

103

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

Y 4. SE 2: 103-1-11

Implementation of the Helsinki Acco...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

THE CURRENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF DEMOCRACY IN
RUSSIA

NOVEMBER 3, 1993

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 103-1-11]



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 1994

74-256 CC

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402

ISBN 0-16-043478-5

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THE CURRENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF DEMOCRACY IN RUSSIA

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1993

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
Washington, DC.

The hearing was held in room 628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, at 2 p.m., Senator Dennis DeConcini, Chairman, and Representative Steny H. Hoyer, Co-Chairmen, presiding.

Present: Senator Dennis DeConcini, Chairman, Representative Steny H. Hoyer, Co-Chairman, Senator Charles Grassley, and Representative Chris Smith.

Senator GRASSLEY. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, I have been asked to call the meeting to order and I do that. And I know that everybody knows what the hearing deals with on the prospects of democracy in Russia.

We have a very distinguished panel of witnesses. I would ask them to come and testify in the order in which I introduce them, but I'd ask you to all come at the same time. Come while I'm introducing you.

Michael Dobbs is a Resident Scholar of the Cannon University of the Wilson Center. Mr. Dobbs was Moscow Bureau Chief for the Washington Post from 1988 to 1993, and before that he was correspondent for the Post in France and Poland. Prior to his Moscow assignment, Mr. Dobbs spent a year at the Harvard Research Center as a Visiting Fellow.

Next we have Doctor Leon Aron, he's a Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He holds a Ph.D. from Columbia where he specialized in Political Sociology of the Soviet Union. He is a regular contributor to leading journals of opinion and comments regularly on Russian affairs for McNeil-Lehrer News Hour, CNN, C-SPAN, and other public affairs telecasts.

Finally, Doctor Robert Kriebler, who is chairman of the Kriebler Institute of the Free Congress Foundation and has been active in training Russian democracy advocates in election and market economy strategies. He was also an eyewitness to the events that unfolded at the Russian White House on October the 4th.

Welcome everybody and would you please start, Mr. Dobbs.

MICHAEL DOBBS, RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT THE KENNAN INSTITUTE OF THE WILSON CENTER

Mr. DOBBS. Mr. Chairman, thank you for giving me this opportunity of testifying before the Commission.

In my prepared remarks today, I should like to focus on two questions, events leading up to the dissolution of the Russian legislature and the prospects for democracy in Russia.

We have just witnessed the fall of the first post-Communist republic in Russia. The bloodshed in Moscow last month also marked the failure of the first brave, albeit flawed, attempt to create democratic institutions in a country with a long tradition of autocracy and totalitarianism. This doesn't mean that there is no chance of democracy ever taking root in Russia. But it does mean that we should brace ourselves for a protracted and rocky post-Communist transition in the former Soviet Union. We must be prepared for many set-backs and even upheavals as these countries attempt to find their way in a new and unfamiliar world. And we must ask ourselves why an elected legislature and an elected president resorted to the bullet rather than the ballot as the means of resolving their differences.

Public debate in this country has tended to depict the clash between Yeltsin and the Congress as a conflict between a democratically-elected, reform-minded president and a reactionary legislature dominated by former Communists and nationalists. There may be some truth in this, but it's a gross oversimplification. Few people questioned the legitimacy of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies when it was elected in March 1990. Two months later, in May 1990, this supposedly retrograde body elected Boris Yeltsin as its first speaker by a majority of 535 votes to 467. It is true that many deputies were former apparatchiks, but that description also applies to Yeltsin. It is not true that only extremists were inside the Russian White House October 4, 1993 when it was shelled by Yeltsin's tanks. I cite the case of Oleg Rummyantsev, a young legislature who was once described by my newspaper, *The Washington Post*, as the James Madison of Russia because of the effort he put into drafting a new democratic constitution.

While my own personal sympathies were largely with Yeltsin, particularly in the final stages of the crisis, I'm also aware of his many flaws. And I'm against demonizing the other side. Both president and parliament committed serious mistakes and both must bear responsibility for what happened. I don't think it's very helpful to view this conflict in terms of good guys versus bad guys. In drawing lessons for the future, I prefer to focus on the failure to develop functioning democratic institutions and the inadequacy of the constitutional arrangements that Russia inherited from the Soviet era.

The first post-Communist republic of Russia lasted for just 25 months, from August 1991 to October 1993. It was a political hybrid, operating in a twilight zone between totalitarianism and democracy. Superficially, its institutions appear to be based on democratic principles but the political mentality and the political culture were molded by the totalitarian past. Russian democracy during this period sometimes reminded me of a Potemkin village. The facade seemed pleasing enough, but there was nothing behind it. For a democracy to work, you also need the proper foundations and structural supports, political parties, independent news media, the rule of law, tolerance for diverse points of view. Some people argue that there are also economic prerequisites for democracy, a mini-

mum standard of living and a strong property-owning class. Few of these conditions were satisfied in Russia.

More serious in my view was the lack of clearly understood and widely accepted rules of the democratic game. In the United States, the Constitution provides a mechanism for settling disputes between the different branches of government. In Russia, the constitution itself became a weapon in the brutal struggle for political power. There was no clear division of authority between executive and legislature. At Yeltsin's urging, the legislators agreed to the introduction of an American-style presidency in 1991 but they didn't really surrender any of their own powers. In the Communist period there was a slogan, All power to the Soviets. In theory at least, the Soviets, the elected councils, were sovereign. In practice, of course, this was just a facade for one party dictatorship. But the idea that the Soviets were all powerful survived the collapse of Communism. The parliament felt it had the right to change the constitution whenever it wanted and did so at least 300 times between 1991 and 1993. Under these circumstances, it isn't surprising that the conflict between president and legislature was eventually resolved by extra constitutional means.

So what kind of foundation is necessary if Russia's second post-Communist republic is to avoid the unhappy fate of its predecessor? The first requirement, in my view, is a constitution capable of facilitating the unprecedented socioeconomic revolution now underway in Russia. We must remember that the birth pangs of democracy in Russia have been accompanied by growing economic and social tension caused by the collapse of the old command economy. When post-Franco Spain and post-Pinochet Chile made their transition to democracy, free markets were already in place. Russia, by contrast, has been devastated by seven decades of central planning. Tens of thousands of state-owned companies are virtually bankrupt. Economic production has been declining by 15 to 20 percent a year and is likely to decline still further. To build a market economy on the ruins of central planning will require great discipline and great sacrifices from an already exhausted people.

A Congressional committee room may be the wrong place to voice such an opinion, but I believe that in such a situation the future balance of power in Russia must be tilted toward the executive. Russia needs leaders who have the political courage and the political authority to take some extremely unpopular measures. All Russian revolutions have been revolutions from above—and it is naive to expect that a transformation of such scope can be carried out by 500 or 600 legislators representing a vast range of political parties. At the same time, I think it is necessary to introduce constitutional guarantees against a return to dictatorship, even elected dictatorship. These include an effective if diminished legislature, some kind of constitutional court, and a free press.

Above all, Russia needs a constitution that all political factions will respect. There is a serious danger that the opposition will challenge the legitimacy of Yeltsin's constitution, just as Yeltsin challenged the legitimacy of the previous constitution. The legal basis for the December 12 elections is murky, to say the least. Voters are being asked to approve the new constitution on the same day that they elect the Duma—or legislature—provided for in a constitution

that they have every right to reject. To make matters even more complicated, nobody outside Yeltsin's inner circle has yet seen this draft constitution.

If the new constitution is to be taken seriously, Yeltsin must somehow show that it is a genuinely impartial document rather than a political device designed to shore up his own power. In my view, the best way to convince the Russian people that this is the case would be to set a date for new presidential elections and announce that he does not intend to run, I suspect that Yeltsin, like Mikhail Gorbachev before him, will turn out to be a transitory political figure. To steer Russia into a new era is gruelling, exhausting work—and it is unreasonable to expect even the most energetic politician to see the whole process through from start to finish. By defeating his old Communist party comrades—not once, but twice—Yeltsin has fulfilled his historical mission. But the spectacle of a charred and blackened White House has tarred the heroic image he acquired in August 1991 as a result of his vigorous defense of the same building in the name of Russia's fledgling democracy. His most valuable contribution now would be to give the second Russian republic a workable constitution—and then surrender power, gracefully, to a new generation of post-Communist politicians.

Thank you.

Senator GRASSLEY. Doctor Aron.

**DR. LEON ARON, RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT THE AMERICAN
ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE**

Doctor ARON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

If we are to summarize the key factor that led to the September 21st-October 4th crisis, I think it would be this: that for about a year prior to that the country's political system inherited from the totalitarian regime was so worn out, so tattered and frayed, that it could not, for much longer, contain, let alone accommodate, the mammoth social pressures unleashed by the economic reform, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the devolution of political power from Moscow to the Provinces.

