

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

THE SITUATION IN RUSSIA

October 1993

**Briefing of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
Washington, DC**

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CONTENTS

WITNESSES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1993

	Page
Paul Goble, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace	2
Ariel Cohen, Salvatori Fellow in Russian and Eurasian Studies, The Heritage Foundation ..	7

The fact is that Russia has never been a democracy and is not one now. Holding elections does not make you a democracy. Democracy presupposes a large number of things, including rule of law, an effective court system, and a cultural support for the view that minorities, political minorities, have the right to speak out and insist on their views. And that conflicts will be resolved in ways other than by force.

Unfortunately, that is a very rare thing in the world today. Democracy is proclaimed by many, many governments and peoples. It is practiced by very, very few. And it is unfortunately the case that countries that have not had the experiences which made possible the emergency of democracy in western Europe and North America, and the rest of the Anglo-Saxon world and Australia, and New Zealand, have not—are finding the process of going to that democracy very, very difficult.

While we can be only appalled at the behavior of some members of the parliament and their appeal for violence at the end, the fact is that both sides were prepared to use force to resolve a political conflict. And when you start using force to end the first division of power between an executive and a legislative branch in Russian history, it is very, very difficult to imagine how that contributes to the move towards democracy. Something which I argue does not now exist.

Moreover, Mr. Yeltsin's controls on the registration of parties, his near total dominance of the media, and the failure earlier this week of the authorities to register a left of center political newspaper, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, because it has been too critical of Yeltsin from the other side makes the upcoming elections on December 11th and 12th extremely problematic. Moreover, one of the interesting questions is what happens if you have a democratically elected parliament, as we are going to proclaim this, and this parliament does not vote with Mr. Yeltsin on every issue? Then what? How do you resolve those kinds of conflicts? Those are things that are not being asked.

Second, many of us expected that if either the parliament or the President attempted to resolve the division of power that this would have extraordinarily serious consequences for the integrity of the Russian state itself. While there was a parliament and a president, the regions were in the best of all possible worlds because they enjoyed competitive bidding from the center as both—as now Yeltsin and now the parliament promise them this and that in order to try to get the regions—the regional authorities across the 11 times zones of Russia to support them.

Since October 4th and Mr. Yeltsin's demand that regional administrations disband themselves and that they accept presidentially appointed governors as the rulers in place until at least December, there has been a very mixed picture of complaints. Some regions have agreed, others have not. But far more seriously, the assertion of presidential power against the parliament has not yet really had its full impact in the regions because the central authorities have not yet been able to reproject central power over those regions. Tax collections have not gone up. Draft compliance has not gone up. Obedience to central law has not increased. That being the case, the problems of regional stability of Russia are in the future.

And last, about democracy in Russia itself, the decree on the expulsion of persons of Caucasian nationality, a locution which was used only one time previously in Soviet history, *Litsa Kavkazkoy natsionalnosti* was used in 1952 and 1953 about *Litsa Yevreyskoi natsionalnosti* with respect to the Jews. It is an extraordinarily ugly thing. What is even more frightening is how popular it is.

BRIEFING ON THE SITUATION IN RUSSIA

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Wednesday, October, 27, 1993

Washington, DC.

The briefing was held at 10 a.m. in room B-352 of the Rayburn Office Building, South Capitol and C Streets, Washington, DC, David Evans, moderating.

Commission members present: Hon. Frank McCloskey.

Staff present: David Evans, Moderator, Michael Ochs, and John Finerty.

Moderator **Evans**. Good morning, and welcome to this special briefing on democracy in Russia held by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. My name is David Evans. I serve as the Senior Advisor for East European and post-Soviet Affairs at the Commission and I will act as your moderator this morning for the discussion.

This briefing is the second that we have had this week. The first on Monday dealt with the crisis in Georgia and it is one of several briefings that the Commission holds to deal with special problems and issues that arise in the fields of human rights, the process of democratization, and regional security within the purview of the CSCE.

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, commonly known as the Helsinki Commission, was established in 1976 to monitor and encourage implementation of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and subsequent Helsinki commitments. This Commission is an independent government agency chaired by Senator Dennis DeConcini and co-chaired by Congressman Steny Hoyer, which includes 18 Members of Congress and three Commissioners from the Executive Branch of the Government, from the State, Defense, and Commerce Departments.

