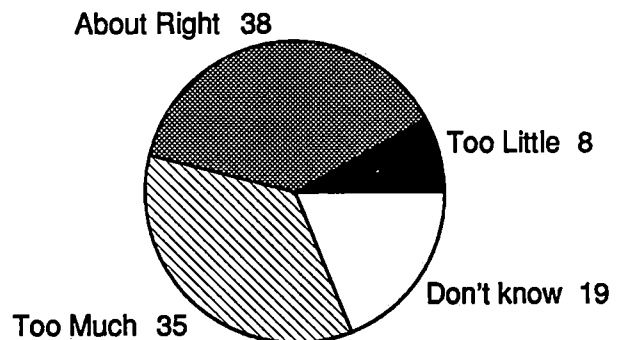
Even though most Turks agreed that the defeat of Iraq was in their national interest, there was little sentiment that Turkey should have done more in the war effort. As many believed that Turkey's contribution to the coalition of nations fighting against Iraq was "about right" as said it was "too much" (38% and 35% respectively); only a few (8%) said Turkey contributed "too little" (Figure 1; Table 2). Prior to the war, a majority of Turks consistently opposed military action against Iraq.²

Figure 1. Turkish Opinions on the Gulf War

For Turkey, Outcome of Gulf War was:



Turkish Contribution to War Effort was:



¹ In compliance with the UN sanctions, Turkey sealed its borders with Iraq, closing the oil pipelines, which supplied 60% of Turkey's oil needs, the payment for the oil covered by the fees for the pipelines. The losses from the pipeline closure are estimated at up to 7 billion U.S. dollars for 1990 and could run as high as 15 billion U.S. dollars by the end of 1991. Therefore, it is not surprising that residents of the region most directly affected by the closing of the pipelines see the defeat of Iraq as a desirable resolution of the crisis.

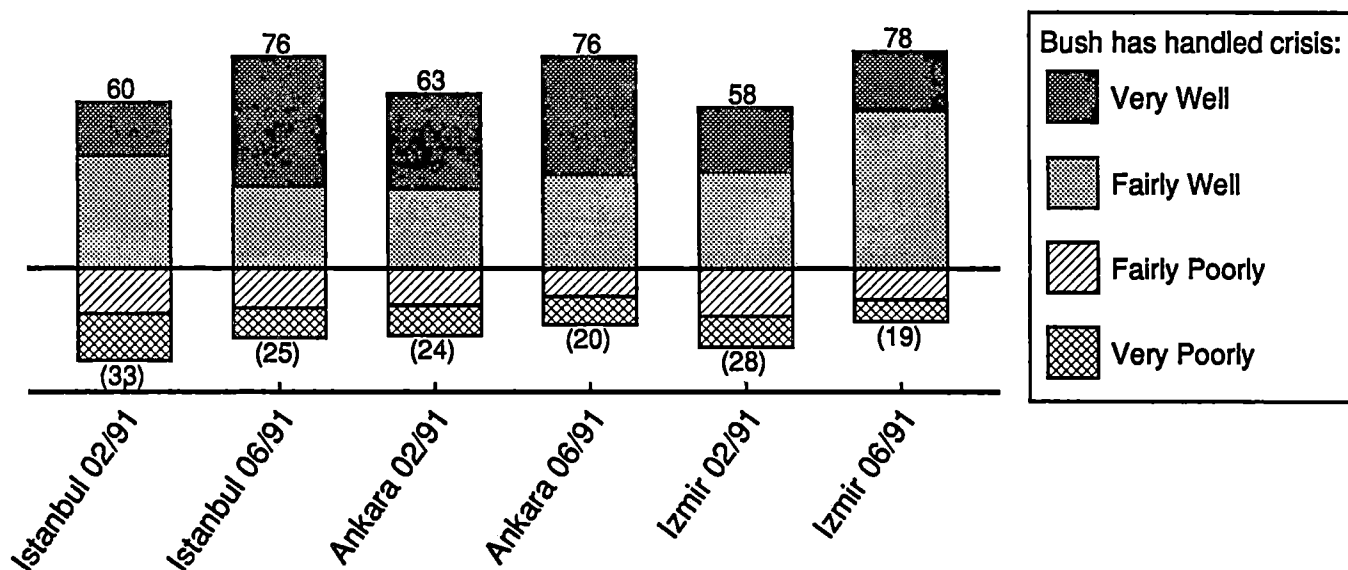
² An October 1990 survey of urban Turks showed a majority opposing military action against Iraq, if the economic blockade failed (58% oppose to 36% favor; see USIA Office of Research report M-117-90). An earlier nationwide survey (fielded late August/early September) found a majority (66%) not wanting to become involved in a Gulf war (reported in *Milliyet*, September 17, 1990).

President Bush's Gulf Policies Given Accolades

In line with the widely held perception that the defeat of Iraq was in Turkish interests, most Turks approved President Bush's Gulf policies -- two-thirds (65%) said he handled the crisis "well" (Table 3). President Bush received broadest endorsement from residents of Turkey's three major cities -- Istanbul (76%), Ankara (76%), Izmir (78%) -- and from residents of the Adana area (80%), who were, as noted previously, also most ardent in saying that Iraq's defeat served Turkish interests. The endorsement of President Bush's policies was much lower in the other urban centers (59%) and in the rural settlements (63%). As expected, approval of U.S. Gulf policies was more widespread among those politically right-of-center than those left-of-center.

Turkish opinion on President Bush's Gulf policies improved notably as the crisis unfolded. The initial decision to send troops to Saudi Arabia was met with hesitancy: more urban Turks disapproved (50%) than approved (42%) of the decision to "send armed forces to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf."³ Yet by February 1991 (in a three-city survey) a majority said the President was handling the crisis "well" (60%, only 29% said "poorly").⁴ In June of this year, in these three cities, approval of the President's policies was even more widespread, with three-fourths saying he handled the crisis "well" (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Turkish Approval of President Bush's Handling of Gulf Crisis
Increased from February to June in Turkey's Key Cities**



³ October 1990 survey of urban Turks.

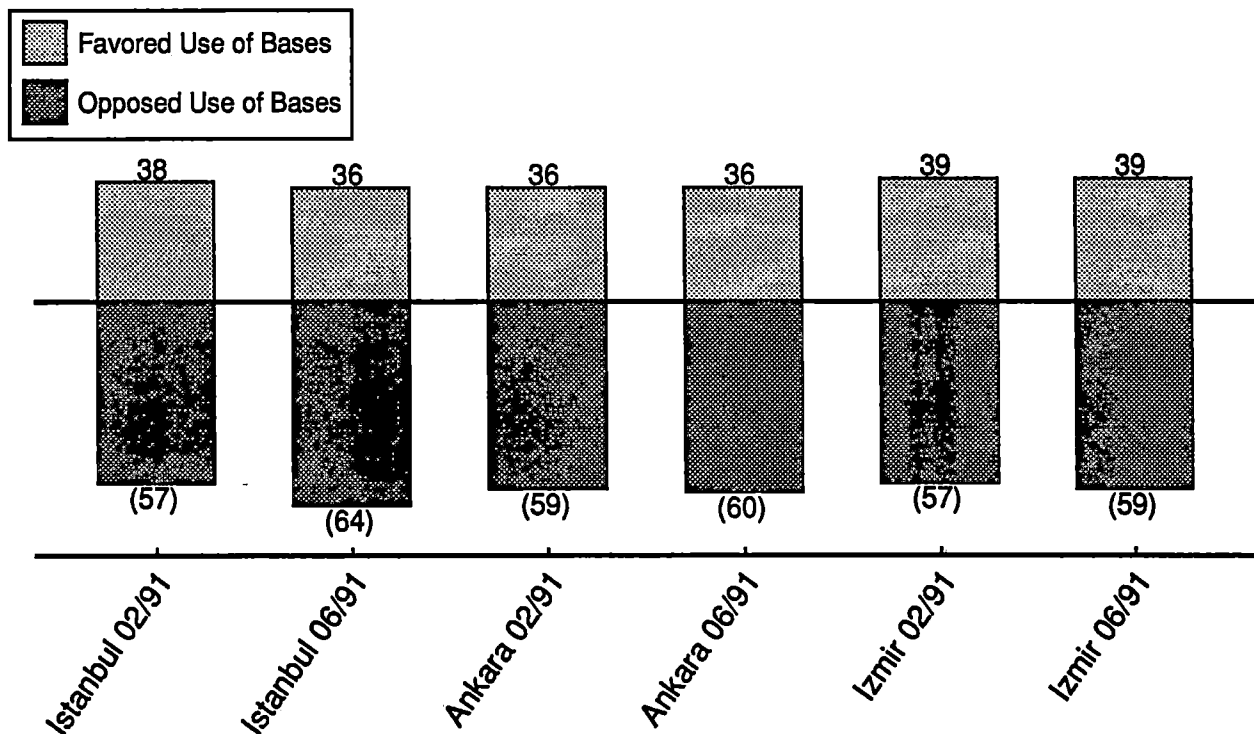
⁴ February 1991 survey of urban Turks; commissioned by the USIA Office of Research; see USIA Office of Research Report "Urban Turks Fear Iraq, Narrowly Support Coalition Forces," 2/11/91.

Opposition to the Use of NATO Airbases Continued Unabated

Almost all Turks were aware that the U.S. used NATO airbases in Turkey to attack Iraq (a scant 9% had no opinion on the issue).⁵ Notwithstanding the widespread acclaim for President Bush's Gulf policies and the widely held view that the defeat of Iraq was "good" for Turkey, half (54%) objected to the government's decision to allow the U.S. to use the NATO airbases (only 37% support the decision; Table 4). Opposition to the government's decision was more intensely felt in Turkey's three major cities, particularly in Istanbul (53% opposed strongly; Ankara, 39%; Izmir, 34%), than in the rest of the country (where between 25% to 27% opposed strongly).

Opposition to the use of NATO airbases was expressed throughout the Gulf crisis and continued unabated even during the war. In early fall of last year, a majority (68%) of urban Turks said they would oppose the use of the NATO airbases by the U.S. "in the event of a hot war."⁶ During the war, a majority (58%) of the residents of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir still disapproved of the use of the NATO bases (only 38% approved).⁷ After the war, in these three cities solid majorities (62%-to-37%) continued to oppose the use of the NATO airbases (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Opposition to Allied Use of NATO Bases Unabated After War



⁵ The use of the NATO airbases was widely debated in the Turkish media, despite the government's frequent denials that the issue was even under consideration. On January 17, following the Turkish cabinet's approval of the use of the NATO airbases by the coalition forces, U.S. aircraft from Incirlik bombed strategic sites in Iraq.

⁶ October 1990 survey of urban Turks.

⁷ February 1991 survey of urban Turks.

Most Agreed Iraq Should Pay Reparations to Kuwait, Compensation to Turkey

Over three-fourths (80%) of adult Turks agreed that Iraq should "pay to rebuild Kuwait," with residents of Istanbul and Izmir the most demanding (in each city, 91% said they would demand reparations; Table 5). Three-fourths (74%) of all Turks also agreed that Iraq "has an obligation to reimburse Turkey for the cost of taking care of the refugees" (Table 6). Least insistent upon compensation from Iraq were residents of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, areas close to the Iraqi border (only a third said Iraq should pay, a view expressed by 80% or more in the other areas).