Although we heard a lot about the constitutional crisis and the struggle between the President and the Supreme Soviet, although in the forefront those were but the tail of a far larger and more dangerous beast, a profound crisis of legitimacy of all and any political institutions in Russia.

The Russian public's apathy, and the alienation from the political process, which began approximately a year ago, reached a level beyond which lay anarchy. By the beginning of this year, the question was not so much who was in power, but whether any legitimate power would survive in Russia for much longer.

By last spring, across the entire responsible political spectrum, there was a growing sense that all institutions needed an overhaul, and if there was any doubt as to how the Russian people, which is the ultimate judge of it all, felt about it, the results of the National Referendum on April 25th put those doubts to rest, suppressing their cynicism, indifference and disgust at the sight of the corrupt and crumbling state, and its bickering and incompetent political elite. The voters of Russia gave their democracy one last chance to reform and save itself.

49.5 percent voted to hold early elections for the presidency of the Russian Federation, and 67.2 percent voted to hold early elections to the Parliament.

It is then, in April of this year, in the aftermath of the referendum, that the fuse of the last months' crisis was lit, for the Supreme Soviet, the Russian Parliament, chose to ignore the results of the referendum.

Thus, in the end, the crisis that came to a head on September 21 was not that there existed in Russia determined and spirited political opposition, no matter how outrageous and provocative that opposition must be and was, but that their opposition eventually refused to play by the democratic rules of compromise and attention to voters' wishes.

And, of course, this was not strictly a Russian problem. Yeltsin faced a systemic dilemma of mainly a democratic transition, how to deal with non-democratic or even anti-democratic structures, laws, institutions, while defending and extending democracy.

Far stronger, and all the democracies faced the same quandary. In 1787, the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia faced it, when it bypassed the lackadaisical Continental Congress and secretly wrote the Constitution of the United States. Abraham Lincoln faced the same dilemma when he suspended the habeas corpus and fought a bloody civil war; Winston Churchill, when on the second day of the war he ordered the arrest of the leader of British Fascists, Oswald Mosley. Charles DeGaulle, when in 1958, as France lay racked by the Algerian Rebellion and institutional debility, demanded that the parliament be suspended so that it did not interfere with his writing of the constitution of the 5th Republic and the preparation for the September 28th referendum.

This painful dilemma that Yeltsin faced was not unlike the one that must be dealt with when a cancerous growth is found in a vital organ. Does one subject the body to strong doses of chemotherapy and run the risk of poisoning, perhaps, killing it, or should one leave the cancerous growth untouched in the hope that it might dissipate on its own, but also risking the very high probability of debilitation or death?

On September 21, Yeltsin opted for a strong dose of radiation therapy, and so on that day, Russia confronted two legitimate acts, that of the President who went outside the constitution in dissolving the parliament, and that of the parliament that had, for almost five months, ignored a most explicit and urgent wish of the people for the creation of legitimate political structure and institutions.

It was up to that ultimate judge, the Russian people, to decide which of the two illegitimate acts was a lesser evil, and to decide, which of course, they did. In the first 48 hours of the crisis, when Ruslan Khasbulatov's call for a general strike went unheeded, or when the mass civil disobedience for which he called and demonstrations which he tried to organize did not materialize.

Two years ago, in defense of Yeltsin and Gorbachev, and the parliament of course, both materialized very quickly.

This lack of solidarity with the parliament, of course, could not be explained by fear or lack of information. I would like to remind everybody that until October 3, when the opposition chose to resort to mass scale violence, not a single newspaper, save that of the

parliament, no matter how outrageous the opposition was, not a single newspaper was closed down, not a single organization was prohibited from functioning, and not a single opposition politician was arrested.

And so, on September 25 and 24, a poll commissioned by CBS showed that 60 percent of Moscovites were in favor of the parliament's dissolution and 20 percent were opposed.

So, what we are facing now, I think, is the fact that in Russian politics today there are unmistakable signs of this poisoning from the radical chemotherapy that Yeltsin resorted to, and destructive in any nation, it is especially serious in the one that's emerging from totalitarian darkness, and that is still learning to see and move by the daylight.

There were all kinds of actions taken in the last month that bear a great deal of criticism. One of them was a short-lived, but still real censorship of the newspapers that since has been lifted, and, of course, the crackdown on the so-called "illegal aliens," ethnic non-Russians in Moscow, that crackdown was as wrong as it was futile.

And so, now having proved to the Russians and the world that he's a patient but decisive surgeon, Yeltsin must prove that he is a careful and caring post-op nurturer of democracy as well. The jury is still out, but following James Madison's, choice at the end of the Constitutional Convention, we are, on balance, better off indulging our hopes, rather than our fears.

In the last couple of weeks, it seems that those hopes were quite real, the censorship was lifted except for a few newspapers whose existence, even in the United States, let alone Europe, would be quite questionable, although, of course, this is a judicial matter. And, secondly, with the exception of Khasbulatov and Rutskoi, and the leaders of the rebellion, every other politician is free to participate. There were two—I have to add that in addition to Khasbulatov and Rutskoi first arrested, there are several other leaders of the rebellion that are in jail now.

Finally, the final, and I think, rather hopeful piece of information is that the Russian television, both Ostankino and the Russian channel, are now decreed by the president to give equal time to every opposition politician participating in the elections, on the local level and on the all Russian level. The latest is that each party bloc, including the Communists incidentally who are now, of course, in the open, and even Pravda now appeared under its own name. For anybody who was anxiously waiting for the news, it's out. You can purchase it now. And, the Communist, too, would have their equal time, about an hour for each bloc participating in the elections.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRASSLEY. Thank you, Doctor.

Doctor Kriebler?

**DR. ROBERT KRIEBLE, CHAIRMAN OF THE KRIEBLE
INSTITUTE OF THE FREE CONGRESS FOUNDATION**

Doctor KRIEBLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As I've been bringing assistance to the opposition elements in the former Soviet Empire—

Senator GRASSLEY. Could you pull your microphone a little bit closer, Doctor? Thank you.

Doctor KRIEBLE [continuing.] I've been bringing assistance to the opposition elements in the former Soviet Empire since 1986, trying to help democracy, free enterprise and capitalism take root in this region of vast potential and importance to the world.

And, today there are pressing questions about the future of Russia, in light of recent actions taken by President Yeltsin to dissolve the Russian parliament and schedule the upcoming elections.

It is very easy to criticize President Yeltsin for having taken steps which appear undemocratic, in order, hopefully, to start the democratic process in Russia. This process was previously blocked by the stalemate between the pro-Communist parliament and the President. I don't think there's any doubt the steps he has taken were required, considering the circumstances that existed up until October 4, 1993. Look at the betrayal of Yeltsin by Vice President Rutskoi, who called upon the Communists and neo-fascist mobs to take control of the television station, the Moscow City Hall and the Kremlin.

Regarding the upcoming elections, Yeltsin is in a very strong position with respect to his opposition. In a poll taken a few days before the action at the White House, Yeltsin's popularity rating was 71 percent versus 4 percent for Khasbulatov, Chairman of the recently dissolved parliament, and four percent for Vice President Rutskoi. Of course, they are both at present in jail. In all 50 cities in which we have lectured, my audiences, which, of course, had a strong democratic bias, were obviously pro-Yeltsin. I am not aware that Yeltsin has denied participation to any parties in this election.

I realize that there's concern regarding the status of the media in Russia. Many of the papers that were barred by Yeltsin have been reopened, even though they called for an overthrow of the lawfully constituted government. The press in Russia is freer now than it was three years ago, and will become even freer as media outlets become market oriented like ours.

Like the population, the media is divided between those strongly biased toward former Communists and those ardently championing the cause of democracy. Paul Weyrich, Arkady Murashev and I held a press conference last January in Moscow that was attended by 50 editors of Communist newspapers. I was violently attacked for activities promoting freedom and democracy and the market economy in Russia. They had taken particular offense at our having created a field force of 35 people established in leading cities of the former Soviet Empire. Through E-mail, this field force is in daily contact with our headquarters in Washington. They and I were called "agents of evil influence." This conference was major news in Moscow for at least the following week. I consider this pretty strong evidence that Yeltsin has in no way suppressed the press of the opposition, although his press corp, Yeltsin's press corp that is, strongly defended me and my activities.