The Commission has been particularly interested in the democratization process, particularly in the post-Soviet period in Russia, the new independent states, and East-Central Europe. As part of this interest, we have issued a series of reports, held briefings such as this, and full scale Congressional hearings. Our Chairman and Co-Chairman have traveled to the area, to Russia, and to the new independent states following up on travels that they made to the former Soviet Union.

Our particular interest in democratization follows, particularly, the Copenhagen document and the Paris Charter in 1990, and particularly subsequent commitments made by all 53—52 active, 53 total—members of the CSCE in the field of the human dimension. And that will be our focus area today.

We issue implementation reports on human dimension commitments. We did one in January of this year on the former Soviet Union and we have on the table over here four reports on East and Central Europe. They are the initial batch of reports which we are issuing on all of the East and Central European states including the three Baltic states.

Also on the table there is an article and I think an outline by Professor Cohen relating to today's discussion.

On September 21, Boris Yeltsin suspended the parliament, as you all know. And less than 2 weeks later, the night of the 3rd and the 4th of October, he used military force to attack the parliament building and capture those parliamentarians in it and opposing him, and to hold them in prison. He also, following that action, suspended the Constitutional Court, suspended regional legislatures, suspended publication of some 15 publications and one TV news program or TV show. He banned several, half a dozen, political parties from participation in the December 12 elections. And he obviously condoned the Moscow round up of Caucasians, their holding, and deportation.

Now, the U.S. Government and virtually every Western government supported Boris Yeltsin in his action to suspend parliament and also in his other actions with the rationale, obviously, that these were necessary steps to insure further democratization. And Secretary Christopher recently in Moscow reiterated that it was Boris Yeltsin's commitment to democratic reform and a free market economy that was the condition for the support. But Boris Yeltsin's actions clearly have caused great concern about the path of democracy now in Russia and particularly with regard to the forthcoming elections for the new parliament and the referendum on the new constitution which will be held December 12 and which, among others, this commission will be observing.

The question then that we are going to look at today is whether these measures that Boris Yeltsin has undertaken are in fact necessary, and therefore justifiable, to ensure the continued democratic reform movement in Russia, including the holding of the December 12 elections; or are these actions in fact a threat to democracy in that they are done by presidential decree and perhaps represent a resort to dictatorial rule.

Those are—that's the issue that we want to address today and we have two experts to discuss this matter. Mr. Paul Goble is Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He is a leading specialist on the politics and peoples of the post-Soviet successor states. Prior to joining the Carnegie Endowment he was the special advisor on Soviet nationality problems to the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and the Desk Officer for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania at the U.S. Department of State.

Professor Ariel Cohen, Salvatori Fellow, Russian and Eurasian Studies at the Heritage Foundation holds a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a Bachelor of Arts from Bar Ilan University Law School in Israel. He has written several articles on Russia and the former U.S.S.R. and his "Competing Visions, Russian Constitutional Drafts, and Beyond" was published in the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report of September 24, 1993.

Mr. Goble, perhaps you would lead off.

Mr. Goble. All right. Thank you very much.

It's a pleasure to be here and I commend you for having a session on this subject. And I thank you for including me in it. I think this is the most important development in recent months. I think how we react to it will determine a great deal of what happens, not only in Russia and in Russia's neighbors, but in the case of the United States.

The komendantski chas [curfew] was supported by 70 percent of the Moscow population according to the polls at the time. And the expulsion of Caucasians for no crime other than being Caucasians was also extremely popular. This ethnicization of politics is also extremely dangerous in a country which has 30 million people of non-Russian origin and when millions of Russians live in the 14 other former Soviet Republics.

Russia's relationship with her neighbors is also going to be profoundly affected by the events of October 4th. One of the things that has been misunderstood in the West is that the very weakness of Russia at home has been driving Russia to behave badly abroad. The idea of a good little war was of course pioneered by Nicholas II and has been used by a large number of governments. Russian difficulties at home, the difficulties of any government in Moscow being sure that it would be obeyed if it ordered the use of Russian troops against Russians are somewhat compensated by using Russian troops against other people. And we are seeing that, unfortunately, in spades and we are seeing more of it.