Most Felt Iraqi Leaders Should Be Tried as War Criminals

Three-fourths (75%) of all Turks also supported putting Iraqi leaders on trial for war crimes, with most (54%) strongly favoring this action (Table 7). Similar to sentiments on reparations to Kuwait and compensation to Turkey, residents of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia were not as demanding -- roughly half supported having the Iraqi leaders stand trial.

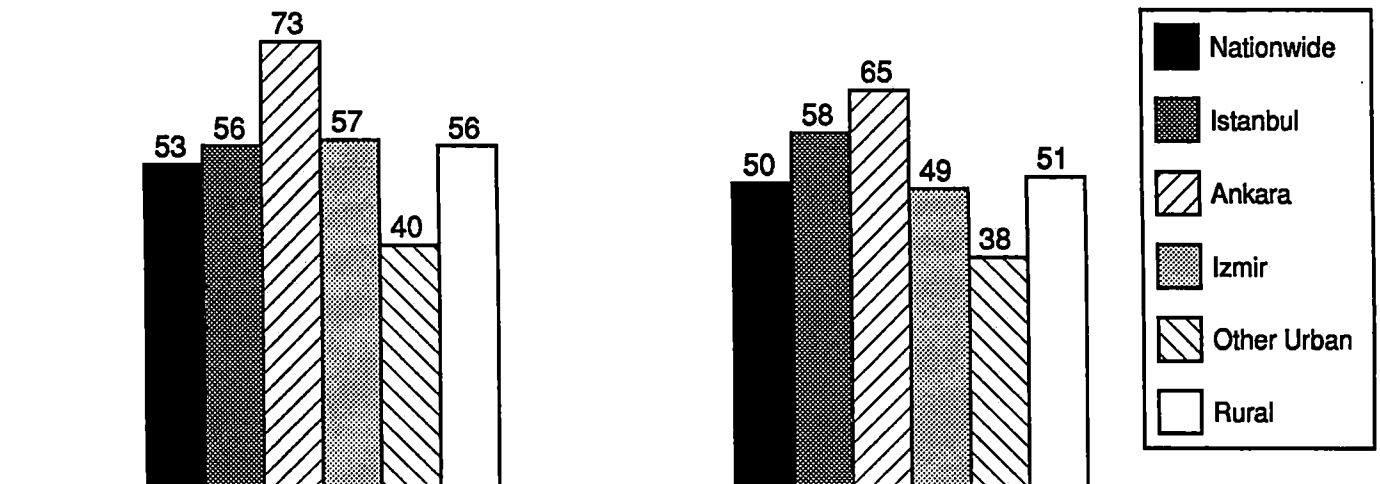
In June, Half Concerned that Saddam a Threat to Turkey and to the World

In June, a half (53%) of adult Turks considered Saddam Hussein a serious threat to Turkey, with a third (32%) saying he is a very serious threat (Figure 4; Table 8). But in Ankara a large majority (73%) considered Saddam Hussein a serious threat. The same level of concern was expressed about Saddam Hussein's threat to world peace. About half (50%) of all Turks agreed that "the security and stability of the world can only be secured by removing Saddam Hussein from power" (42% disagreed; Figure 4; Table 9). However, in Ankara and Istanbul the perception of Saddam Hussein as a threat to world peace was more widely held (Ankara, 65%-to-32%; Istanbul, 58%-to-43%).

Figure 4. Concern About Saddam Hussein Most Acute in Ankara

% Agreeing:

Saddam a Serious Threat to Turkey **Removal of Saddam Necessary for Peace**



The end of the Gulf War assuaged some Turkish fears of Iraq and Saddam Hussein. During the Gulf crisis, the Turkish public expressed widespread hostility toward Saddam Hussein and feared his regime. During the war Iraq was seen as the principal military threat to Turkey,⁸ but in the most recent survey (June) Turkey's traditional rival Greece was perceived as posing the most serious military threat to Turkey. Additionally, during the war vast majorities in Ankara (86%), Istanbul (81%) and Izmir (90%) supported the removal of Saddam Hussein from power by the coalition forces (in addition to liberating Kuwait).⁹ However, in the June survey, in Istanbul and Ankara majorities, though smaller than during the Gulf war, saw Saddam Hussein as a threat, but in Izmir opinion was mixed (49% agreed and 50% disagreed that Saddam Hussein threatens world peace).

Turks Divided on Need for Peacekeeping Force in the Gulf

In light of the lessened concern about Saddam Hussein, it is not surprising that in June of this year opinion was divided on whether the U.S. military presence in the area was necessary "to ensure peace in the Persian Gulf" (46% necessary, 45% not; Table 10). The most supportive of a continued U.S. military presence were residents of the Adana area (58% very and 11% somewhat necessary), a city whose residents were also staunch supporters of President Bush's Gulf policies and most likely to have said that the defeat of Iraq served Turkish interests. Least supportive were residents of Izmir (61% said the U.S. "is not needed") -- the city which hosts many U.S. military personnel and serves as the headquarters (both naval and air) for NATO's southern command.

By a small margin (51%-to-40%) Turks also opposed their country's participation in a UN peacekeeping force in the Persian Gulf (Table 11). Opposition to participation in a UN force was most widespread in Eastern Anatolia, the area just north of Iraq.

Majority Felt War Unlikely to Erupt in Middle East in Next Five Years

A slim majority felt that it was "unlikely" that a war will break out in the Middle East in the next five years (54% unlikely, 40% likely, Table 12). Women were much more optimistic than men (compare: women, 60%-to-30% war unlikely; men, 49%-to-49%). Residents of Anatolia (Eastern, Southeastern, and Inner) were more likely to foresee a war than residents in the rest of Turkey.

Among those who perceived a likelihood of a war, a majority (72%) named Israel as probable instigator of the next armed conflict; in distant second place was Iraq (named by 39% of those who saw war as likely). Additionally, one-in-five named Iran, Syria, or the Palestinians (Table 13).

⁸ February 1991 survey of urban Turks.

⁹ February 1991 survey of urban Turks.

Better-Educated More Opposed to U.S. Military Presence and Less Worried About Saddam Hussein Than the Less-Educated¹⁰

The better-educated group were more opposed to a continued U.S. military presence in the Gulf (66% said U.S. not needed, but among those with primary education 51% said U.S. needed). In part, opposition to a U.S. military presence could be accounted for by the lower threat perception among the better-educated (35% of better-educated, but 54% of those with primary education saw Saddam Hussein as a threat to world peace). However, the better-educated were also more likely to foresee a war erupting than the less-educated (55% better-educated, but only 39% of those with primary education said war is likely).

Political Orientation Colors Assessment of Gulf War

Turkish opinions on the Gulf War have fairly consistently reflected individual ideological orientations, with those on the right of the political spectrum more supportive of U.S. initiatives than those on the left. Those who identify with the ruling Motherland Party (ANAP) were more sympathetic to the government's decisions than those who identify with the other political parties. Thus, only among ANAP supporters did a definite plurality say the Turkish contribution to the coalition forces was "about right" and only among ANAP supporters was opinion split on the use of NATO airbases (opposition prevailed among all of the other party supporters). Adherents of the center-right DYP tended to share the views of ANAP followers, though not as extensively and generally not as intensely.

In the June survey, views on the future security needs in the Persian Gulf also differed along party lines. Specifically, among ANAP and DYP supporters the prevailing view was that Saddam Hussein is a threat to Turkey and to the world, but among those politically center-left opinion was divided or majorities did not see Saddam Hussein as a threat. Among ANAP and DYP supporters majorities saw a need for the continued U.S. military presence in the Gulf, but among the center-left opinion was diffused.

Additionally, supporters of the Welfare Party (RP), many of whom are former members of the Islamic fundamentalist National Salvation Party, were much less likely to demand reparations or compensation from Iraq than those who identify with the other political parties. RP members were also less demanding that Iraqi leaders stand war crime trials (supported reparations from Iraq to Kuwait -- 57% of RP supporters, but 80% or more in any of the other parties; supported compensation to Turkey -- 59% of RP, but 75% or more among others; demanded trials for Iraqi leaders -- 63% RP, but 80% or more among others).

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¹⁰ The "better-educated" are defined as those adults who completed academic high school or have at least some university education; this group accounts for 16% of Turkey's adult population. For further details on educational groups, see "Operational Definitions" in Appendix.

HOW THE POLL WAS TAKEN

This survey of public opinion was conducted by means of in-home, face-to-face interviews with 1009 residents of Turkey. Personal interviews took place from May 25 to June 6, 1991.

The questions were written by the USIA Office of Research and were translated by PIAR, the Istanbul firm which conducted the interviews.

The sample is representative of the adult (18 and older) national population. Interviewing took place nationwide, covering cities of all sizes as well as the rural areas. The contractor designed the sample through a multi-stage, stratified procedure, applying random probability at all but the last stratum -- the selection of respondents -- when a quota sample was used.

Nineteen times out of twenty, results from samples of this size will differ by no more than 3.1 percentage points in either direction from what would be found if it were possible to interview every adult in the country.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting a survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the results.

APPENDIX

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS: In this Turkish survey, for purposes of analysis the population was divided into mutually-exclusive demographic groups. Below in **bold** are the specific subgroups referred to in the text, and the definitions used to identify the group.

EDUCATIONAL GROUPS:	None	No formal education
	Primary	Some or completed primary school
	Secondary	Some or completed secondary school
	Better-educated	Completed academic high school, some or completed university

GEOGRAPHIC GROUPS --	<i>Region:</i>	<i>Major Cities:</i>
	Aegean	Izmir, Manisa
	Marmara	Istanbul, Bursa
	Black Sea	Zonguldak, Ordu
	Inner Anatolia	Ankara, Yozgat
	Eastern Anatolia	Elazig, Mus
	Southeastern Anatolia	Mardin, Gazinatep
	Mediterranean	Isparta, Adana

PARTY AFFILIATION:

ANAP	Motherland Party; the ruling party since 1983; headed by Turgut Ozal; center-right
SDP	Social Democratic Populist Party; the main opposition party; headed by Erdal Inonu; left-of-center
DYP	True Path Party; headed by Suleyman Demirel; right-of-center
DSP	Democratic Left Party; headed by Bulent Ecevit; center-left, populist
RP	Welfare Party; many former members of the Islamic fundamentalist National Salvation Party
MCP	Nationalist Labor Party; extreme right-wing; not represented in National Assembly
DMP	Reformist Democratic Party; right-wing

TABLE 1: IMPACT OF GULF WAR ON TURKEY

Question: Overall, do you think that the defeat of Iraq is a good thing or a bad thing for Turkey? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
A good thing (felt strongly)	34%
A good thing (felt somewhat)	30
A bad thing (felt somewhat)	17
A bad thing (felt strongly)	13
Don't know	6
Total:	100%

TABLE 2: TURKEY'S CONTRIBUTION TO GULF WAR

Question: What is your opinion of the support the Government of Turkey gave to the coalition of nations fighting against Iraq -- did Turkey do too much, too little, about the right amount, or do you not know enough to say?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Too much	35
Too little	8
About the right amount	38%
Don't know enough to say	19
Total:	100%

TABLE 3: ASSESSMENT OF PRES. BUSH'S GULF POLICIES

Question: How well do you think U.S. President Bush handled the crisis in the Persian Gulf -- very well, fairly well, fairly poorly, or very poorly?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Very well	33%
Fairly well	32
Fairly poorly	11
Very poorly	10
Don't know	14
Total:	100%

TABLE 4: USE OF NATO AIRBASE DURING THE GULF WAR

Question: As you are aware, the United States was allowed to use a NATO airbase in Turkey from which to attack Iraq. Do you favor or oppose this decision to allow the use of the NATO base in Turkey? Strongly or somewhat?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Favor strongly	14%
Favor somewhat	23
Oppose somewhat	22
Oppose strongly	32
Don't know	9
Total:	100%

TABLE 5: IRAQI COMPENSATION TO KUWAIT

Question: Do you think that Iraq should or should not pay to rebuild Kuwait?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Should pay	80%
Should not pay	16
Don't know	4
Total:	100%

TABLE 6: IRAQI COMPENSATION TO TURKEY

Question: You may be aware that many refugees fled here to Turkey during the crisis. Do you think Iraq does or does not have an obligation to reimburse Turkey for the cost of taking care of these refugees?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Should reimburse Turkey	74%
Should not reimburse Turkey	24
Don't know	3
Total:	101%

TABLE 7: WAR TRIALS FOR IRAQI LEADERS

Question: Do you favor or oppose putting Iraqi leaders on trial for war crimes?
Is that strongly or somewhat?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Favor strongly	54%
Favor somewhat	21
Oppose somewhat	9
Oppose strongly	8
Don't know	9
Total:	101%

TABLE 8: IS SADDAM HUSSEIN A THREAT TO TURKEY?