I understand that Mr. Yeltsin has been expanding his own outreach through the vast territories of Russia by appointing personal representatives in each of the territories. In my view, it was essential for him to curtail the obstructionist Communist parliament by any means available. Recent events, however, in which this par-

liament was dissolved, now put the focus on the new parliamentary elections of mid--December followed by a new presidential election in June. I view this move as being the critical turning point in eliminating the major block to progress, namely the parliament which represented the dominant Communist influences of 1990, before democracy took hold. Polls will show the magnitude of the gap between the current democratic will of the people and the legislative actions of a totally obstructionist parliament. I believe that the dissolution of this parliament represents the second step into the democratization of Russia. I now expect rapid progress toward the legalization of private property and the stabilization of the currency.

There is some question in the U.S. as to whether our government should be more critical of actions taken by Yeltsin's government that are contrary to democratic principles. Under current circumstances, I believe we should lend full support, continue to lend full support, to Mr. Yeltsin, regardless of his relatively minor actions with which we do not agree.

Regarding Yeltsin's actions towards the regions, the oblasts and the cities, it is has been his longstanding policy since his election to decentralize power from Moscow to regional and local governments. With the upcoming elections and a tendency for the Communists to have a stronger voice in the outlying regions, I'm convinced Yeltsin may have decentralized too quickly. Overall, I see the Russian Republic staying essentially within the present boundaries if Moscow continues to recognize the ethnic and nationalistic problems that exist and allows some freedom of action.

Another issue of concern to many is the relationship of Yeltsin to the military. I do not believe that Yeltsin has acquired any significant obligation to the military or security operations because of the dissolution of parliament and the subsequent military action at the White House.

Surprisingly, a major impact of recent events is on Russia's largest neighbor, the Ukraine, which customarily is very anti-Russian and which, as you know, has both a Communist president and a Communist legislature. They have in the last week agreed to follow Yeltsin's example in calling for new elections for both the parliament and the presidency. These elections are sure to advance the cause of democracy in the Ukraine.

Many members of the old nomenclature would like to reestablish the Russian Empire. It may be indicative of the problems with U.S. news about Russian, that to the surprise of most Americans the principle proponent of this to reestablish the old empire is said in Russia to be former KGB chief Mikhail Gorbachev. Contrast the Russian point of view with the adulation Mr. Gorbachev receives in the West, even by Margaret Thatcher in England, and much of the leadership in the United States.

Let me close by saying that America historically has supported democracy around the world. My position on Russia is that they must prepare to improve their economic status, largely with their own resources, much as Japan did following World War II. I do not believe that other major countries will be willing to provide the necessary resources, particularly with most of the world in economic stagnation. Russians must, and can, do the job themselves.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRASSLEY. Thank you, Doctor.

Let me address a few questions on the media. Mr. Aron, you said that opposition parties are granted equality, is that the electronic media?

Doctor ARON. Yes. Well, in the print media there was never any doubt, as I said, virtually all the newspapers, with the exception of a handful, that, as I said you know, could not be qualified other than fascist.

Senator GRASSLEY. Well, what about Pravda?

Doctor ARON. Pravda is out now.

Senator GRASSLEY. Is that a good thing?

Doctor ARON. Under its own name. Initially, they insisted that it change the name and change the editor. They split that in half; it kept the name but changed the editor.

Senator GRASSLEY. Oh, so it's back on the street.

Doctor ARON. It's back now, sold on Red Square.

Senator GRASSLEY. And, is it still critical of—

Doctor ARON [continuing]. Oh, yes, very much critical. As a matter of fact, the first issue after the crisis carried extremely critical material.

Senator GRASSLEY. We received a report just in the last day or so from the Independent Gazette, which is having trouble getting certified. It's been pro-reform but critical of Yeltsin.

Doctor ARON. That's right.

Senator GRASSLEY. Are you familiar with that?

Doctor ARON. I'm familiar with the altercations. I didn't know how it came out. I would be extremely surprised if the Independent Gazette does not have a chance to publish.

But, the opposition's major concern was the electronic media, and that was television. This was not only because of the willful opposition by the government, but also because independent television does not exist in Russia.

Well, according to the *Isvestia*, October 23, 1993, there is a decree now by Yeltsin and the heads of the two official television stations were interviewed, and without going into the details of each opposition bloc, every single opposition bloc that is registered lawfully, and to do that you need to collect 100,000 signatures, is now given an hour time. And, in fact, the time is—

Senator GRASSLEY. An hour a day or what?

Doctor ARON [continuing]. An hour a day, to—well, not every day, but it's given one hour at the time of its choosing, and they will decide whether it will be determined by lot, or whether it will be determined by some sort of agreement between the parties.

But, each day a party, a particular opposition bloc, gets an hour. And, how they rotate it between themselves is up to them.

Senator GRASSLEY. How many opposition parties are there?

Doctor ARON. Oh, quite a few.

Senator GRASSLEY. And, could they all qualify for an hour?

Doctor ARON. If they are qualified as legitimate opposition blocs, they get one hour.

In addition to that, of course, they are free to purchase time on television.

Senator GRASSLEY. Yes.

Doctor ARON. And, this is just a set aside, and, of course, you know, the third thing I would like to mention is the electronic media itself. Everywhere in the world, if the opposition carried the kind of message that people supported, and the television was in the hands of the government, that this did not prevent opposition from winning.

It happened in Nicaragua, it happened, in fact, in Russia itself, where the democrats in 1989, 1990 and 1991, managed to gain seats in the various legislatures during different elections, although the television was completely in the hands of the Communist authorities.

So, all those things taken together make me hopeful that the access to the media would be fairly well distributed.

Senator GRASSLEY. Mr. Dobbs, do you share that optimism?

Mr. DOBBS. Not entirely. I think that, particularly, if one considers the electronic media, it is true that every political movement—and at the moment I think 10 have been registered for the election—will get an hour's free television time. But television and radio, which is the main means of reaching most of the population, are in the hands of the government, and I think that the pro-government parties will receive extra time. In fact, they already have been receiving extra time.

So, as far as the electronic media is concerned, I expect a bias to the pro-government parties to continue.

As far as the print media is concerned, there is a wide range of newspapers expressing different points of view, and I think that balance has shifted now slightly to newspapers that support Mr. Yeltsin, but the other side also has its newspapers.

I think that you have to bear in mind that, particularly in a country like Russia, where the circulation of the newspapers has been going down drastically, what is going to affect this election is really the electronic media.

Senator DECONCINI. Do you think, Mr. Dobbs, that what we heard from Mr. Aron and any information that you have, that it's a fair playing field for the opposition as it relates to the electronic media?

Mr. DOBBS. I think they would voice the opinion that it isn't completely fair, and precisely for this reason, that apart from the one hour free television time which they've been granted, they will not have equal access to the electronic media.

And, I think it's difficult to argue with that.

Senator DECONCINI. Doctor Kriebel, let me ask you about reports indicate that Mr. Yeltsin has expanded the power and personnel of his presidential council, and intends to curtail the power of the parliament, regardless of these new elections in December. Is there any validity, or do you concur with those reports? And, is he really going to have a supreme Soviet that is controlled by him, rubber stamping what he wants?

Doctor KRIEBEL. No. I think he is a true democrat in our sense, and that what you observe is a very human reaction to a parliament dominated by the opposition, very unpopular with the people it was supposed to represent, and one that's thwarted him in every attempt to do what he was elected to do, namely, advance the cause of democracy and a market economy in Russia.

Senator DECONCINI. Do you think, Doctor, that we should be critical of individual acts of Mr. Yeltsin? Let me give you a for instance, like the expelling the Chechens from Moscow, you know, and some of the activities that he has taken, is it constructive for the United States to speak out as to those things, to caution him, or is that an insult of such a nature that it might be counter-productive?

Doctor KRIEBLE. Well, my recommendation would be you stay with the broad picture. Yeltsin is the only viable pro-democratic leader in Russia at the present time, in my opinion. He has faults, he has flaws, don't we all have flaws, but rather than pick at little details which we don't agree with, and we have good reason not to agree with some of the things that he's done, look at the big picture and his vision of a democratic Russia is certainly one that I think should be highly acceptable to the United States and worthy of our full support.

Senator DECONCINI. Gentlemen, do any of you think that the situation that evolved in Georgia, whereby the Russian army, in effect, bailed out Mr. Shevardnadze in return for Georgia's entrance into the CIS, is that a harbinger of more active Russian role towards its neighbors, or even expanding the Russian Empire and trying to reestablish that?

Doctor Kriebel, would you like to start off?

Doctor KRIEBLE. I do not see any very serious indications that a Yeltsin government would make any strong efforts to establish a Russian Empire.

I think, as I say, that he is a genuine convert to democracy, and is as pro democracy as anybody in this room, perhaps.

Senator DECONCINI. Mr. Dobbs, does that concern you?

Mr. DOBBS. Yes. On the question of Georgia, I think there has been some evidence in recent months that the Russian authorities, with or without Mr. Yeltsin's consent, have been attempting to reassert their influence and control over some areas of the former Soviet Union.