The Commonwealth of Independent States which many people believed or hoped would be a divorce court is turning into a new straight jacket that will allow Russia to reestablish an empire. It is not accidental that the three places where Russia has made the greatest investment in military activity, Moldova, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, are the three countries that were the most interested in exit from the Commonwealth of Independent States or who had not yet joined. And we have now seen all three of them forced back into the fold.

Isn't it interesting where the violence is? It is not because of the population per se but because of the introduction of Russian military equipment, the arming of Mr. Husseinov in Azerbaijan, the provision of MIG-29s to the Abkhaz forces in Georgia, and the continued support of the 14th Army in the Trans-Dniester region of Moldova. In fact, on October 2nd Boris Yeltsin signed an ukaz providing for the promotion of Russian officers serving in the 14th Army and providing them with additional medals for their conduct. So much for the argument that these are all rogue operations or worse, the statement of the American Ambassador in Moscow that Russia is playing a "stabilizing role" in these countries.

And we have seen how far it will go when last week President Shevardnadze of Georgia finally under Russian pressure acceded to the Commonwealth of Independent States, prepared his own press statement of what he was doing and the Russian foreign ministry simply took it away and handed one that it had prepared for him and said this is what you will read.

That is not the way independent countries behave toward other independent countries. What we are seeing is not the restoration of a Russian regional role which allows these countries some independence but rather one which will allow them less and less and for reasons I'll get to in a minute, threatens Russia itself. The concept of a Monroeskie doctrine which the West did not contest when Mr. Yeltsin stated it on February 27, has led to increasing statements by Russian officials. The ultimate I think was Mr. Kozyrev, the foreign minister, who said at the United Nations the United States should pay for it, too, which is an amazing thing that few imperial powers have asked for.

The United States' position, as we know, is moving increasingly toward the idea of Baltic exceptionalism, that the Russians will be expected to behave well in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania which we have traditionally cared more about, and that this increased American support for the Balts is a cover for the American withdrawal of any kind of support for the others, which is simply an encouragement.

The danger is precisely the reasons that the Russians specify that they should be allowed to intervene in the near abroad. The 25 million ethnic Russians. The tradition that this was all one country in the past will make it increasingly difficult as Russian power is expended for those governments to remain stable. The local Russian populations will increasingly view themselves as representatives of a newly ascended imperial arrangement. They will be viewed with increasing hostility by the local governments. The local governments in many cases will become increasingly nationalistic in response to what the Russians have—this Russian attitude. The consequence of that will be the Russian state will be presented with a situation that, as the Gorbachev foundation has said, we will be “forced to intervene.” And that it will mean that the possibility of this—of Russia simply being a regional authority in this area which we would expect will not be sustainable for very long. That Russia will be forced either to back out or to expand its role in these countries. And that will be increasingly dangerous.

I don't think there are very many people who want a single country called the Russian empire but I think the idea of running these countries through the Russian embassy is unfortunately what has been decided upon. Unfortunately I think it has been viewed with relief by so many people in the West.

But lest anyone think, as the State Department of the United States does, that this is all right because this is the price of democratization in Russia, the fact is that the kind of coercive resources which will be necessary in order to sustain this policy will make it impossible for Russia to make the shift to a free market. The defense ministry in Moscow will demand ever more resources and that the kinds of threats that will be viewed on the periphery will presuppose a Russian policy and Russian attitudes *vis-a-vis* not only these countries but the West as well to justify the continued extraction of resources to pay for coercive resources to be used in these countries, and to posit the existence of an enemy in the West. And we will discover that the expansion of Russian power over these other countries will have the effect not of leading to Russia's integration into the West and transition to democracy and free markets, but precisely the reverse.

Our present happiness with the fact that this will be the end of all these conflicts and this will all be stable and we can ignore it, sounds like one person accompanying Secretary of State Warren Christopher was quoted as saying in Kazakhstan the other day, “Foreign policy is now off page one, thank God.” The fact is that this is a very short term, short sighted approach because the consequences for Russia of allowing these policies to continue will eventually come back to haunt us.

That brings me to my third point, Russia and the United States. One of the tragedies of the American approach to the former Soviet Union and now to Russia is that we have adopted what I like to call a *People* magazine approach to politics. We have identified with leaders rather than with national interests. One of the consequences of doing that with Mr. Gorbachev in the past and Mr. Yeltsin in the present is that you find yourself unable to criticize the individual you have selected even if he changes his policies, precisely because you have so much invested in him.