Question: In your opinion, how much of a threat does Saddam Hussein now pose to Turkey -- does he pose a very serious threat, a somewhat serious threat, not a very serious threat or no threat at all to the security of Turkey?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Very serious threat	32%
Somewhat serious threat	21
Not a very serious threat	24
No threat at all	18
Don't know	4
Total:	99%

TABLE 9: IS SADDAM HUSSEIN A THREAT TO THE WORLD?

Question: Some people say that the security and stability of the world can be secured only with the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Strongly or somewhat?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Agree strongly	30%
Agree somewhat	20
Disagree somewhat	21
Disagree strongly	21
Don't know	8
Total:	100%

TABLE 10: U.S. PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN PERSIAN GULF

Question: In order to ensure peace in the Persian Gulf, is a U.S. military presence in the area necessary or is it not necessary? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Very necessary	19%
Somewhat necessary	27
Somewhat unnecessary	19
Very unnecessary	26
Don't know	10
Total:	101%

TABLE 11: TURKISH PARTICIPATION IN UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE

Question: What if a United Nations peacekeeping force is placed in the Persian Gulf? Would you favor or oppose Turkey participating in this peacekeeping force? Strongly or somewhat?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Favor strongly	18%
Favor somewhat	22
Oppose somewhat	24
Oppose strongly	27
Don't know	8
Total:	99%

TABLE 12: LIKELIHOOD OF WAR IN MIDDLE EAST IN NEXT FIVE YEARS

Question: How likely is it that in the next five years there will be another war in the Middle East -- is this very likely, rather likely, not very likely, or not likely at all?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(1009)
Very likely	10%
Rather likely	30
Not very likely	27
Not likely at all	27
Don't know	6
Total:	100%

TABLE 13: WHO WOULD INITIATE WAR IN MIDDLE EAST

Question: ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAY "WAR VERY OR SOMEWHAT LIKELY." Which country or countries, if any, do you think are most likely to begin the next armed conflict in the region?

Date:	06/91
Sample Size:	(409)
Israel	72%
Iraq	39
Palestine	19
Iran	19
Syria	13
Jordan	7
Libya	3
Saudi Arabia	3
Egypt	3
Kuwait	2
United States	2
USSR	*
Others	3
Don't know	2
Total:	187%'

* Less than .05 percent.

' Due to multiple responses

Research Memorandum

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November 14, 1991

RUSSIA'S NEW GUARDIAN OF THE PRESS *The Russian Republic's Ministry of the Press and Mass Media*

This report analyzes events in the USSR as reported by Soviet print and broadcast media, RFE/RL and FBIS from August to October 1991.

Key Findings:

- ◆ Under the leadership of Mikhail Poltoranin, a long-time associate of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the Russian Federation's Ministry of the Press and Mass Media is now Russia's chief institutional guarantor of a free press. The moribund USSR Ministry of Information and the Press is in eclipse.
- ◆ Since the failed coup in August, the Russian ministry has redoubled efforts to eliminate Communist Party dominance over the press. Existing and proposed legislation are key weapons in the battle to demonopolize the press.
- ◆ The Russian press ministry faces formidable challenges. Hardline Russian nationalists accuse the ministry of "information dictatorship." Financial hardships continue to plague virtually every Russian periodical, now that almost all newspapers in the USSR are formally "independent," having lost all Party and government subsidies.
- ◆ Although the economic troubles of Russia's press will continue for some time, free competition is emerging among newspapers. Increasingly, they can now rise or fall on their own merits and readership, rather than on their subsidies and sponsors.

The Russian Ministry of the Press and Mass Media

Russia's Ministry of the Press and Mass Media [*Ministerstvo pechati i massovoi informatsii RSFSR*] was created in July 1990, supplanting the RSFSR State Committee for Publishing Houses, Printing Plants, and the Book Trade [*Goskomizdat RSFSR*]. Mikhail Poltoranin, a long-time associate of Russian President Yeltsin, has been its minister since inception. Fortified by a liberal USSR Press Law enacted in June 1990, the ministry has taken the lead role in registering independent newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations, and information agencies throughout the Russian Federation. The ministry has helped these media outlets overcome many of the Communist old guard's obstacles (e.g., restrictions on paper supplies and printing facilities) that were especially evident before the failed coup in August. These outlets, among them *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, and Russian TV, have pushed glasnost to new frontiers.



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A clear indication of Minister Poltoranin's reformist philosophy is his choice of the youthful jurist Mikhail Fedotov as his deputy. Fedotov was one of the original drafters of the USSR Press Law, as well as an author of an even more far-reaching draft Russian law on the mass media. A tireless proponent of a free press, Fedotov asked in an interview earlier this year: "Can the press be the 'Fourth Estate' when it is somebody's organ?"

USSR Ministry in Eclipse

While the Russian press ministry's star continues to rise, the all-union Ministry of Information and the Press, headed by Mikhail Nenashev, is moribund. Since the abortive coup in August, the ministry's status has been in doubt. The coup's failure precipitated a wholesale shakeup of the Soviet governmental structure, chiefly because almost every USSR minister openly or passively supported the coup plotters. (Minister Nenashev did not speak out against the coup and probably was branded as too "passive.") One newspaper reported that all former ministers were sent on vacation in September pending a decision on their future; no such decision has yet been made.¹ Meanwhile, the functions of the USSR Ministry of Information and the Press have increasingly been parceled out to the republics' ministries.

Russian Ministry Takes Charge After Failed Coup

Following the abortive putsch, Yeltsin issued a decree on August 22 establishing control over all mass media in Russia and temporarily prohibiting Party publications (*Pravda*, *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, et al.) from being issued on Russian territory because of their "active support for the illegal actions" of the coup committee. Minister Poltoranin claimed that the closure of Party papers was a "demonopolizing" step consistent with the USSR Press Law passed in June 1990 -- in particular a clause stipulating that no party or individual group may "monopolize" the country's periodical press.² (Poltoranin asserted that similar legal clauses exist in France and many other countries.)

¹Little has been heard from Minister Nenashev of late besides his surprising 11th-hour decision in early September to cancel the Eighth Annual Moscow International Book Fair, scheduled for September 3-9. Observers suggest that official publishers' fear of competition from the 100 or so independent publishers slated to be at the fair led to its last-minute cancellation. (American publishers, many of whom had already arrived in Moscow when word of cancellation came, reportedly plan to sue the fair's Soviet organizers for \$6 million.) Minister Nenashev's erstwhile first deputy, Dmitrii Mamleev, left even before the coup to become first deputy chief editor of the newspaper *Izvestiia*.

²A draft RSFSR Law "On Mass Media," published in mid-1991, is more specific than the USSR Press Law in its anti-monopoly provisions. Authored by Yurii Baturin, Mikhail Fedotov, and Vladimir Entin (the same trio that wrote much of the USSR Press Law), the draft carries the union law further. For example, the union law does forbid monopolistic control over the mass media, but the Russian draft spells out how to ensure this ban: "The total annual print-run of periodicals owned by one person or one group cannot exceed 30 percent of the annual print-run of all periodicals registered on the same territory." Also, while the union law prohibits censorship, the draft Russian law eliminates all financing of any censorship agencies (e.g., *Glavlit*). (The Russian draft reportedly is near completion and will soon be submitted for approval to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.)

Yeltsin's late-August decree allowed reinstatement of closed papers once they re-registered with new founders, a procedure to be overseen by the Russian press ministry. But the closures evoked sharp criticism from reformers and hardliners alike, including USSR Confederation of Journalists' Unions Chairman Eduard Sagalaev, who complained that the USSR Press Law and journalists' rights were being violated and recommended that the shutdowns be rescinded and that only "guilty journalists" be dismissed.

On September 11, Yeltsin relented, issuing a decree "On Measures to Defend Freedom of the Press in the RSFSR." This decree nullified his earlier one that temporarily closed certain Party papers, and affirmed that they now had been re-registered with the RSFSR Ministry of the Press and Mass Information as "independent publications." Yeltsin instructed the Russian press ministry to "restore" [*vosstanovit'*] the principle of freedom of the press and to punish violators of the USSR Press Law.

Russia Seizes "Novosti"

Yeltsin's August 22 decree allowed Russia to take control of the "Novosti" Information Agency, which he accused (along with TASS) of spreading "disinformation" during the coup (accusations that both agencies denied). Press Minister Poltoranin took the lead, merging "Novosti" with the Russian Information Agency [RIA] and appointing RIA's president, Andrei Vinogradov, general director of the new agency, now called "RIA 'Novosti.'"³ Taking over all rights and properties of the old "Novosti" Information Agency, the new agency is subordinate to the Russian press ministry. The agency reportedly has already halted publication of foreign-language propaganda materials. Poltoranin hints at plans to transform "RIA 'Novosti'" into a shareholders' association, and supports similar reforms at the newly independent TASS press agency; he wants competitive relations to develop between them.

New State Inspectorate to Defend Media

Yeltsin's September 11 decree also created a State Inspectorate to Defend Freedom of the Press and Mass Media, to be attached to the Russian press ministry. The Inspectorate is charged with monitoring existing USSR and RSFSR legislation on the press and mass media.⁴ Inspectorate subdivisions are to be created in Russia's oblasts and autonomous

³The Russian Information Agency [RIA] was created by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet in early 1991 as an umbrella organization uniting such independent news agencies as "Postfaktum" and "Interfax." An indication of Vinogradov's reformist credentials may be his recently stated willingness to rid his agency of the magazine *Soviet Life*, for years published by "Novosti" in joint agreement with the U.S. Information Agency. "Perhaps I'm mistaken, but today we [in Russia] shouldn't get into self-advertisement [*samoreklama*]. Let Russia be advertised by the fullness, trustworthiness and energy [*operativnost'*] of [our] information.... We need to reflect life as it is -- with democrats, monarchists, sexual [-persuasion] minorities -- in all its variety and contradiction."