This was first the case in Moldova. I think there's then in Central Asia, particularly Tajikistan, and I think there's some evidence that there was covert support from the Russian military to the Abhazian rebels fighting against Mr. Shevardnadze.

I think, of course, the former parliamentary leaders, including Mr. Ruskoi, favored a much more vigorous assertion of what might be called Russian imperial interests.

I think there is some danger that Mr. Yeltsin might take a leaf out of that book, but I think the danger point comes if the territorial question is reopened. And I think he has been very responsible in that matter, particularly, towards Ukraine and towards the Baltic States. So, I think this is a mixed picture.

Doctor ARON. If I may?

Senator DECONCINI. Yes, please.

Doctor ARON. It's a very complicated issue. When the Soviet Union was dissolved in December of 1991, we lost track of certain realities that have existed in that part of the world.

Now, almost two years later, I think certain things are becoming clear. The first one is that the new states, again, barring some of them, most explicitly the Baltic States, are are very fragile, very

unsure, and there are reasons for that, into which I will not go, why these new states are very unsure of their statehood or even nationhood.

And, that fragility of their statehoods, which we observed everywhere, we observe them in Moldova, we observe them in Georgia, we certainly observe them all over Central Asia, coupled with the legacy, with a twin legacy of the Soviet economic system, which on the one hand tied all those republics very, very tightly to Russia in terms of their dependence on raw materials, particularly, energy, and, secondly, distributed industrial resources in a very haphazard way that would not allow newly independent states to function, much less function for export, to function as independent industrial units.

All those taken together, I think, brings a reality of a certain compromise, I call it a grand compromise between Russia and the newly independent states, where those states, in return for membership in a Russian-led community that might hold out a hope of preserving law and order and peace, and preserving those newly independent states until they could stand on their own, in return for that they will be willing, in my view, to surrender certain measures, not of independence, but certain measures of autonomy, a certain measure of sovereignty, for example, allowing Russian peacekeepers.

I agree with Mr. Dobbs that there are clearly imperial tendencies in Moscow. We cannot expect otherwise after 400 years of the empire. I also agree with him in that I don't think Yeltsin or anybody around him is implicated in any kind of master design to rebuild the empire, but that's a very complex issue.

Senator DECONCINI. Thank you very much. I'm going to ask the reporter to insert my opening statement. I was in an Intelligence Committee briefing and couldn't be here.

Before I yield to the Co-Chairman, I'd like to welcome our Swedish guests who are here with us today, Ms. Ingegerd Troedsson, Speaker of the Swedish parliament, Mr. Schorri, Deputy Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, and Mr. Dragstedt, a member of the parliament, along with Ambassador Liljegren, Swedish Ambassador and the Council, Sven Petersen and Mr. Starell, the Aide to Ms. Troedsson, we welcome you here today. We certainly hope your stay is fruitful, and if we can be of any assistance our offices are prepared to do that. Thank you for joining us.

Would you please stand so we can see all of you? Thank you for being here.

Mr. Hoyer.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to join you in welcoming the representatives of the Swedish parliament and their delegation to this hearing. They are active members, of course, of the CSCE. We've had the opportunity of visiting in Stockholm and spending time with members of the parliament there on CSCE issues. In particular, we had the opportunity of visiting during the vigil that the Scandinavians effected with respect to the Baltic States, which I think was critically important to try to stabilize and protect lives of people during that very tenuous period.

And, as someone whose father was born in Copenhagen, I'm particularly pleased to welcome our Scandinavian friends.

I want to apologize to this very distinguished panel. This is one of the problems with having hearings during what is hoped to be the last 3 weeks of the session, particularly, when we did not meet the first 2 days of the week, as a result everything has been pushed into Wednesday, and Thursday and Friday, and I apologize. I had four meetings scheduled within 15 minutes of one another. I've made three, and this is the fourth. I don't think I substantively participated in them, but I was there.

I want to also, Mr. Chairman, if I can, include my statement in the record at this time.

Chairman DECONCINI. Sure.

I will try not to be redundant, and if you've already answered these questions please say that it is already on the record.

It appears that Yeltsin has gotten the local governments back into the fold, so to speak. Do you think this is the case? Do you think that there is a growing or greater stability. With regard to relations between Moscow and the regional and local governments?

Mr. DOBBS. I think that the events of the past month have certainly shifted the balance of power in the regions in Yeltsin's favor. Evidence of this is that the parliament of Yakutia, in the Far East, agreed to dissolve itself at his urging. Also, the separatist movement in Tatarstan appears to be running out of steam, and in a number of other regions the local councils have either dissolved themselves or Mr. Yeltsin's supporters clearly have the upper hand.

But, I don't think that this is the end of opposition from the regions. I think that his opponents are still there. They may have suffered a setback, but there are a lot of regions in the country where they still constitute a majority of the legislature and I think have some support among public opinion, largely for economic reasons, dissatisfaction with the speed of the economic reforms.

So, I don't think we've seen the end of this issue.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Would either of the other distinguished witnesses like to comment on that?

Doctor KRIEBLE. I would agree with Mr. Dobbs' statement, and in regard to possible future subdivisions of Russia—

Co-Chairman HOYER. Can you pull the mike a little closer? Doctor Kriebel, I can see you and, therefore, I can get what you are saying, but our guests cannot.

Doctor KRIEBLE. OK. I agree with Mr. Dobbs. I think, in particular, in the vast regions that we call Siberia, that they call the Far East, that there are stresses that could lead to a subdivision into separate republics.

Of course, we are talking about an area of 4,000 miles from the Urals to the Pacific, and there are great historical differences, not very much direct contact with the Moscow government, a normal propensity towards independence, such as we ourselves saw 100 years ago in our wild west, it's their wild east, of course, and it would not surprise me to see what we call Siberia break up into several independent republics in the coming decade or two.

Otherwise, I see no great flaw lines developing, and feel pretty confident that the European part of Russia will manage to maintain itself as a separate republic.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Doctor, just so I'm sure what you are saying, when you say independent republics, are you talking about independent political subdivisions within Russia?

Doctor KRIEBLE. No. I'm talking about they are actually trying to break away from Russia.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Independent sovereign entities.

Doctor KRIEBLE. And, become further members of the CIS or NIS, what have you.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Doctor Aron, do you have a comment on that?

Doctor ARON. Well, I think we've got to look at this process from the historic point of view. Russia is simply too diverse and too big to be both democratic and what the Russians called unitary, that is, ruled from the center. In other words, in Russian history, either one or the other factor predominated. Whenever Russia was not under an authoritarian control that happened during interregnums, it fell apart. It always fell apart into relatively self-sufficient regions.

Whenever the totalitarian or authoritarian control was reestablished, Russia became unitary again.

What Yeltsin is trying to do, and what is completely unprecedented, is to create a state that will be whole democratic and federative. Yeltsin is the first Russian leader ever who is trying to build Russia from bottom up, rather than from top down.

And, I would not be—I'm not terribly disturbed by the calls for independence, or autonomy and so on. There are plenty of states equally large and complex as Russia, the United States, India, Germany, that are largely existing as a conglomerate of pretty much autonomous regions. And, I think Russia, if it is to remain democratic, would have to go that route.

Of course, if the regime in Moscow changes, and, you know, for example, if Alexander Rutskoi had taken over, we would not be talking about federation, would not be talking about independence, you would have a unitary authoritarian state that has always existed in Russia.

Co-Chairman HOYER. When I visited Rutskoi's office with Majority Leader Gephardt, and you may have heard this story, in March, we all sat around his table and we had a discussion, and then we got up and we walked by a large map that was in his office. Of course, it was the map of the Soviet Union.

And, he was asked by Congressman Lantos about it, and he shrugged and simply implied that, well, perhaps, he hadn't had a chance to change the map.

Having spent an hour and a half with him, there was nobody in the delegation that believed that was the case.

Let me ask you something about the elections. The elections, I take it, are going to be held in all regions?

Doctor KRIEBLE. Yes.

Co-Chairman HOYER. All right. And so, all regions will cooperate as far as you can glean in the election of the new parliament?

Doctor KRIEBLE. Yes.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Do you expect those elections to be stable and representative, stable in the sense that the elections will go forward with citizen participation being generally protected and provided for, and representative, I guess, being a fact that you will have full participation and they will represent the views of the people.

Doctor KRIEBLE. I think that would be the best election held in Russia, pretty much up to American standards, if not quite, given a lot of oversight by the West, which I believe is being organized.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Yes. I think there's been an invitation to us and others, us being the Helsinki Commission, which has generally participated as observers, and we will, of course, be sending observers to that.