The choice in Moscow was not between the perfectly good and the perfectly awful but between the less bad and the more bad. And by demonizing the parliament and by deifying Mr. Yeltsin, we have made it more difficult for Russia to make the transition. We have discouraged cooperation. We have discouraged conversations across the lines. And we have tied our hands in the future. More seriously, because we have signaled that what we really care about is the domestic policy of Russia and not Russia's policy to her neighbors,

Pages 7 & 8 are missing.

So, if you look at Russian public opinion and mood, this crisis of trust, it's hardly surprising that against the background of lack of popularity of both the president and the government, and refusal of the parliament to cooperate, Yeltsin did what he did.

There's one point where I would beg to differ with Paul and that's the assessment of and use of the terms parliament and supreme court or constitutional court. Let's not forget that the elections to the Supreme Soviet, and the Russians did not officially use the word parliament, took place in 1990 when the Communist Party was still the dominant force according to the Russian constitution. In many regions the candidates were put on the ballot exclusively by the Communist Party. And as far as the constitutional court is concerned, I met with some of the judges and looked at the background of other justices. These were Soviet police colonels, including Chairman Zorkin who is, by the way, is looking for speaking engagements in this country right now.

From my conversations with them it was absolutely clear that they have no idea what constitutional law is. And from my research and conversations in Russia, there are very, very few people in Russia who can with any amount of professionalism analyze laws and write opinions on what is constitutional and what's not constitutional.

By the way, in the poll I quoted before, 45 percent of Russians felt that an immediate adoption of a new constitution is absolutely vital for continuation of the political process.

What happened after October 4 and Yeltsin's decrees I call "reinventing government Moscow style." So, you get an executive branch-dominated, legislatively impaired, and judicially handicapped government. You have the legislature banned and you have the judicial system practically non-existent.

In addition, and Paul I think touched on that, we witness a possibility of the end of Russian Federal development which is very unfortunate. Russia had an extremely unsuccessful track record of developing local government since the Zemstva, the local governments that were allowed after the reform of Alexander II in the second half of the 19th century. And with all the criticism I may have about the Communist domination of the local governments, people like, for example, Aman Tuleev, the Siberian regional boss from Kemerovo who together with the neo-Communists from Novosibirsk are talking about the creation of the Siberian Republic. People like that do not cause sympathies on my part. However, there was a process of a formation of local and regional elites in Russia that may get interrupted by the Yeltsin decree on disbandment of the local councils and elections.

The human rights situation in Moscow as far as the expulsions are concerned is despicable. I agree with Paul. There should have been a much stronger response. The official Russian representatives giggle when I mention this to them and this is not an appropriate—not a respectable response for diplomatic or official representatives of any country.

However, on the censorship issue, it looks like there is a variety of views expressed in the printed press, the old Communist structure still controls a lot of provincial press. With some help from the Greeks, Pravda will be republished. Pravda by the way is a Greek newspaper in case you didn't know. Yannis Yannakis, a Greek Communist billionaire, believe it or not, who was involved in KGB handling of the Ethnos newspaper in the 1980's, is now a cashier for the old Communist and KGB money. And they are supporting Pravda. Ask the Pravda correspondent in Washington. He said his paycheck does arrive most of the time on time. Sometimes they screw up with the books or whatever. But they're still paid and of course they're not making money in Russia.

You are getting a new and improved party mix in Moscow. People are running from one little party or bloc, or movement, to another. November 1 is the date of the registration of the parties that will run in December elections. And you get a political split in the democratic camp, what we call democrats or reformers. You have Egor Gaidar, the first deputy prime minister leading the most radical reformist block, Vybor Rossii, or choice of Russia. There are other parties and names that are hard to keep track of so it's easier to keep track of individuals.

You have Gaidar. Shumeiko just dropped out. He is first deputy prime minister who is going to run for the upper house. Then you have another block led by Shakhrai, a very capable politician, a person who authored *many of Yeltsin's laws and decrees*. And I know Paul does not have—does not keep those to a very high standard. Then you have people who already are a little bit outside of the Yeltsin camp. People like Grigorii Yavlinsky, Ambassador Lukin is also running.