⁴Especially since the failed coup, the Russian press ministry has demonstrated the willingness and ability to decide the law's applicability within the Russian Federation. Violations of the law are thus not as likely to escape attention and punishment as they were prior to the coup. For example, in a clear infringement on the USSR Press Law, hardliner Vladimir Sevruk's June 1991 appointment (two months before the coup) as chief

regions. Finally, the decree gave the RSFSR Council of Ministers 10 days to adopt measures to protect the publishing industry and the mass media during the transition to market relations.

Ministry Butts Heads With Hardline Newspapers

Despite widespread approbation, the Russian press ministry is not without detractors. Its harshest critics are hardline newspapers, many of which supported the coup (for which they were temporarily shut down).⁵ On October 3, the press ministry sought to file suit in a Moscow district court to close down *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (circ. 1.4 million), one of very few mass-circulation central newspapers to emerge unreconstructed, unapologetic, and with the same staff, after the failed coup. The ministry alleges that, in the past year, the paper repeatedly violated Article 5 of the USSR Press Law, which prohibits using the press to call for the violent overthrow of the state. The ministry's suit claimed that *Sovetskaia Rossiia* issues published on August 20-21 were an "informational and ideological cloak" for the abortive coup.⁶ The newspaper categorically denies the charges.

Deputy Russian press minister Fedotov later explained that his ministry sought to close down the **pre-coup** *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, which was founded by the CPSU Central Committee and registered with USSR Goskompechat. His ministry has no designs on the **post-coup** paper of the same name, founded by the editorial board and registered with the Russian press ministry. Fedotov planned similar suits against other newspapers formerly sponsored by the Communist Party, including *Pravda*, so as to deprive the erstwhile sponsors of any juridical pretenses against the reborn papers (most of which have retained their old names).

Also on October 3, the entire editorial staff of the hardline Russian nationalist newspaper *Den'* (circ. 150,000) picketed the building of the Russian press ministry because of the latter's refusal to re-register their paper after the coup.⁷ Claiming his was "now essentially the only

USSR Press Law, hardliner Vladimir Sevruc's June 1991 appointment (two months before the coup) as chief editor of the weekly *Nedelia* took place without the knowledge of *Izvestiia's* editorial collegium (*Nedelia's* legally registered founder). The USSR and Russian press ministries proved unable to oppose the process.

⁵The Russian ministry's only reported conflict with the reformist press is brewing at this moment. According to the *Christian Science Monitor* (October 31), Minister Poltoranin publicly warned the radical newspapers *Nezavisimaia gazeta* and *Moscow News* that they violated the USSR Press Law by recently printing articles reporting discussions within the Russian government over the possibility of nuclear conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It remains unclear whether the newspapers will be punished.

⁶It was *Sovetskaia Rossiia* that, one month before the August coup, published the notorious "Word to the People" [*Slovo k narodu*] -- a virtual call for a coup d'état. Before that, the paper printed Nina Andreeva's infamous neo-Stalinist manifesto on March 13, 1988.

⁷According to Deputy Minister Fedotov, *Den'*, which changed its masthead just before the coup attempt in August from "Newspaper of the USSR Writers Union" to "Newspaper of the Spiritual Opposition" [*Gazeta Dukhovnoi Oppozitsii*], violated the USSR Press Law twice. After *Den'* changed its legal founder from the

opposition newspaper," *Den'* Chief Editor Aleksandr Prokhanov (who co-authored the insidious "Word to the People") warned: "If our demands are not met, then we will become a dissident newspaper." Five days later, Deputy Minister Fedotov signed the paper's registration certificate, but also fined it 300 rubles for printing an issue while still not registered.

Political and Economic Challenges Loom

The Russian press ministry faces ongoing challenges and responsibilities. Among the immediate tasks is "de-partyization," or elimination of the Communist Party's dominance over the press. This process has economic and political repercussions. Traditionally, Party publications received at least 70 percent of total state subsidies to local newspapers, as well as state-subsidized prices on over 70 percent of their paper purchases. The Russian press ministry now refuses to sanction state financing and paper allotments for publications associated with any political parties. The ministry promises instead to support publications created outside the auspices of political parties. This is a clear blow to previously subsidized publications, whose continued existence is now in question.⁸

The political side of de-partyization is more complicated. Yeltsin's post-coup decree shutting down several central Communist Party newspapers ignited what some called a "witch-hunt" throughout Russia for newspapers and individual journalists who supported coup plotters. In Saratov, for example, local authorities shut down the oblast newspaper *Kommunist* and fired journalists for publishing the coup committee's decrees. The same happened in neighboring Volgograd oblast, although the local prosecutor's office there has declared the closure of Party newspapers illegal. In Omsk, the staffs at the two main local newspapers removed their editors after the coup collapsed (and new founders were registered for the papers), but the Omsk city council organized a special commission to investigate the activities of all journalists at the newspapers during the coup attempt.

Financial Hardship Bedevils Press

Probably the most intractable challenge confronting Russia's press is its economic viability. The press, which has done so much to explain and popularize the transition to market relations, has ironically ended up suffering as a result of them. Skyrocketing paper, printing, and postal costs threaten many periodicals with bankruptcy, even though subscription prices are at

USSR Writers Union to the Russian Writers Union, the paper was required to re-register with the Russian press ministry. Despite lacking the necessary new registration document, the paper's editors printed one *Den'* anyway. Fedotov also questioned whether *Den'* had violated Article 5 of the USSR Press Law.

⁸Just after the coup failed, the Russian press ministry offered a refund to those who wanted to cancel their 1991 subscriptions to any newspapers or magazines, a move aimed primarily at the Party press.

an all-time high.⁹ Declining readership and stiffer competition from thousands of new publications compound the press's problems. (Nearly half of the 8,000 newspapers, magazines, and bulletins now registered in the Soviet Union have been founded since passage of the USSR Press Law in June 1990.) Renewals of subscriptions to central newspapers for 1992 are sharply down from 1991 totals, continuing a recent trend.

"Economic independence" is the watchword of the day. The USSR Confederation of Journalists' Unions, headed by Eduard Sagalaev, convened in September in Moscow to review the "lessons of the [August] putsch." Participants in the meeting agreed that the mass media must not again be "prisoners of the situation." One speaker noted that "there's no freedom without money" [*svoboda bez deneg ne byvaet*]. The journalists decided to create a commercial bank with brokers' offices at the commodities exchange [*birzha*] for paper and printing services. (Not surprisingly, some observers fear this commercialization of the press. Independent news agency "Interfax" Chief Director Mikhail Komissar recently warned that large exchanges, banks, and various export enterprises in Russia are simply trying to buy the press -- to the detriment of media independence and objectivity.)

Perhaps only as a formality, the journalists also adopted an appeal to USSR President Gorbachev, requesting him to take measures to ensure the very existence of the press. Such measures might presumably include maintaining fixed prices for newsprint, although steps in this direction have proved fruitless thus far. Newsprint costs roughly 1,000 rubles per ton at the official, state-controlled price and 8,000-10,000 rubles at the free-market price. This discrepancy discourages many newspapers from going totally independent, lest they be forced to pay free-market prices. Union authorities may also adjust their "state order" [*goszakaz*], or output quota that they demand from paper manufacturers, either raising it to ensure that more paper is distributed in controlled fashion, or reducing it to allow more paper to float on the free market, available to the highest bidder.¹⁰ The August coup's failure may help matters by freeing up paper previously earmarked for Party press quotas. Most important, however, administrative measures to protect the press sharply contradict economic reforms even Gorbachev claims to favor -- rapid privatization and free-market pricing.

The USSR Ministry of Communications: Glasnost Profiteer?

The Russian press ministry's objective of a free press is handicapped by the USSR Ministry of Communications, which monopolizes postal services in the country. Fully 90 percent of

⁹In August, the RSFSR Union of Journalists organized a protest against the economic "noose" [*udavka*] threatening them. Because of drastic increases in the costs of paper and postal delivery services, some 34,000 journalists and 78,000 editorial staffers reportedly are on the verge of "unemployment ... and poverty."

¹⁰Given the economic anarchy and barter relations now rampant in the USSR, the central authorities' manipulation of plans, quotas and prices may be increasingly irrelevant. For more on the Soviet newsprint-making industry, see *The Soviet Paper Chase: Newsprint Crisis Imperils Glasnost*, USIA Research Memorandum (M-63-91), April 29, 1991.

all Soviet newspapers and magazines are distributed by subscription through the mail service under the communications ministry's auspices. In July 1991, the ministry boosted postal rates for delivery of all newspapers and magazines in 1992 by four to five times, pushing some of the press, especially local newspapers, to the brink of financial ruin. At the same time, the ministry has not raised employee salaries despite the windfall (although it did give them Sundays off).

In its defense, the communications ministry cites lack of state support in the face of rising input costs. Its own fleet of mail cars is decrepit. To deliver all the mail, the ministry must now find and rent autos (including taxi fleets controlled by local mafias and cooperatives) and pay higher prices for increasingly scarce fuel. Rates for air transport (vital for mail delivery to the Russian North and Far East) were raised by five to eight times in January 1991 by the USSR Ministry of Civil Aviation. Local city councils have hiked commercial rents for premises used by the communications ministry for postal operations. To make ends meet, the ministry claims, it has become hugely indebted to Soviet banks.

In late September, the RSFSR Council of Ministers issued a decree transferring all USSR Ministry of Communications enterprises and organizations located on Russian territory to Russian jurisdiction, but it is too early to judge the results of this change.

Reverberations Beyond Russia

To a degree, Russia's success in seizing control of its own economic affairs comes at the expense of other present (and former) Soviet republics. The Russian Federation manufactures nearly 100 percent of all Soviet newsprint. In recent weeks, Ukraine has suffered a grave "paper famine." One by one, Ukrainian newspapers are ceasing publication because they lack newsprint. According to one report, the Russian paper mill that supplies most of Ukraine's newsprint will agree to supply only 60 percent of paper needs at state-set prices; the rest must be purchased at high free-market prices or bartered for with food.

Some areas of Ukraine (Khar'kov oblast, for example) plan to curtail publication of central newspapers and channel scarce resources to print only Ukrainian newspapers. Citing paper shortages, Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, and the newly independent Baltic states are following suit in shortchanging central newspapers -- some of which are among the most progressive in the USSR -- to concentrate on issuing their own publications. Individual Soviet republics are increasingly insulating themselves from centrally directed information structures.¹¹

¹¹Other republics have followed Russia's lead in taking local media under their own purview. In September, for example, Kazakh President Nazarbaev liquidated his republic's Goskompechat', Gosteleradio, and Glavlit. They now are administered by a newly created republic Ministry of the Press and Mass Information. The reorganization is designed to "ensure the informational independence" of Kazakhstan and provide state support for newspapers and magazines, TV and radio, and book publishing, all of which have suffered financial losses in the transition to market relations.

Outlook

"Today we are already close to the time when we'll be able to say: Freedom of speech has arrived and glasnost, thank God, devised by Gorbachev and his team of partocrats as a publicity stunt to begin perestroika, is on the way out."