Supposedly, the Russian constitution will define the relationship between the regions and the center. The Russian people are supposed to vote on this constitution also in December, and is that on target as far as we know?

Have relations between the center and the regions been formulated to the satisfaction of most?

Mr. DOBBS. Could you repeat that?

Co-Chairman HOYER. Yes. You've been discussing relations between Moscow and the regions. Within the constitutional framework where do we stand on that? What are the proposals? Do you have much information on that? It's still yet to be resolved.

Mr. DOBBS. Well, partly, we're still in the dark, because we haven't seen a copy of the constitution. There is a draft of the constitution that will be presented to the Russian people on December 12th, the same day as the elections.

Just to go back very briefly to your previous question about how fair the elections will be, we already had some discussion about the access to the news media, which is on the record, but I think there are also concerns among the opposition of gerrymandering of electoral districts.

According to one report I saw recently, the size of the districts that could be expected to vote for pro-government political parties, is much smaller than the districts that could be expected to vote for the opposition.

Technically I think these elections will be perfectly free, I think that there will be secret balloting. The ballots will be counted fairly. I think that you may well find that the opposition will question the legitimacy of the elections, and their complaints may have something in them.

Co-Chairman HOYER. When you refer to size, are you referring to both population and geography? Is there any standard district size that's being discussed, as far as you know?

Mr. DOBBS. Yes. I'm referring specifically to population.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Population.

Mr. DOBBS. For example, in a recent report from a journalist in Moscow, the average size of anti-Yeltsin districts, based on previous voting patterns, is 590,000 voters, and the average size of the pro-Yeltsin districts is 456,000 voters, so that clearly gives the government parties an advantage.

I think that since the government controls the electoral commission, that there may have been some writing of boundaries to favor the government parties.

The point here is that, the elections should not only be fair, but they should also be seen to be fair. And I think at the very least the opposition may be able to claim that they are not entirely fair.

Co-Chairman HOYER. A member of our staff points out that the Republic of Chechnya has refused to participate in the election. I don't whether that's known to you. How important is this? What impact will it have? Do you believe that Yeltsin can or will take any action to forcibly ensure its participation.

Doctor ARON. No. Chechnia has been essentially outside of Russia for almost a year now. Its status is kind or murky, but I don't believe many Russians inside or outside the government considered Chetchnia part of Russia.

I would like to add something to what Michael Dobbs said. This problem with the Russian opposition reminds me of a line from—a couple lines from a great English poet, Auden, he wrote, "His existentialists declare that they are in complete despair, yet, keep on writing." The Communist declare that they are not free to compete, yet, they registered themselves, they collected 100,000 signatures needed. They are publishing their newspapers. They now have access to electronic media, and while I agree with Mr. Dobbs that there are certain—there could be certain technical problems, could we not give Russia a break? I mean, this is the country just stepped back from a fratricidal civil war, this is the country that emerged from totalitarianism, where there were no political structures and no free elections. And to have done this without the kind of bloodshed that everybody predicted, I don't know a single specialist on the Soviet Union who did not predict massive bloodshed as a result of the fall of Communism, be that ethnic, or be that simply political.

So far, with regrettable deaths of several dozen people, throughout the whole period of perestroika and glasnost, and now throughout these elections, there's remarkably little violence, and there is—I think these elections should not be compared to the elections that we have now in the United States, but why don't we compare them with the elections that were held in the South right after the civil war and see whether, you know, in a country that's just been ravaged by a very brutal political battle, whether these elections could be, in fact, absolutely free and fair as in the oldest democracy in the world, in the United States.

This is not to justify irregularities. This is just to give the perspective on things.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Let me make an observation, though, Doctor. I agree with you, I appreciate your position. But, let me hypothesize, if I can, that had we had a Helsinki Commission based in London, or in Paris, or in Stockholm, or Copenhagen, that was meeting regularly in 1966 or 1968, and saying to President Johnson, you are not living up to standards, you tell the Congress to live up to standards, I don't know that it would have made a difference, but it may have.

And, to that extent, there are some advantages that Russia has in terms of external pressures, so that those who want reforms,

and, certainly, from my perspective, President Clinton and other Western leaders have shown a great deal of courage in standing up for that kind of support for democratization, so the external pressure has been somewhat helpful there.

But, I agree with your basic premise that it would be unreasonable to expect the kind of elections that we have in free democratic countries who have experienced them for hundreds of years, or 50 years, or 20 years for that matter.

On the other hand, living up to American standards of gerrymandering you may have to go some way to really do that. But, for *Baker v. Carr*, and *Reynolds v. Simms*, our discrepancies may be substantially greater than 550,000 to 450,000 people.

Let me ask you a transition question, because you mentioned the military and the lack of violence, which I think all of us have been amazed by, not just in Russia, but with, perhaps, the exception of Rumania and some other exceptions, an amazingly blood-free revolution has occurred since 1989.

In that context, however, one of the reasons, presumably, was that the military was prepared to stand by and, ultimately, did, in fact, support President Yeltsin. What obligations does he have to the military, and how do those obligations relate to the military's inclinations for a near abroad participation?

Doctor KRIEBLE. My observation is that the leading political forces on the side of democracy, which are the ones that I know, of course, show a remarkable restraint and aversion to getting into any situation that might lead to blood shed. That seems to be priority number one, and it is to that, rather than to the standing by of the military, that I would attribute the remarkable lack of blood shed in this very critical period.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Doctor, that's an interesting observation.

Let us, again, assume that, let's say Rutskoï, who theoretically, had ties with the military, as a military Afghan participant, if he had had a coterie, which, apparently, if he had it was small and really never made much of an impact in the military—that regardless of that the military's willingness to stay out, am I reading from you, is drawn from the relatively broad consensus on peaceful action within the populace?

Doctor KRIEBLE. That is my understanding, yes, sir.

I don't know Rutskoï, but I know Burbulis, and Murashev, and Filipov and Gaidar, and most of the other people on the democratic side, and in our discussions they always shrink away from, refuse to participate in anything that might lead to blood shed. That's consideration number one in their mind.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Of course, that may have been true of the democratic forces in 1917 as well, I'm not sure, and you are much better historians, and, obviously, there are exceptions there, but the democratic forces are usually not those necessarily who are first inclined to use force.

Doctor KRIEBLE. Well, true, but, fortunately, they do seem to be in the majority.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Yes.

Doctor KRIEBLE. It bodes well for the future.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Doctor Aron?

Doctor ARON. Well, it seems to me that this popular theory that now Yeltsin is in deep debt to his military, and, basically, the military is going to be sort of ruling from behind the scene, in my view it is flawed, it's exaggerated, and there are several reasons for that.

First of all, the role of the military. Well, like every military anywhere in the world, the Russian military likes two things. It likes to be popular with the people, and it likes to be on the winning side, and, like any military in the world it does not like one thing, and that is to shoot the civilians. For all three reasons, the Russian military hesitated two years ago and did not support the Pusch.

For the same three reasons, it hesitated and then supported Yeltsin two years later.

Incidentally, this hesitancy, which, again, was misconstrued in the media here as sort of a sign of disloyalty, to my view was probably among the most hopeful signs of the normalcy that is appearing to be settling on that hapless land, that is, for the first time in history, the Russian military, not counting August of 1991, for the first time in history the Russian military hesitated, brooded, thought, and soul-searched before they shot at the civilians. I think we should really welcome that sign.

Further, it appears that Yeltsin was never in any danger.

I'm personally convinced, and I'm yet to find somebody who can dissuade me, that Yeltsin—or even his position, or even the Kremlin was in any moment, from the 21st of September to the 3rd of October, in any danger of being overthrown. You cannot afford to have a bunch of loonies running around with guns.

But, in no way, and in no time, and in no time in my view was he in any danger of being overthrown, arrested, killed, and so we cannot say that here we have sort of a third world situation where the masses rose against a dictator, and the army came in, saved his neck, and from that time on he is in deep debt to them. This was exactly not the case.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Let me switch further, though, in terms of where the military is now, and I mentioned the near abroad policy and U.S. policy, which appears to be supportive of the concept of Russia being the peacekeeper in the near abroad, or it appears to be U.S. policy to acquiesce to that sort of Russian Monroe Doctrine.

Would you like to comment on that and give me your thoughts on either the U.S. position as you perceive it or the Russian position as you perceive it, or both.

Mr. DOBBS. I think in the last few months, there's definitely been a tendency by the Russian government, by Yeltsin and his supporters, to assert a greater interest in the near abroad, and one can discuss how much this is affected by his relationship with the military.

I think you remember the incident when he went to Poland and appeared to give the go ahead for Poland to join NATO, and then a couple of days later he changed his mind and expressed serious reservations about this.