You have still in the reformist camp the party of economic freedom led by Konstantin Borovoy, a man who invented the Russian commodities exchange game and made a lot of money in the process. And the Movement for Democratic Reforms led by the former Moscow mayor Gavril Popov and Mayor Sobchak of St. Petersburg. Then you move to the center and you find people like retired colonel Zorkin, a former head of the constitutional court, and a gentleman named Aktsiuuchits in something called Christian Democratic Party. Father Gleb Yukunin, a Russian Orthodox priest in the Democratic Russia movement pointed out that it's not Christian and it's not democratic.

Then you have the Son of Civic Union still with Arkady Volsky and other non-Yeltsin, very slow reformers or what people in this town call neo-Communists in the Civic Union. Then you have the old Communist Party which is *the biggest and the strongest party* in all of Russia, led by Zyuganov. So you still have a very large spectrum of political opinion and you have people who detest Yeltsin and detest the Yeltsin regime, who have nationwide name recognition who are not necessarily very unpopular. As I mentioned, Boris Yeltsin and former vice president Rutskoi were the two most popular politicians followed by people like Egor Gaidar or like Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, Deputy Prime Minister Shakhrai, and Yavlinsky. This is the second tier of the politicians. And people like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who some call neo-Fascist, Russian imperialist, who personally gets zero point nine percent of popular support.

So you still have a wide variety of parties to choose from.

I will not speak on the issues of the Monroeski doctrine, the Russian Monroe doctrine. A, I agree with most of the things that Paul had to say. And B, I just finished a paper on this subject and I will be happy to provide it if you're interested in the subject of Russian involvement in the regional conflicts. I think Paul's assessment is pretty much adequate.

However, I would like to point out in today's Washington Post a story that showed the amount of Russian support that was needed to turn the tide around in Georgia was very few T-72 tanks which are not even *state-of-the-art* tanks. T-80 is. And three tanks only. That's all the Washington Post is talking about.

I talked the other day with Ambassador Chkheidze, the Georgian ambassador. He is telling me that all this materiel supplied to Shevardnadze was agreed upon long before it happened. The reason the Russians were holding back was because Shevardnadze was not happy to join the CIS and he was forced to join. Which caused again a terrible split

in the Georgian body politic, another split there. It's very fractured and the National Democratic Party that was the largest pro-democracy party in Georgia now is opposing Shevardnadze. This is something people who do not track Georgian politics usually do not know.

I would like to point out that Russia made a 180 degree turn on the membership of Eastern Europeans in NATO. I think it's an unfortunate development but I think we had something to do with that, with the position of Secretary Aspin took listening to some of our staunch European allies such as the Danes who were opposing the membership for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech republic in NATO. I personally think that if you expand NATO to the east, including Ukraine, you will have (A) a protection shield against Russia and for those nations. And (B) provided Russia will stay on the democratic course, you will open an opportunity to further participation of Russia in a security framework in Europe which will be a positive development.

Finally, I'll just touch real briefly on what else can we do as far as our policy is concerned. We could and we should provide support, including electoral support, for the democratic forces in Russia. The choice in September/October was between a Russia led by Boris Yeltsin and Gaidar and people who support market development and reforms who will prefer not to rush ahead with CIS integration, who think that Russia should look after its own interests.

In the poll I quoted you, 55 percent think that Russia should care about its national interests including the interests of all peoples of the Russian Federation. You have about 25 percent of public opinion which supports the ethnic Russian national interests vis-a-vis all the others. However, what you have to really look at, are the percentages of support in the political elite, in the military, in the political class if you wish, of the Russian Federation. Even there we found very little support for military intervention in the CIS. On the other hand, we all know Russian economic control of resources, oil, gas, energy resources, especially in case of the Ukraine, has proved to be a very strong weapon with which Russia can achieve its foreign policy goals.

Finally, we could clarify to the Russian leadership that unilateral implementation of a Russian Monroe Doctrine or violation of sovereignty of other new independent states and the Baltic states is totally unacceptable.

However, as we are involved in more important regions, in countries such as Haiti and Somalia, we cannot even contemplate sending troops for peace keeping missions in the CIS and we have to look at the realities of who can do that. We should and could provide multilateral security guarantees to Ukraine, facilitate Russian-Ukraine dispute resolution, and as I mentioned, nurture a NATO role in Eastern Europe and move the NATO shield further east. We should support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova in dismantling the Russian expeditionary force there.