-- Pavel Gusev, Chief Editor of *Moskovskii komsomolets* and
Chairman, Moscow Journalists' Organization

The Russian Ministry of the Press and Mass Media is the bastion of the democratic press in Russia. Under Poltoranin's leadership, the ministry continues efforts to demonopolize and privatize the press, liberating it from decades of Communist Party domination. At the same time, Poltoranin warns that financial constraints will hamper developments for the time being. Print-runs of Russian publications will not increase, largely because of the high cost of paper and the republic's increasingly rich media environment. While small district [*raionnye*] newspapers may not survive, long-term prospects are favorable for regional [*regional'nye*] publications in Russia, of which there are now about 40. Publications will compete more and more with one another for readers' loyalties. Poltoranin is sanguine: "Some publications will die off, others will arise: this is the market, this is very good business."

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M-185-91

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November 27, 1991

BORIS YELTSIN'S FIRST 100 DAYS

INTRODUCTION

Russian President Boris Yeltsin's one-hundredth day in office since the failed communist coup of August 19-21 will be November 29. Although Yeltsin was elected President of Russia on June 13, 1991, his position largely was symbolic until after the coup. Before that time his powers had been severely limited by the communist bureaucracy led by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. As a result, Yeltsin's presidency did not really begin until August 21, 1991, the day on which the hardline coup was defeated and Yeltsin, who played the key role in thwarting the coup, emerged as the most powerful and most popular man in Russia.

Yeltsin's first hundred days in office are important. What the Russian President does then will set the course for the remainder of his five-year term as president. Yeltsin's policy decisions during this time also will shape the character of the world's largest country for years, if not decades, to come. In this respect, Yeltsin's first hundred days in power may be even more critical for Russia than were those of Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan for the United States. Russia is at a crossroads in its history, and the actions of Yeltsin may very well decide whether the new Russia will emerge as a free market democracy or a dictatorship.

Radical Reforms. Since the August coup Yeltsin has made major policy decisions. He has launched a radical program of free market reform. He has strengthened democracy in Russia by neutralizing the three key institutions of the Soviet totalitarian state: the Communist Party, the KGB secret police, and the armed forces. And he has begun to change the direction of Soviet foreign policy in such areas as relations with Afghanistan, Cuba, and Japan. All of this was done to advance the declared goal of the Yeltsin administration: the creation of a democratic and prosperous Russia committed to political freedom, free markets, and friendly relations with its neighbors.

At the same time, Yeltsin and his aides have made some incautious statements that unsettled the newly-independent republics and revived in the minds of their leaders the image of the old imperial Russia. Likewise, the Russian President's use of force in November to solve the nationalist crisis in the Checheno-Ingush Autonomous Republic, located in southeastern Russia, further heightened the republics' wariness of Russia.

As it evaluates the beginning of the Yeltsin administration, the U.S. should assume the position of a true, but by no means uncritical, friend. After three years of diplomatically, politically and economically snubbing Yeltsin and Russia in favor of Gorbachev and the Soviet Union, the U.S. should demonstrate its support for Yeltsin and his long-overdue political and economic reforms. George Bush could do this by giving Yeltsin greater diplomatic recognition and publicly supporting his free market and democratic reforms while reserving the right to criticize him in private when necessary.

Bush should:

◆ ◆ **Invite Yeltsin to make his first official state visit to the U.S.** Yeltsin has made two visits to America. He came as a private citizen in September 1989. He was invited in June 1991 by the Senate Majority and Minority leaders, George Mitchell, the Maine Democrat, and Robert Dole, the Republican from Kansas. An invitation by Bush would signal U.S. recognition of Russia's growing independence, demonstrate U.S. approval of Yeltsin's free market and democratic policies, and boost the Russian President's image at home.

◆ ◆ **Urge Congress to invite Yeltsin to address a joint session of Congress.** This would underscore to Russia and the world that not only the U.S. government but the American people support the revolutionary changes spearheaded by Yeltsin.

◆ ◆ **Create a U.S-Russian Consultative Commission on Arms Control.** This would involve the Russian government directly in negotiations on such key arms control agreements as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. As Russia gains control over most of the military potential of the former U.S.S.R., arms negotiations should be conducted directly with Russia.

◆ ◆ **Open direct negotiations with Russia on economic, trade, and cultural cooperation.** As the power of the Soviet central government diminishes, political and economic agreements will have to be negotiated directly with the former Soviet republics. Russia, which is the largest, most powerful, and most populous of these republics, is the logical place for the U.S. to begin such negotiations.

◆ ◆ **Establish a U.S. consulate in Moscow accredited to Russia.** This is necessary to accommodate the rapidly increasing volume of direct U.S.-Russian diplomatic contacts and to signal the recognition of Russia's growing independence.

THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

After the defeat of the hardline communist coup on August 21, the most urgent task before Yeltsin was to take control of the Soviet state bureaucracy. Especially critical for the success of an anti-communist revolution was neutralizing the three pillars of Soviet totalitarianism: the Communist Party, the KGB and the armed forces.

Dismantling the Party. Yeltsin signed a decree on August 23 suspending the activities of the Communist Party of Russia. The next day, under pressure from Yeltsin, Gorbachev resigned his position as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and issued a decree ordering the property of the Party to be turned over to the local elected bodies in each republic. On the same day Yeltsin transferred the Communist Party's archives to the jurisdiction of the Russian government, and suspended major Party-directed newspapers, including *Pravda*, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, *Glasnost*, *Rabochaya Tribuna*, *Moskovskaya Pravda*, and *Leninskoye Znamia*.¹ Finally, on August

THE AUGUST REVOLUTION IN MOSCOW: A SELECTED CHRONOLOGY

June 13: Boris Yeltsin is elected president of the Russian Republic.

August 21: Hard-line communist coup is defeated as demonstrators surround the Russian Parliament building to prevent Yeltsin's capture by troops loyal to the coup plotters.

August 22: Yeltsin issues a decree forbidding political activity in the armed forces.

August 23: Yeltsin suspends the activities of the Communist Party of Russia, and publication of the Party-directed newspapers *Pravda*, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, *Glasnost*, *Rabochaya Tribuna*, *Moskovskaya Pravda* and *Leninskoye Znamia*. Mikhail Gorbachev appoints Vadim Bakatin as the Chairman of the KGB. Air Force chief Colonel-General Evgeny Shaposhnikov is appointed Minister of Defense of the USSR.

August 24: Gorbachev resigns as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and issues a decree ordering that Party property be turned over to the local governments. Yeltsin transfers the Party's archives to the jurisdiction of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFR). Bakatin removes the KGB from control of the government's communications lines. KGB archives are transferred to RSFR jurisdiction. Yeltsin takes control of the U.S.S.R.'s economic ministries and agencies.

August 26: Gorbachev transfers the 250,000-strong KGB border troops to the Soviet Army.

August 29: The Congress of People's Deputies suspends activities of the Communist Party on the entire territory of the Soviet Union.

September 5: The Congress of People's Deputies votes to dissolve itself.

September 24: Bakatin disbands the KGB department responsible for spying on the Soviet population.

Heritage InfoChart

¹ Yeltsin rescinded the suspension decree on September 10, after all of these newspapers formally severed their ties with the Communist Party. All six newspapers have since resumed publication.

29, the Congress of People's Deputies of the U.S.S.R. suspended activities of the Communist Party throughout the Soviet Union.

Yeltsin's decrees suspending the Communist Party and its publications were justified. The reason: the Communist Party was not a voluntary political association in a Western sense, but the most powerful and effective tool of political control employed by the Soviet totalitarian state. Within two weeks of the abortive coup, the Communist Party collapsed as an effective political force. It was deprived of state funding and its control over the economy, police, and the armed forces was ended. Although various leftist groups, such as the All-Russian Communist Party of the Bolsheviks, were formed in all of the republics to replace the discredited Communist Party, they now no longer represent a monolithic political force directed from a single center.

Taming the KGB. Gorbachev on August 23 appointed Vadim Bakatin, a former Soviet pro-reform official, as the Chairman of the KGB, replacing Vladimir Kruchkov, a hardliner arrested for his role in the coup. Bakatin had served as Gorbachev's Minister of Internal Affairs from October 1988 to November 1990, but he was dismissed by Gorbachev because of pressure from communist hardliners. The day after his appointment, Bakatin ordered the KGB to relinquish control of government communication networks. On the same day, the KGB archives were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Russian government.

Gorbachev announced on August 26 the transfer of the 250,000-strong KGB border guard to the Soviet Army. A month later, on September 24, Bakatin disbanded the infamous KGB "Department for the Preservation of Constitutional Order," responsible for spying on Soviet citizens.

Drawing in the Reins on the Armed Forces. Moving quickly after the failed coup, Yeltsin issued a decree on August 22 forbidding political activity in the armed forces. The reason: to eliminate the Party's control over the military. The next day, Gorbachev appointed the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, Colonel General Evgeny Shaposhnikov, as the Minister of Defense of the U.S.S.R. He replaced hardliner General Mikhail Moiseev whom Gorbachev had appointed only the day before. Yeltsin overruled Gorbachev's choice for this critical post and forced the weakened Soviet president to pick his candidate, Shaposhnikov.

Shaposhnikov had refused to support the coup. He called Yeltsin during the coup to tell him that he would not allow the Air Force to be used against the defenders of the "White House," as the Russian Parliament building is known. Gorbachev appointed the former Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Airborne Troops, Colonel General Pavel Grachev, as Deputy Defense Minister also because of his opposition to the coup.

Two days after his appointment, Shaposhnikov announced his intention to replace 80 percent of the Collegium, the Defense Ministry's highest consultative body, which is roughly equivalent to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. The majority of the Collegium were hardline communist generals. By September 16, according

to Soviet press agency TASS, nine of the seventeen members of the Collegium had been ousted.

Seizing Control of the State Ministries and the Media. Yeltsin on August 24 took control of most of the Soviet Union's economic ministries and agencies. These included the Ministry of Economy and Forecasting, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, the Ministry of Trade, and the State Bank. Two days later, Yeltsin consolidated his hold on these institutions by appointing members of his cabinet to administer them.

Yeltsin took charge not only of Soviet economic ministries, but of the Soviet media. The editor of the pro-reform *Moscow News*, Egor Yakovlev, was appointed Chairman of the All-Union State Television and Radio Broadcasting Committee on August 27, replacing the communist hardliner Leonid Kravchenko. The committee controls all Soviet TV and radio stations.

Under Yeltsin's pressure, Gorbachev also ordered personnel changes at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He fired Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexandr Bessmertnykh on August 28 because of his "passivity" during the coup and replaced him with Boris Pankin, the Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, who had publicly denounced the coup on Czech television. Pankin promised a "serious reorganization" of Soviet embassies abroad. Pankin announced on September 17 that the KGB staff in the embassies would be reduced "to the lowest possible minimum required by our security interests."² KGB personnel previously had made up an estimated 35 percent of Soviet Embassy staffers. Foreign Minister Pankin was replaced by former Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on November 19.

Finally, on September 5, Yeltsin abolished the last key hardline institution of the Soviet Union, the U.S.S.R. Congress of People's Deputies, which was the Soviet Union's highest representative body. Established in 1989, when the Communist Party still maintained a stranglehold on Soviet politics, most of the Congress's Deputies were approved by the Party. The resulting reactionary majority of the Congress was one of the major obstacles to radical political and economic reforms in the Soviet Union. After three days of heated debates, the Congress, in effect, abolished itself by voting to transfer supreme power in the Soviet Union to a revamped Supreme Soviet whose members would be elected by the republics.