I'd also cite Mr. Kozyrev's recent speech to the United Nations, in which he also stressed a very close interest in what's known as the "near abroad."

So, this has been happening, and I think it will be accentuated over the coming months. The only question is, how far it goes.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Assuming that's the only question, do you have any thoughts?

Mr. DOBBS. Well, I think that to some extent it's a natural phenomenon, that after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there will be a period of reintegration, economic reintegration, military reintegration and political reintegration. After all, Russia is the dominant power here. It has military interests, it has economic interests.

And, what concerns me is not so much that this is happening, but how far it goes, and I think there's a line which is very difficult to draw, where it can become dangerous.

And, as I said earlier, I think that up to now Mr. Yeltsin has shown a large degree of responsibility in this matter, but I think it is possible to conceive of circumstances where Russia does try to start claiming the loyalties of the large Russian population in Ukraine, for example, tries to stir things up in the Baltic States, and if that is the case then I think we should be on the alert for that, and if that happens, the U.S. and other Western countries should clearly state that this is unacceptable.

I don't think that line has been reached yet.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Would anybody else like to comment on that?

Doctor KRIEBLE. I might just comment a little on the economic side. I note that the CIS are developing new economic networks with other Western countries, Italy, for example, partly because of the reluctance of Russia to continue to supply them at below market prices.

And, I think this is very constructive. A region which was a homogenous bloc only three or four years ago is now showing signs of entering the world economy, not knowing what the ultimate scale is yet, but the process seems to have started and I welcome that. I think that's good for democracy and good for the world.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Going back to the near abroad question, and, Mr. Dobbs, you referenced the Baltic States, as well as other republics, clearly the West has always looked at, for the most part, the Baltic States as different. Now some of the non-Baltic States have argued, Moldova and others, very vigorously, that they are not different, that they were occupied, independent, sovereign states as well.

Do the Russians look at the Baltic States differently than they look at the other republics?

Mr. DOBBS. To some extent, yes. I think they recognize that the independence of the Baltic States has been guaranteed by the world community, and they observe that the international community is not so concerned with interventions, covert or otherwise, in places like Georgia and the Caucasus.

So, there's much more restraint towards the Baltic States.

On the subject of the Baltic States, I should say that there's a large Russian minority in those countries. They also have rights, and to some extent their rights have been infringed upon, and Russia has the right and obligation to speak up on behalf of Russian Nationals in the Baltic States. So, it's not just a matter of Russia's responsibility, but also a matter of the governments of the Baltic

States giving the Russian citizens living there full rights and not discriminating against the minority.

Co-Chairman HOYER. The Commission has been very interested in that question, as you may know. Obviously, it's not quite the problem in Lithuania that it is in Latvia and Estonia, because of the smaller number of ethnic Russians in Lithuania. But, in Estonia, of course, it's very large.

Can you tell me what progress, what is the current situation, as it relates to Russia's perception of the Estonian legislation, for instance? That's not really the subject of this hearing, but you mentioned that, and I'm interested in it, and I wondered if any of you had any knowledge on that currently. Maybe our staff does, they can tell me.

Mr. DOBBS. Well, it's true, I mean, there are people who would describe themselves as democrats in Russia, for example Mr. Kozarev, people who supported the Baltic independence movements, also Alexander Yakovlev, who have expressed serious concern about what's happening in the Baltic States.

And, I think when one talks about what is happening there, the Yugoslav analogy is useful. After all, the collapse of Yugoslavia was not only due to the aggressive policies of Serbia, but also to the failure of Croatia to guarantee full rights to its Serbian minority, and there's a clear parallel with Russia and the Baltic States.

Co-Chairman HOYER. My question, though, if you know or you are current on it, is whether Estonia is making progress? For instance, when we attended the parliamentary Assembly in July, we sent two of our members, Mr. Cardin and Ms. Slaughter, over to Estonia, to Tallin, for the purposes of having discussions with officials there, to express our concerns, regarding minority rights I had expressed 2 years prior to that, 1991, that in my opinion the quicker and the more liberal the integration policy as it related to citizenship being extended to folks who had lived there for some period of time, the more stable would be the relationship internally.

I've just been told that Ambassador Ilves of Estonia is here, back in the right corner, and we're very pleased to have you here. I did not know you were here, but I know we've maintained a very constructive dialogue on those concerns, and it's a tough problem, obviously. From the Estonian standpoint, they are very concerned about making sure they have control of their state and the process of democratization and control in the sense that they remain an Estonian state, an Estonian society. I understand that, but nevertheless it is a significant problem.

Would you like to comment on that anymore than I've already muddled it up?

Doctor ARON. Well, there's one thing that I think is hopeful, and that is that, in fact, Russia did delink the question of human rights of the Russian speakers, not just ethnic Russians, in the Baltic Republics from the question of troop pull out.

On the level of rhetoric, it's still there, but this is one of the things, as Bob Kriebel, I think correctly, pointed out, where I think we could see Yeltsin's instincts. I mean, on a very rhetorical, diplomatic level, there is a great deal of linkage between troop pull out and human rights, but, quietly, the troops are leaving those coun-

tries, and I think that's very helpful, because had it been otherwise we would be really facing a very acute crisis.

If I may add on the question of Russian minorities, it seems to me that the next frontier we are all concerned about Russian minority in the Baltics, but it seems to me that soon a much more urgent crisis is going to occur in other republics, in Kazakhstan for example, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, with respect to the Russian minorities. I'm just alerting you, as the Chair of the Commission, because I think there are different Russians that live in the Baltics from those who live in Kazakhstan they are accustomed to a different treatment.

I think in Kazakhstan, for example, there is an almost, in my view, a kind of blanket dismissal of ethnic Russians from positions of responsibility, to which they were accustomed, as opposed to the Baltics, where they largely were blue collar and not represented very much in the professional classes.

So, I think the resentment that the Russian minority is going to feel in Central Asia is soon going to become a problem.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Let me ask one more question, and there are a lot of questions that I could ask and a lot of discussion we could have. It won't come as a surprise to you, I have another meeting at 3:30. Obviously, Senator DeConcini did as well. It is part of the very thoughtful, reflective process in which we engage.

Regarding agriculture, Yeltsin recently moved into privatization in a greater extent in agriculture. I'd like to hear your thoughts on that, your prospects for success, the impact it will have.

Doctor KRIEBLE. I would like to comment on that, and I think the answer, perhaps, is pretty well laid out in the fact that the little 2½ acre private plots that the farmers employed in the Kolkholz, the state farms, produce something like 40 percent of the food that gets to families in Russia.

The private ownership does something to the energies and the productivity of a farmer. It's a wonder to behold. To think that this move to privatized farms is going to relieve any stress on the food supply in Russia, they will become an exporter of food once again.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Do you—

Mr. DOBBS [continuing]. Yes. I think that the dismantling of obstacles to the free purchasing and sale of land is a positive step. But I think it's doubtful that there will be any quick agricultural revolution in Russia, because I think there are many other factors that are making it very difficult for private agriculture to develop.

It involves a lot more than a stroke of a pen. Agriculture remains dominated by the old collective and state farms and the distribution system remains dominated by them. Until one starts tackling these issues it's going to be a very long time before Russia enjoys a real agricultural revolution and increase in agricultural production.

Doctor ARON. Just one point. I think revolution is happening. I think for the first time in, over 20 years, Russia's imports of grain are going to be very sharply down, which, of course, was a huge drain on Russian economy.

If that is, indeed, happening, and I heard such forecasts, this is a sign that something is working, whether it's privatization or whether it's price liberalization, that is, they could sell grain.

I agree, though, with Mr. Dobbs, it seems to me that once—the next step should be privatization of the distribution elevators. Once the elevators are privatized, I think you will see, as Bob said, Russia exporting grain within 3 to 5 years.

Doctor KRIEBLE. Could I make just one note on that point?

Co-Chairman HOYER. Certainly.

Doctor KRIEBLE. If my arithmetic serves me, if you simply increase from one hectare to two hectares, the allowable size of a *dacha*, which produces today 40 percent of the food that gets to families, then the food problem in Russia would be pretty well solved without dealing with the kolkhoz.

Co-Chairman HOYER. It's an amazing system, free enterprise.

Doctor KRIEBLE. It really is. The increase in productivity is unbelievable.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Gentlemen, again, I want to thank you very much for being here. I again want to apologize for being late.

I will read all three of your statements, however. You are obviously all individuals who can make a real contribution to the knowledge of this Commission, and, therefore, to our effectiveness, and we very much appreciate your being with us.

Thank you very much.

Doctor KRIEBLE. Thank you for the opportunity.

[Whereupon, the hearing was concluded at 3:31 p.m.]