FORGING A NEW FOREIGN POLICY

Although Yeltsin has given higher priority to domestic affairs, he has launched several foreign policy initiatives that differ significantly from the pre-coup Soviet foreign policy of Gorbachev.

2 *Report on the U.S.S.R.*, September 27, 1991, p. 32.

Afghanistan. Long before the August coup, Yeltsin and his camp were critical of Soviet military and economic support for the communist regime of Afghan dictator Najibullah. Subsidizing communism in Afghanistan is estimated by the U.S. to cost the Soviet Union roughly \$300 million per month. Largely because of Yeltsin's opposition to aid to Afghanistan, the Soviet Union in September temporarily stopped the shipment of weapons, food and fuel to Afghanistan. While Moscow did not promise to withhold aid permanently, the suspension of supplies may have facilitated the September 13 joint U.S.-Soviet statement pledging to end Soviet and U.S. military assistance to Afghan clients by January 1, 1992. This joint statement, announced by Secretary of State James Baker and Foreign Minister Pankin in Moscow, will not by itself bring peace to Afghanistan—there still is no mechanism in place for the transfer of power from the Najibullah dictatorship to a successor democratic government—but it is a step in the right direction.

One reason for optimism in Afghanistan has been the favorable reaction of the moderate wing of the Afghan anti-communist resistance to the Soviet initiative. A delegation of moderate *mujahideen* Freedom Fighters met in Moscow with the Vice President of Russia, Alexandr Rutskoy, on November 11 to discuss a political solution to the thirteen-year-old war in Afghanistan. Rutskoy, who served as a fighter pilot during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, told the Afghans that it was "the standpoint of Russian President Boris Yeltsin" to "take all measures to bring about peace to the long-suffering land of Afghanistan."³ The moderate *mujahideen* delegation was received on November 12 by Pankin, who suggested that a permanent Soviet diplomatic delegation be stationed in Peshawar, Pakistan, to continue the dialogue.

Cuba. Speaking to an American audience during a joint television appearance with Gorbachev on September 6, Yeltsin stated that Soviet "troops should be gradually withdrawn from Cuba."⁴ A week later, on September 11, Gorbachev followed up by promising to begin negotiations with Havana on the withdrawal of 11,000 Soviet troops from Cuba. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Valery Nikolayev was dispatched to Havana on September 19 to begin the talks.

The Kurile Islands. The Kurile Islands are a chain of small islands in the Sea of Okhotsk. The Soviet Union illegally seized four of them, known in Japan as the "Northern Territories," from Japan at the end of World War II. Japanese outrage over the Soviet occupation of the Kuriles has been the major obstacle to the improvement of Soviet-Japanese relations. Hoping to reverse the decades of Japanese-Russian animosity, then acting Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Russia, Ruslan Khazbulatov, said on September 9 during a visit to Tokyo that Yeltsin "does not want the problem [of the Kurile Islands] to drag on."⁵ Two days later,

3 RFE/RL Daily Report, November 13, 1991, p. 3.

4 The New York Times, September 7, 1991.

5 The Washington Post, September 10, 1991.

Yeltsin stated on Russian television that the islands should be returned quickly and not in "fifteen to twenty years."

RELATIONS WITH OTHER REPUBLICS

The Second Russian Revolution of August 1991 transformed relations between the Yeltsin government and the other republics of the former Soviet Union. As a result of the sudden collapse of the Gorbachev-led central government in the aftermath of the coup, Russia inherited most of the military resources and police of the Soviet Union, including the huge nuclear arsenal, the 3.5 million armed forces, and the KGB. Yeltsin's image in the eyes of the non-Russian peoples of the U.S.S.R. quickly was transformed from that of a trusted comrade-in-arms in the struggle against the imperial communist "center" to a ruler of a reemergent Russian state, which for centuries was an expanding imperial power that menaced its neighbors. This called for an especially sensitive treatment of the other republics, the sort of sensitivity Yeltsin had displayed while he was in opposition to Gorbachev prior to the coup.

Such sensitivity, however, was lacking. In the exhilaration of victory after the defeat of the communist coup, the Yeltsin camp did not demonstrate the necessary statesmanship and foresight in conducting relations with the newly-independent republics. For example, Yeltsin's Press Secretary, Pavel Voshchanov, stated on August 26 that Russia intended to raise "frontier issues" with the republics of Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine.⁶ Voshchanov used the term "frontier issues" as a code phrase for redrawing the U.S.S.R.'s internal borders between the republics.

Exacerbating Anxieties. Gavriil Popov, the mayor of Moscow and one of Yeltsin's closest allies, further exacerbated anxieties in the neighboring republics when he proclaimed in an August 27 interview on Soviet television that the recent declarations of independence by the republics were illegal. Popov insisted that if the republics intended to secede, the question of borders would have to be discussed.⁷ In this respect, Popov specifically referred to the Ukrainian territories of Crimea,⁸ the Odessa area on the Black Sea, and the Dniester region in the southwest. Finally, also on August 27, in his talks with President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Yeltsin reiterated Russia's claim that it may have to redraw its borders with other republics.

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- 6 Yeltsin was reportedly furious that Ukraine declared independence on August 24 without consulting him first. He was also alarmed by Ukraine's intention to assume control over Soviet military assets on the Ukrainian territory, including the Black Sea Fleet.
 - 7 In addition to Ukraine, Popov probably was referring to Byelorussia and Moldavia, which declared independence on August 25 and August 27 respectively.
 - 8 The Crimean peninsula was part of Russia until 1954 when it was transferred by the Kremlin to Ukraine.

These statements from Moscow caused alarm and anxiety in the other republics. Most of the internal Soviet borders between the republics were arbitrarily drawn by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin. This was the case, for example, with the Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Tadjikistan, Turkmenia, and Uzbekistan. To call for the renegotiation of these borders, therefore, was to threaten to open a Pandora's box of territorial claims and counter-claims which quickly could escalate into violent confrontations. Worse yet, the statements by Yeltsin, his aides and allies, seemed to fit the stereotype of Russian imperialism, which for centuries drove Moscow continuously to "adjust" Russia's borders at its neighbors' expense.

Independence-Minded Ukraine. The greatest damage was done to Russia's relations with Ukraine, after Russia, the second most populous of the former Soviet republics. Ukraine has a huge ethnic Russian minority of 11.3 million, or roughly 22 percent of Ukraine's total population. Thus, Yeltsin has a keen interest in seeing Ukraine remain friendly and associated with Russia in some capacity. The Ukrainians, however, seem bent on independence and they fear Russian designs on Ukraine. A Ukrainian Deputy to the All-Union Supreme Soviet, Serhiy Ryabchenko, accused Russia on August 27 of "recreating imperial structures, but under different names," and he demanded that the Russian leadership retract the statement about redrawing borders.⁹ On the same day, the leading democratic nationalist organization of Ukraine, *Rukh*, issued a statement deploring the "high-handed rejection" of Ukrainian independence by "certain newly democratized leaders of Russia." *Rukh* also accused Russia of harboring "imperial aspirations regarding one's

1991 RUSSIAN REPUBLIC STATISTICS

Official Name: Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

Capital: Moscow

Head of State: President Boris Yeltsin

Head of Government: same

Area: 6,591,100 square miles, nearly twice as large as the U.S.

Natural Resources: huge deposits of coal (50% of world's reserves), oil, natural gas, iron ore, gold (20% of world's deposits), diamonds, copper, silver, timber (20% of world's supply), uranium, among other raw materials.

Population: 147,386,000; annual growth: 1.5% (1989)

Ethnic Groups: Russian: 82.6%, Tatar: 3.6%, Ukrainian: 2.7%, Chuvash: 1.2%, Dagestani: 1.0%, Bashkirs: 0.9%, others: 8.0%. (1989)

Source: Deutsche Bank, *The Soviet Union at the Crossroads, 1990*; and from other sources.

Heritage InfoChart

⁹ Roman Solchanyk, "Ukraine and Russia: Before and after the Coup," *Report on the USSR*, September 27, 1991, p. 16.

neighbors.”¹⁰ The Chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, Leonid Kravchuk, warned on August 27, that “territorial claims [were] very dangerous.”¹¹

Fence-Mending in Kiev. Confronted with a brewing storm, the Russian leadership belatedly launched a campaign to control the political damage caused by the statements on revising borders. On August 28, Vice President Alexandr Rutskoy, State Counsellor Sergei Stankevich and Leningrad mayor Anatoly Sobchak were dispatched by Yeltsin to Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, to mend fences. They were met by huge crowds of angry protestors. The Russian delegation in Kiev did its best to defuse the border issue by confirming, in the official communique, the “territorial integrity” of Ukraine. Sobchak called Voshchanov’s August 26 statement on the “frontier issue” a “mistake” and “unfortunate,” while Stankevich argued that the statement had no official force and that Yeltsin was not speaking for the Russian parliament.¹²

A month later, Yeltsin tried to restore his reputation as an ally of the republics by arranging, together with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev, peace talks between the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which effectively have been at war for over two years. Thanks to Yeltsin’s mediating efforts, Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian and Azerbaijani leader Ayaz Mutalibov met in the southern Russian town of Zheleznovodsk on September 23. At that meeting the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders signed a “preliminary” agreement on the conditions for settling the conflict. Only the day before, Yeltsin had traveled to the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region in Western Azerbaijan, where most of the fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan was taking place, to broker a deal between the two republics. This trip broke the deadlock in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, paving the way for the Zheleznovodsk agreement the next day.

YELTSIN’S LOSS OF MOMENTUM

The Yeltsin-led democratic revolution began to lose momentum in the latter part of September. On September 24 Yeltsin left Moscow for a two-week vacation at the Black Sea resort of Sochi. This vacation was extremely ill-timed: not only did Yeltsin’s absence from Moscow slow the process of revolutionary change, but the Russian President failed to indicate to his top aides who would be left in charge. Vice President Rutskoy later claimed that he had tried to telephone Yeltsin twelve times during his vacation but did not succeed in getting through to him.

Predictably, the blurred lines of authority and the lack of direction from the top soon produced open political infighting within Yeltsin’s team, and his top lieutenants resorted to public recriminations. The acting Chairman of the Supreme

10 *Ibid.*

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Soviet of Russia, Ruslan Khazbulatov, for example, on October 5 accused State Secretary Gennady Burbulis and State Counselor Sergei Shakhrai of incompetence and demanded that they resign.¹³ On October 10, Vice President Rutskoy lambasted the chief of the Russian KGB, Viktor Ivanenko, calling him "lazy," "incompetent," and "a danger to the state."¹⁴ State Counselor Sergei Stankevich was quoted on October 2 by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as saying that he was frustrated with Yeltsin's inability to organize the Russian government and was prepared to resign.

Yeltsin's ill-timed vacation also damaged his personal authority. It was rumored that he was working on a book about the August 19-August 21 coup for a Western publisher. Whether or not the rumor is true, the perception began to spread in Russia that fame abroad was more important to Yeltsin than the plight of his nation. Russian Supreme Soviet Deputy Anatoly Greshnevikov said in the October 11 *Washington Post* that, while Yeltsin's book undoubtedly was an interesting one, it "was not what people expected from him" at the time.

Although Yeltsin's reputation suffered, the most damaging result of his absence from Moscow was the loss of revolutionary momentum. At a time when Russia faced its most difficult political and economic choices since the abdication of the Tzar in 1917, Yeltsin's puzzling lapse in leadership left a disquieting sense of drift and indecisiveness.