A P P E N D I X

Statement by Chairman Dennis DeConcini
Hearing on Russia, Nov. 3, 1993

I would like to welcome our distinguished witnesses and guests to this Helsinki Commission hearing today. We have called this hearing to examine recent events in Russia, and possible scenarios for the future, domestically and beyond its borders.

On September 21, 1993, President Yeltsin suspended activities of the Russian parliament in Moscow and ordered new parliamentary elections to be held December 12, 1993. Armed resistance by a faction of parliamentarians led by Vice President Rutskoi and Speaker Khasbulatov resulted in the armed attack on the parliament by units of the Russian army on October 3-4, crushing the resistance. Yeltsin has since ordered the disbanding of local legislative bodies throughout the Russian Federation, closed several opposition newspapers, and prevented political organizations most implicated in the violence from participating in the upcoming elections.

There is absolutely no doubt that President Yeltsin was faced with a grave crisis last month ago when armed insurgents threatened to take power in Moscow. With the backing of the army, Mr. Yeltsin demonstrated that he had the power to thwart his opposition.

There is also no doubt that for the majority of Russians, Mr. Yeltsin is a figure of great popularity, while his opponents in the Russian parliament were held in very low esteem.

Still, several questions remain: where is Mr. Yeltsin going? Are his policies intended to lead Russia to genuine democracy and free market relations, or is there a danger, as some have claimed, of slipping back into traditional Russian, non-Communist authoritarianism? Is Mr. Yeltsin moving too quickly in the economic sphere, as some have

claimed, or are the reforms too "Western oriented"? What is Mr. Yeltsin's alleged "debt" to the Russian military and security services, and will this reflect on Russia's policy toward its neighbors? Is the U.S. government striking the proper balance between support for Mr. Yeltsin's reform program, and voicing strong concerns about Yeltsin's disturbing departures from democratic practices? For example, why was there little or no U.S. reaction to the recent eviction from Moscow by police of persons of "Caucasian nationality" such as Chechens, Armenians, Georgians, and others.

I look forward to hearing the testimony of our distinguished witnesses today.

STATEMENT BY STENY H. HOYER
CO-CHAIRMAN, HELSINKI COMMISSION
HEARING ON RUSSIA
NOVEMBER 3, 1993

THANK YOU FOR COMING TO THIS VERY IMPORTANT AND TIMELY HEARING, WHICH FOCUSES ON A SUBJECT OF GREAT INTEREST: THE CURRENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF DEMOCRACY IN RUSSIA. WE INTEND TO EXAMINE THIS CRITICAL ISSUE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RUSSIA'S DOMESTIC POLITICS AND RUSSIA'S POLICIES TOWARDS ITS NEIGHBORS. I HOPE THAT WE WILL ALSO INVESTIGATE THE INTER-ACTION BETWEEN RUSSIAN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY AND THE DYNAMICS OF THEIR COMBINED IMPACT ON DEMOCRATIZATION.

PRESIDENT BORIS YELTSIN, HAVING SWEEPED AWAY HIS PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION WITH THE HELP OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY, NOW SEEMS BENT ON ESTABLISHING A STRONG PRESIDENCY. IN FACT, SOME WOULD CLAIM, TOO STRONG, ESPECIALLY IN A COUNTRY WHERE EXECUTIVE POWER HAS ALWAYS RUN ROUGHSHOD OVER SOCIETY, AND THE OTHER TRADITIONAL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT. FOR INSTANCE, AN ARTICLE IN LAST FRIDAY'S *FINANCIAL TIMES* WAS CALLED: "YELTSIN SEEKS UNFETTERED POWERS FOR PRESIDENCY," AND DETAILED A SERIES OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION THAT GREATLY STRENGTHEN THE PRESIDENT'S PREROGATIVES AND CURBS THE GROWING INDEPENDENCE OF RUSSIA'S REGIONS.

THIS RAISES IMPORTANT QUESTIONS: HOW STRONG A PRESIDENCY DOES RUSSIA NEED, OR CAN RUSSIA ENDURE? RUSSIA IS A GREAT STATE; SOME CLAIM IT REQUIRES STRONG EXECUTIVE POWER TO LEAD THE ENTIRE COUNTRY TOWARDS DEMOCRACY AND A FREE MARKET. YET THAT SAME STRONG EXECUTIVE POWER HAS BEEN THE DETERRENT TO RUSSIA'S DEMOCRATIC HOPES SHOULD WE NOT HOPE THAT A FREELY ELECTED, LEGITIMATE

PARLIAMENT WILL PROVIDE THE COUNTERWEIGHT TO EXECUTIVE POWER, AND SUPPLY A BALANCE THAT WILL ENSURE INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS? AT THE SAME TIME, RUSSIA'S REGIONS HAVE GROWN ACCUSTOMED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS TO UNPRECEDENTED FREEDOMS. HOW WILL THEY REACT TO AN ATTEMPT BY THE CENTER TO REIMPOSE ITS CONTROL, AND HOW FAR COULD THE CENTER GO IN RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE? WHAT ARE U.S. INTERESTS IN THIS CONFRONTATION?

EVEN MORE WORRISOME TO ME, HOWEVER, IS RUSSIA'S CLEAR TENDENCY TO REASSERT ITS RULE OVER THE OTHER FORMER REPUBLICS. RUSSIAN ACTIVITIES AND MILITARY INVOLVEMENT HAVE RECENTLY BEEN MOST FLAGRANT IN GEORGIA AND AZERBAIJAN, BUT THERE ARE GROUNDS TO FEAR COORDINATED DESTABILIZATION IN OTHER REPUBLICS AS WELL. FOREIGN MINISTER KOZYREV -- ONE OF YELTSIN'S MOST PROGRESSIVE, PRO-WESTERN MINISTERS -- A FEW WEEKS AGO TOLD IZVESTIYA THAT RUSSIA WILL DEFEND "STRATEGIC INTERESTS CONQUERED OVER CENTURIES." IF THESE ARE HIS VIEWS, WHAT MUST THE HARDLINERS BE CALLING FOR? AND HOW WILL THIS AFFECT RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH UKRAINE -- THE ONE FORMER REPUBLIC THAT MIGHT BE ABLE TO RESIST RUSSIAN PRESSURE? HOW ARE U.S. INTERESTS AFFECTED BY RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS?

TODAY WE HAVE THREE WITNESSES EMINENTLY QUALIFIED TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES.

MR. MICHAEL DOBBS IS A RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT THE KENNAN INSTITUTE OF THE WILSON CENTER. MR. DOBBS WAS MOSCOW BUREAU CHIEF OF THE WASHINGTON POST FROM 1988 TO 1993, AND BEFORE THAT HE WAS A CORRESPONDENT FOR THE POST IN FRANCE AND POLAND. PRIOR TO HIS MOSCOW ASSIGNMENT, MR. DOBBS SPENT A YEAR AT THE HARVARD RESEARCH CENTER AS A VISITING FELLOW.

DR. LEON ARON IS A RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE. DR. ARON HOLDS A PH.D FROM COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE SPECIALIZED IN POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF THE SOVIET UNION. HE IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO LEADING JOURNALS OF OPINION, AND COMMENTS REGULARLY ON RUSSIAN AFFAIRS FOR THE MACNEIL-LEHRER NEWSHOUR, CNN, C-SPAN, AND OTHER PUBLIC AFFAIRS TELECASTS.

DR. ROBERT KRIEBLE IS CHAIRMAN OF THE KRIEBLE INSTITUTE OF THE FREE CONGRESS FOUNDATION, AND HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN TRAINING RUSSIAN DEMOCRACY ADVOCATES IN ELECTION AND MARKET ECONOMY STRATEGIES. HE WAS ALSO AN EYE-WITNESS TO THE EVENTS THAT UNFOLDED AT THE RUSSIAN WHITE HOUSE ON OCTOBER 4.

U.S. POLICY TOWARDS RUSSIA MUST BE BASED ON A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MATTERS ADDRESSED IN THIS HEARING AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS. OUR WITNESSES ARE WELL QUALIFIED TO DISCUSS THEM WITH US, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING THEIR TESTIMONY.

Michael Dobbs

PREPARED REMARKS FOR CSCE COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Mr Co-Chairman, Congressmen.

Thankyou for giving me this opportunity of testifying before the Commission. In my prepared remarks today, I should like to focus on two questions: events leading up to the dissolution of the Russian legislature and the prospects for democracy in Russia.

We have just witnessed the fall of the first post-Communist republic in Russia. The bloodshed in Moscow last month also marked the failure of the first brave, albeit flawed, attempt to create democratic institutions in a country with a long tradition of autocracy and totalitarianism. This doesn't mean that there is no chance of democracy ever taking root in Russia. But it does mean that we should brace ourselves for a protracted and rocky post-Communist transition in the former Soviet Union. We must be prepared for many setbacks and even upheavals as these countries attempt to find their way in a new and unfamiliar world. And we must ask ourselves why an elected legislature and an elected president resorted to the bullet rather than the ballot as the means of resolving their differences.