YELTSIN'S ECONOMIC REFORM

When he returned from Sochi on October 10, Yeltsin badly needed to make up for lost time and to get Russia moving again. He accomplished this with his historic October 28 address to the Congress of People's Deputies of Russia, in which he outlined a program for radical free market reform. The key planks of Yeltsin's reform included:

◆ Price Liberalization

Yeltsin calls the "unfreezing of prices" the "most painful measure" the Russian people will have to undergo. Nevertheless, he insists that without price liberalization "all the talk about reforms and market are empty blabber."¹⁵ Says Yeltsin: "No government bureaucrat can invent prices that are more just [than ones created by market]. The experience of world civilization shows that only the market can solve this problem."¹⁶

13 *RFE/RL Daily Report*, October 7, 1991, p. 2.

14 *RFE/RL Daily Report*, October 11, 1991, p. 2.

15 TASS, October 28, 1991. All quotations in this section are from this source.

16 Yeltsin's top advisor on economic reform, Egor Gaidar, later stipulated that the government will continue to "regulate" prices of bread, milk and salt (*Pravda*, November 11, 1991).

◆ Privatization

The Russian President emphasizes "small-scale" privatization as a key element of his program. State-owned small and medium enterprises involved in services, trade, industry, and transportation will be privatized. Yeltsin insists that there is "a real possibility" to privatize up to 10,000 such enterprises, or 50 percent of the total number in Russia, within three months. Once the process begins, Yeltsin promises that a law will be passed to assure that privatization of individual enterprises takes no longer than five days. The state agencies in whose jurisdiction enterprises are located will be ordered to lease them to their workers. If the workers refuse to lease them, the enterprises will be auctioned to the public.

Privatization of large industrial enterprises will take longer. In the next several months shares of large-scale enterprises will be divided between the state and the workers. The state's shares then will be sold to anyone wishing to buy them at the market price. Adds Yeltsin: "The main thing is a quick separation of [large] enterprises from the state."

◆ Private Farming

Although Russia already has nearly 30,000 "personally owned" farms, Russian agriculture continues to be dominated by state-owned or state-subsidized collective farms. Even when private farming was legally permitted in 1989, the communist authorities in the countryside discriminated against private farmers, denying them adequate land and equipment. Yeltsin hopes to change this with his agricultural privatization program. Yeltsin has earmarked 6.5 billion rubles for the purchase of tractors, trucks, and other machinery for farmers in the next few months. During the same period, Russia will buy \$100 million worth of agricultural equipment from abroad. The Yeltsin program requires the "transfer" of land belonging to unprofitable collective farms to local peasants or anyone else willing to work the land. Finally, Yeltsin promises to introduce legislation in the Russian Supreme Soviet to allow the buying and selling of land—a measure that a majority of Russian legislators so far has rejected.

◆ State Budget Reductions

Yeltsin plans to cut the budgets of unprofitable state enterprises and government bureaucracies. Russia stopped financing up to 70 Soviet ministries and agencies on November 1. In addition, Yeltsin will terminate the Russian contribution to "all aid and credits" made by the Soviet Union to foreign countries. The Russian President also calls upon the Russian parliament to refrain from approving expenditures for which "there are no real sources of financing." All these measures are designed to eliminate the budget deficit by the end of 1992 and to lower the rate of inflation, which is now estimated to be 2 percent to 3 percent a week.

◆ Banking Reform and Creating a Viable Currency

Yeltsin promises soon to prepare a "packet of measures" to curb the "uncontrolled emission of banknotes and credits" that cause hyperinflation. Unless Russia and the former Soviet republics reach an agreement on establishing a new interstate bank, Yeltsin warns that Russia will establish its own control over the

printing of rubles and even may create a new Russian currency. His plan also includes creating a Russian hard currency reserve to strengthen the ruble.

On November 16 and 17, Yeltsin began to take steps toward creating a convertible ruble that can be exchanged for foreign "hard" currencies. He issued a set of presidential decrees lifting state control over hard currency transactions, allowing the value of ruble to be set by the market, rather than by the government. Both enterprises and private citizens inside Russia will be able to buy and sell rubles for hard currency. The decree takes effect on January 1, 1992.

◆ **Help for the Disadvantaged**

According to Yeltsin, 55 percent of families in Russia live below the official poverty line. While a year ago this was 120 rubles a month, it is close to 200 rubles today. Rather than mandating that salaries be raised to keep up with inflation—a process called wage indexation—Yeltsin in his October 28 program proposes instead to create a system of "social protection" for the poor through food stamps, soup kitchens, and access to subsidized goods. At the same time, Yeltsin admits that the Russian government will not be able "to protect everyone" and claims "the development of business" and the creation of new jobs are the keys to raising the standard of living. He says: "The main condition for the social protection of the population lies not so much in redistribution of what we have but in the speediest revival of production. It is on this road that we will find the salvation of the economy of Russia."

◆ **Relations with other Republics**

Trying to repair the political damage caused by his statements about revising borders, Yeltsin goes out of his way in the October 28 program to allay the fears of Russia's neighbors. In the preamble to the program, he states that "the reforms in Russia paved the way to a democracy not an empire" and that "Russia would not allow an emergence of another center that would stand over the sovereign states."

Yeltsin also insists that Russia will introduce its own banking system and currency only if it fails to secure an agreement with the other republics on a "common ruble zone," which would make the ruble the dominant currency throughout the former U.S.S.R. The Russian President is equally circumspect on another sensitive political issue: the creation of Russian armed forces. Yeltsin says he prefers a "united armed forces of the commonwealth of the sovereign states under a single command." Russia would establish its own armed forces only if other republics proceeded with the creation of national armies. Adds Yeltsin: "This, however, is not our choice."

Likewise, in his discussion of the status of ethnic Russians living in other republics, Yeltsin carefully avoids mentioning the need for "frontier adjustments," which earlier alarmed the republics bordering on Russia, especially Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Instead, the President claims he prefers to protect the Russian minorities in other republics by negotiating with them. Says Yeltsin: "We have an adequate opportunity to solve these problems on a legal, democratic basis."

Claiming that the depth of the crisis called for urgent measures, Yeltsin in his October 28 address requested that the Russian Supreme Soviet grant him emergency powers to reform the economy. He also asked that he be allowed to serve as his own prime minister, which would make him not only head of state, but in charge of the government. Rather than a grab for personal power, this should be interpreted as a willingness on Yeltsin's part to assume full responsibility for his program. This is a sign not of authoritarianism, but of political courage. The Russian legislature on November 1 granted his request by an overwhelming margin.

Except for the November 16 and 17 decrees on currency reforms, the October 28 program remains a plan only, awaiting concrete laws and decrees. Yeltsin will probably begin taking such steps on January 1, 1992. Although not much has happened yet, the October 28 program still is a bold plan. After five and a half years of Gorbachev's half-measures it gives Russians a sense of direction and is building the confidence of the fledgling Russian private sector.

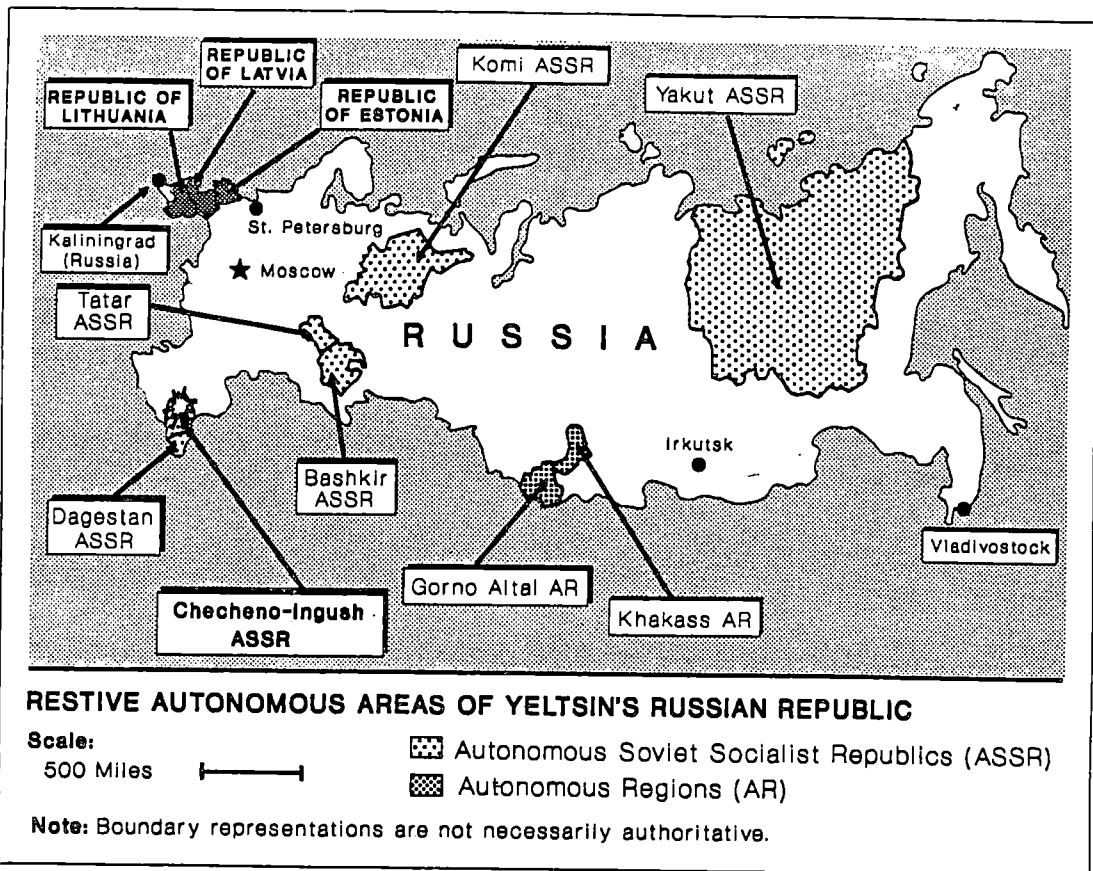
THE NATIONALITY CHALLENGE TO YELTSIN

Along with the economic crisis, a major challenge to Yeltsin and nascent Russian democracy arises from the demands for independence from non-Russian nationalities inside the Russian Republic.¹⁷ Yeltsin's reaction to the calls for independence from the Checheno-Ingush Autonomous Republic in southeastern Russia, precipitated perhaps the most serious crisis of his first 100 days in power.

Conquered by Russia after a protracted and bloody struggle in the 19th century, the Muslim Chechens and Ingush were deported by Stalin to Central Asia in 1944 and allowed to return to their native land only in 1957. Today the population of the Checheno-Ingush Autonomous Republic is 1,277,000, of which 48 percent are Chechens, 26 percent are ethnic Russians, 11 percent Ingush, and 15 percent other nationalities. The Chechens live predominantly in the eastern part of the republic, while the Ingush are settled mostly in its western part. On October 5, 1991, the nationalist organization the National Congress of the Chechen People seized the key government buildings and declared itself the supreme power in the Chechen part of the republic, which includes the capital, Grozny. In the October 27 elections, called by the Congress, General Dzhokhar Dudaev was elected the Chechen President by 85 percent of the Chechens. The Chechens declared their republic's independence on November 2.

Emergency Decree. Dismissing the elections as "illegal" and accusing the Dudaev supporters of "stirring up mass unrest through the use of violence," Yeltsin decreed a state of emergency in the Autonomous Republic on November 8. The decree banned all meetings and demonstrations and ordered the confisca-

¹⁷ There are sixteen so-called "Autonomous Republics" on the territory of Russia and fifteen smaller "Autonomous Regions."



tion of firearms. Two days later, the Russian President sent 630 special riot-control Ministry of Internal Affairs troops to enforce the decree.

The Chechens responded with defiance. Dudaev called upon all men from ages 15 to 55 to come to the defense of the Republic, resulting in an army of 62,000 volunteers. At the same time, neighboring Georgia and Azerbaijan declared their support for the Chechens. Dudaev's supporters surrounded the troops at the airport and destroyed railroads leading to the capital to prevent more Russian troops from arriving. On November 11, the Ministry of Internal Affairs troops withdrew. The Russian parliament dealt another blow to Yeltsin's authority by voting overwhelmingly on the same day to annul Yeltsin's emergency decree. The parliament also decided to begin an investigation "to bring to light people responsible for the insufficiently prepared political and military-technical decisions" that led to the November 8 state of emergency decree.

THE U.S. AND YELTSIN'S RUSSIA

Russia today faces a fundamental choice—one that it has not seen since the 1917 February Revolution. The country not only has to choose between a productive free-market economy and the moribund command economy, but between democracy and back-sliding toward authoritarian rule. As Yeltsin asserted in his October 28 speech, this is "one of the most critical moments of Russian history, [when] it is being decided what Russia will be in years and decades to come."

People's Trust. Yeltsin is the first democratically elected leader in Russia's 1,000 years of existence. Because of his personal courage and opposition to Gorbachev's regime, Yeltsin more than any other political leader in Russia today possesses one political asset without which any radical economic and political reform would be doomed: the people's trust. Whatever his errors, Yeltsin is likely to remain Russia's, and the West's, best hope for a peaceful transition to a stable free market democracy.

If Yeltsin does not succeed in leading Russia through this transition, no one will do so any time soon. If he succeeds, the result is likely to be a peaceful, democratic and economically viable Russia that would not pose a threat to its neighbors or to America's interests. If he fails, the most likely result will be grinding poverty for the majority of the Russian people and, possibly, the coming to power of an authoritarian nationalist regime, which once again will make Russia a menace to its neighbors, the U.S., and world peace.

The Bush Administration must adjust to the new reality in the Soviet Union. The central government of Gorbachev becomes more impotent every day, while the republics are fast becoming the only governments that command authority from the people and the state institutions. Thus, Bush must begin to deal more with the increasingly independent Russia which Yeltsin leads. After Yeltsin's October 28 speech, U.S. diplomatic, political, and economic support for Yeltsin means a U.S. endorsement of Russian democracy and free market economic reforms.

Practical Guidance. This support should not be unconditional. Like Russia, Yeltsin will need considerable practical guidance and even constructive criticism. For example, the Checheno-Ingush episode demonstrates that Yeltsin will overreact when confronted with a troublesome nationalist challenge to the integrity of the Russian Republic. This is the same behavior for which Yeltsin, while in opposition, so effectively criticized Gorbachev. The Chechen-Ingush crisis shows that Yeltsin has not yet adjusted fully to the limitations of power that democracy imposes on political leaders.

Yet Yeltsin can learn from his mistakes. After all, he transformed himself from a Communist Party boss to the leader of Russia's first democratic revolution. The Bush Administration should not be afraid to criticize the Russian leader, provided that it is not personally offensive, as it was in the past, when unnamed "senior administration officials" told the U.S. media that Yeltsin was "uncouth," "unstable," "boorish," or "authoritarian."

Before the coup, the Bush Administration may have been partly justified in preferring to deal with Gorbachev rather than Yeltsin. At that time, Gorbachev controlled the Soviet armed forces and his cooperation was needed not only to reach arms control agreements, but for the Soviet army to withdraw from Eastern Europe. The situation is radically different today. Gorbachev and his "center" matter much less than before August 19—even in such national security matters as arms control and defense. At the same time, Russia is emerging as the largest Eurasian state and a military superpower in its own right.

A basic rule in international relations is that if a nation refuses to get involved, it will lose influence. U.S. engagement with Russia and the influence it would bring with it is more important today than ever before. The reason: Although the fate of Russia will be decided by the Russians themselves, the U.S. can help Yeltsin stay on course with his democratic and free market reforms. To do this, the Bush Administration should:

◆◆ **Invite Yeltsin to make his first official state visit to the U.S.**

Yeltsin has visited the United States twice. On his first trip to the U.S. in September 1989, he came as a private citizen because he did not have an official invitation from the U.S. government. This was in spite of the fact that Yeltsin was a recognized leader of the democratic opposition to Gorbachev and one of the Co-Chairmen of the Inter-Regional Group in the Congress of People Deputies of the U.S.S.R., the principal democratic organization in the Soviet Union at the time. Reportedly afraid to offend Gorbachev, the White House snubbed Yeltsin and rejected his request for an official meeting with Bush. Instead Bush dropped by the office of National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft for a few minutes to greet Yeltsin.

Even when Yeltsin became the first popularly elected chief executive in Russian history on June 13, 1991, the White House again refused to extend an invitation for a state visit. Instead, the Russian President arrived on June 18 at the invitation of Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell and the Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole. Although this time Yeltsin was received by Bush in the White House, this did not make up for the absence of an official invitation from the President.

Such an invitation is long overdue. A state visit by Yeltsin would signal the Bush Administration's acceptance of an independent democratic Russia and its leader. A White House invitation now would be especially helpful as Yeltsin prepares to press forward with difficult economic reforms. A state visit would offer a public and official endorsement of the Russian economic and political revolution unleashed by Yeltsin. Given the immense moral authority of the U.S. in the eyes of millions of Russians, an official state visit would go a long way toward popular acceptance of Yeltsin's policies.

◆◆ **Urge Congress to invite Yeltsin to address a joint session of Congress.**

An invitation to address a joint session of Congress must come from the Speaker of the House of Representatives after a consultation with the Senate and the White House. In the last two years, Congress thus has honored three leaders of victorious anti-Communist revolutions: Lech Walesa of Poland on November 15, 1989, Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia on February 21, 1990, and Violeta Chamorro of Nicaragua on April 16, 1990. A de-facto leader of the democratic opposition to Gorbachev since 1989, Yeltsin played the key role in the defeat of the hardline communist coup of August 19-August 21 and today he is the leader of the democratic revolution that followed. He undoubtedly deserves to address a joint session of Congress. Such an invitation would underscore to Russia and the

world that not only the U.S. government but the American people support the revolutionary changes spearheaded by Yeltsin.

◆ ◆ **Create a U.S-Russian Consultative Commission on Arms Control.**

As the heir to all Soviet nuclear weapons and most conventional forces, Russia becomes a party to all arms control agreements between the Soviet Union and the U.S. and its allies. Unless Russia approves, the Gorbachev-led Soviet government is in no position to comply with existing agreements or to negotiate any new ones, such as the Defense and Space Talks concerning missile defenses. The Bush Administration should recognize the new reality of Russia's paramount role in arms control and create a U.S.-Russian Consultative Commission on Arms Control. This would serve as a forum in which the Russian leadership could be briefed on the status of the existing arms control agreements and compliance issues. It could also be used to explore new U.S.-Russian arms control initiatives.

To prepare for the first session of the Commission, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Robert Strauss should begin consultations with top Russian national security policy makers. They include: Deputy Prime Minister and State Secretary Gennady Burbulis who oversees the Russian Foreign Ministry, Armed Forces, and the KGB; Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev; State Counsellor for Defense General Konstantin Kobets; Chairman of the Russian Republic Defense Committee General Pavel Grachev; Deputy Chairman of Russian Republic Defense Committee Vitaly Shlykov; Chairman of the Committee on International Relations of the Russian Supreme Soviet Vladimir Lukin; and Chairman of the Committee on Defense and Security of the Russia Super Soviet Sergei Stepashin.

◆ ◆ **Open direct negotiations with Russia on economic, trade, and cultural cooperation.**

As the central government of the U.S.S.R. loses political and economic power to the newly-independent republics, the control of the "center" over Soviet foreign policy is bound to diminish. Reflecting this process, former Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Pankin stated on November 15 that the republics, and not his Ministry, should be handling their own economic, cultural, scientific and humanitarian relations with the outside world.¹⁸ Although Pankin was replaced on November 19 by Eduard Shevardnadze, who resigned as Foreign Minister in December 1990, it is doubtful that Shevardnadze will be willing, or able, to change this aspect of his predecessor's policy.

The Bush Administration should respond to the logic of events in the former Soviet Union by gradually shifting the entire range of negotiations on non-military matters to the republics. The need to do this was underscored by the Bush Administration's November 18 decision to channel most of the \$1.5 billion in economic assistance directly to the republics. While the Administration should

18 *The New York Times*, November 16, 1991.

begin direct negotiations on economic, trade and cultural cooperation with all of the former Soviet republics, Russia, which is the largest and most populous of the republics, is the logical place to start.

◆ ◆ **Establish a U.S. consulate in Moscow accredited to Russia.**

Russia already has made the first step toward achieving diplomatic representation in the U.S. On November 20, the Russian government announced that Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Kolosovsky would represent Russia in Washington. He will serve as Minister-Counselor in the Soviet Embassy in Washington, which is the second highest ranking position in the Embassy.

Until now, whenever American officials wished to consult with the Russian leadership, it was done by diplomats in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. The problem is that the U.S. Embassy there is accredited to the Soviet Union, not Russia. For that reason it soon may become obsolete as a channel for direct U.S.-Russian consultations and negotiations.

To accommodate the rapidly increasing volume of direct U.S.-Russian diplomatic contacts and to signal the recognition of Russia's growing diplomatic independence, the U.S. should open in Moscow a consulate accredited to Russia. In addition to facilitating direct negotiations and consultations with Russia, this would be a first step toward establishing a full-scale diplomatic representation in Russia in the form of an embassy.

CONCLUSION

Russia stands at an historical crossroad. As Yeltsin said on October 28:

Today we need to make a decisive choice....Your President has made such a choice. This is the most important decision of my life. I have never looked for easy roads but I can see quite clearly that the next months will be the most difficult in my life. If I have your support and trust, I am prepared to travel this road with you to the very end.

If Yeltsin succeeds, and if he lives up to the standard of heroism and steadfastness set during the August 19-21 resistance to the communist coup, he may enter history as the founding father of Russian democracy. But he will need all the help he can get to achieve that goal. Provided the Russian President does not waiver from the course he outlined on October 28, the U.S. should try to help him along the difficult path to a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Russia.

Chance for Free Market and Democracy. To encourage the growth of free market, and democratic institutions in Russia, the Bush Administration should invite Yeltsin to make an official state visit to the U.S., arranging as well for an address to a joint session of Congress. The U.S. also should not only open direct negotiations with Russia on economic trade and cultural cooperation, but establish a special arms control commission where American and Russian negotiators

can discuss disarmament. Finally, to signal the growing recognition of Russia's new power, the U.S. should open in Moscow a consulate accredited to Russia.

This may be the only chance for free markets and democracy to emerge in Russia soon. The U.S. should do what it can to ensure that this opportunity is not missed.

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