Public debate in this country has tended to depict the clash between Yeltsin and the Congress as a conflict between a democratically-elected, reform-minded president and a reactionary legislature dominated by former Communists and nationalists. There may be some truth in this, but it is a gross oversimplification. Few

people questioned the legitimacy of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies when it was elected in March 1990. Two months later, in May 1990, this supposedly retrograde body elected Boris Yeltsin as its first speaker, by a majority of 535 votes to 467. It is true that many deputies were former apparatchiks, but that description also applies to Yeltsin. It is not true that only extremists were inside the Russian White House on October 4, 1993, when it was shelled by Yeltsin's tanks. I cite the case of Oleg Runyantsev, a young legislator who was once described by my newspaper, The Washington Post, as the James Madison of Russia because of the effort he put into drafting a new, democratic constitution.

While my personal sympathies were largely with Yeltsin, particularly in the final stages of the crisis, I am against demonizing the other side. Both president and parliament committed serious mistakes and both must bear responsibility for what happened. I don't think it is very helpful to view this conflict in terms of good guys versus bad guys. In drawing lessons for the future, I prefer to focus on the failure to develop functioning democratic institutions and the inadequacy of the constitutional arrangements that Russia inherited from the Soviet era.

The first post-Communist republic of Russia lasted for just 25 months--from August 1991 to October 1993. It was a political hybrid, operating in a twilight zone between totalitarianism and democracy. Superficially, its institutions appeared to be based on democratic principles. But the political mentality and the political culture were moulded by the totalitarian past. Russian democracy during this period sometimes reminded me of a Potemkin village. The facade seemed pleasing enough, but there was nothing behind it. For a democracy to

work, you also need the proper foundations and structural supports: political parties, independent news media, the rule of law, tolerance for diverse points of view. Some people argue there are also economic pre-requisites for democracy: a minimum standard of living and a strong property-owning class. Few of these conditions were satisfied in Russia.

Most serious, in my view, was the lack of clearly-understood and widely-accepted rules of the democratic game. In the United States, the Constitution provides a mechanism for settling disputes between the different branches of government. In Russia, the constitution itself became a weapon in the brutal struggle for political power. There was no clear division of authority between executive and legislature. At Yeltsin's urging, the legislators agreed to the introduction of an American-style presidency in 1991. But they did not really surrender any of their own powers. In the Communist period, there was a slogan, All power to the Soviets. In theory at least, the Soviets--the elected councils--were sovereign. In practice, of course, this was just a facade for a one-party dictatorship. But the idea that the Soviets were all-powerful survived the collapse of Communism. The parliament felt it had the right to change the constitution whenever it wanted--and did so at least 300 times between 1991 and 1993. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the conflict between president and legislature was eventually resolved by extra-constitutional means.

So what kind of foundation is necessary, if Russia's second post-Communist republic is to avoid the unhappy fate of its predecessor? The first requirement, in my view, is a constitution capable of facilitating the unprecedented socio-economic revolution now underway

in Russia. We must remember that the birthpangs of democracy in Russia have been accompanied by growing economic and social tension, caused by the collapse of the old command economy. When post-Franco Spain and post-Pinochet Chile made their transition to democracy, free markets were already in place. Russia, by contrast, has been devastated by seven decades of central planning. Tens of thousands of state-owned companies are virtually bankrupt. Economic production has been declining by 20 or 30 per cent a year--and is likely to decline still further. To build a market economy on the ruins of central planning will require great discipline and great sacrifice from an already exhausted people.

A Congressional committee room may be the wrong place to voice such an opinion, but I believe that in such a situation the future balance of power in Russia must be tilted toward the executive. Russia needs leaders who have the political courage and the political authority to take some extremely unpopular measures. All Russian revolutions have been revolutions from above--and it is naive to expect that a transformation of such scope can be carried out by 500 or 600 legislators representing a vast range of political parties. At the same time, I think it is necessary to introduce constitutional guarantees against a return to dictatorship, even elected dictatorship. These include an effective if diminished legislature, some kind of constitutional court, and a free press.

Above all, Russia needs a constitution that all political factions will respect. There is a serious danger that the opposition will challenge the legitimacy of Yeltsin's constitution, just as Yeltsin challenged the legitimacy of the previous constitution. The legal basis for the December 12 elections is murky, to say the least.

Voters are being asked to approve the new constitution on the same day that they elect the Duma--or legislature--provided for in a constitution that they have every right to reject. To make matters even more complicated, nobody outside Yeltsin's inner circle has yet seen this draft constitution.

If the new constitution is to be taken seriously, Yeltsin must somehow show that it is a genuinely impartial document rather than a political device designed to shore up his own power. In my view, the best way to convince the Russian people that this is the case would be to set a date for new presidential elections and announce that he does not intend to run. I suspect that Yeltsin, like Mikhail Gorbachev before him, will turn out to be a transitory political figure. To steer Russia into a new era is gruelling, exhausting work--and it is unreasonable to expect even the most energetic politician to see the whole process through from start to finish. By defeating his old Communist party comrades--not once, but twice--Yeltsin has fulfilled his historical mission. But the spectacle of a charred and blackened White House has tarred the heroic image he acquired in August 1991 as a result of his vigorous defense of the same building in the name of Russia's fledgling democracy. His most valuable contribution now would be to give the second Russian republic a workable constitution--and then surrender power, gracefully, to a new generation of post-Communist politicians.

TESTIMONY OF DR. ROBERT H. KRIEBLE
CHAIRMAN OF THE KRIEBLE INSTITUTE
OF THE FREE CONGRESS FOUNDATION

TO THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN
EASTERN EUROPE

Wednesday, November 3, 1993
2:00 p.m.

Thank you very much for inviting me to testify before this committee today. As the Chairman of the Kriebel Institute, I have been bringing assistance to the former Soviet Empire since 1989, trying to help democracy, free enterprise, and capitalism take root in this region of vast potential and importance in the world. Today, there are pressing questions about the future of Russia in light of recent actions taken by President Yeltsin to dissolve the Russian Parliament and schedule the upcoming elections.

It is very easy to criticize President Yeltsin for having taken

the present. In all the 50 cities in which I have lectured, my audiences, which of course had a strong democratic bias, were obviously pro-Yeltsin. I am not aware that Yeltsin has denied participation to some parties in the election, though I do not claim to be well informed on this matter.

I realize that there is concern regarding the status of the media in Russia. Many of the papers that were barred by Yeltsin have been reopened, even though they called for an overthrow of the lawfully constituted government. The press in Russia is freer than it was three years ago and will become even freer as media outlets become market oriented like ours in the West.

Like the population, the media is divided between those strongly biased towards former Communists and those ardently championing the charge for democracy. Paul

appointing personal representatives in each of the territories. In my view, it was essential for him to curtail the obstructionist Communist Parliament by any means available. Recent events, however, in which this Parliament was dissolved, now put the focus on the new Parliamentary elections of mid-December followed by a new presidential election in June. I view this move as being the critical turning point in eliminating the major block to progress, namely the Parliament, which represented the dominant Communist influences of 1990. Polls show the magnitude of the gap between the current, democratic will of the people and the legislative actions of a totally obstructionist Parliament. I believe that the dissolution of this Parliament represents the second -- and, hopefully, final -- step into the democratization of Russia. I now expect rapid progress toward the legalization of private property and, to a lesser degree, the stabilization of the currency.

the ethnic and nationalist problems that exist and allows some freedom of action.

It is interesting to note that the further one travels from Moscow, the less significance Moscow plays in the course of political events. In the Far East, from Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Khabarovsk, on to Vladivostok, it is striking how rarely one hears reference to policy-making in Moscow.

Another issue of concern for many is the relationship of Yeltsin to the military. I do not believe that Yeltsin has acquired any significant obligation to the military or security operations because of the dissolution of Parliament and the subsequent military action at the White House.

Surprisingly, the major impact of recent events is on Russia's largest neighbor, Ukraine, which is customarily very anti-

of changes in that policy – although I am aware there was some objection to the funding of the National Endowment for Democracy. My position on Russia is that they must prepare to improve their economic status, largely with their own resources, much as Japan did following WWII. I do not believe that, particularly with most of the world in economic stagnation, other major countries will be willing to provide the necessary resources. Russians must and can do the job themselves.

RHK:JAE/DMD

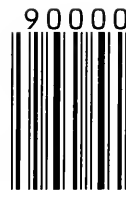
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