Bands from Moldova were sent to support Khasbulatov and Ruskoi in Moscow. It proves that the strongholds of archconservatives, neo-Communists, and Russian chauvinists in places like Moldova lead to a physical threat to democrats and reformers, and the democracy process of Russia.

Finally, we should support the CSCE process in places like Georgia-Abkhazia, Karabakh, and possibly Tajikistan in order to prevent a Russian/Turkey clash, in order to prevent Iranian involvement. And I think the CSCE process has proven to be working

although probably more American involvement and support to that process should be advised.

Thank you.

Moderator Evans. Thank you very much, Dr. Cohen, and thank you both for some very stimulating comments.

I'd like to open this now for questions in our remaining half hour. And we do have a microphone up here if those of you who have questions would come up and identify yourself. I think there's one in the back.

Mr. Abbruzze. Peter Abbruzze, House Foreign Affairs Committee. I'm going to inquire about the ethics of CSCE.

My sense is that the CSCE has done nothing in Moldova, Georgia, and those places because the only thing that really has introduced any element of stability is the successful effort of Russians to force them into the CIS. If Russia achieves this objective of forcing them into the CIS, the CSCE can then claim a success but it seems like a success out of failure.

Moderator Evans. Who would like to take that?

Mr. Goble. I would like to take part of that.

Moldova was not a country riven by ethnic conflict unless and until the 14th Army decided to back a Russian minority in Transdnierster—24.5 percent of the population. Georgia is a country with enormous problems but the conflicts in Georgia would not have gotten off the ground in the way that they did without Russian supplied ammunition to the Ossetians and to the Abkhazians.

Azerbaijan had a democratic set of elections. Not perfect but a set of elections with a democratic parliament and a democratically elected president who was overthrown by a militia that was armed by the Russian army. And what we have seen is no proof that we may get a new level of stability as a result of being pushed into the commonwealth.

But let us not kid ourselves that the image of the periphery of the former Soviet Union as being a bubbling pot of trouble that Russia has to respond to. Russia has been causing a lot of that problem. And that the Abkhaz weren't going anywhere with only 16 percent of the population of Abkhazia until they were getting arms, including MIG-29s which are not readily available in most 7-11s, until the Russian army did it. And so I think that the new level of stability is the stability and peace of a rather unpleasant kind, of a prison house if you will.

Second, I have written and believe that the—what we are seeing in the question of Karabakh with respect to the CSCE is that we are going to see something very much like what we saw in the Middle East settlement. Namely, it's going to be worked outside of organizations we're involved with and then we will take credit for it. That in fact the Russians are very interested in making sure there is a settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan and with themselves as the guarantors of that settlement. And maybe the CSCE will take credit for it but in fact the negotiations that have taken place in the so-called Minsk process have not contributed a great deal and were not advancing very far until the restoration of Russian power and Russian bilateral agreements—or Russian bilateral arrangements with these two—three parties, two countries.

So, I think one of the Russian agendas in the Caucasus is to limit the role not only of Turkey, which they have done very well by what they did to Mr. Elchibey, but also to limit the involvement of the West through the CSCE process. And I think the restora-

tion of Russian influence in these countries is going to make it more, not less, easy—Or, more difficult, not less difficult, for the CSCE to play a role. And in that I completely agree with you.

Moderator **Evans.** Ariel, would you like to comment on that?

Dr. Cohen. I think that Russia playing a UN-like role has no basis in international law as far as I can tell. Russia unilaterally exercising not only the peace keeping but the peace making functions the way they made peace in Tajikistan, for example, by introducing a division. A Russian division is something like 8 to 10 thousand people. The Russian beefed up the 201st Division in Tajikistan and the last numbers I've seen were 20,000. So we're talking about sending the military, an army corps, into Tajikistan which sometimes shoots civilians. Statements by Boris Yeltsin that the Tajik-Afghan border is a Russian border were published. Where did this come from? I used to have all my sympathy for Andrei Kozyrev. He wrote a lot of very nice op-eds in the New York Times. Andrei Kozyrev recently stated that Russia should make an effort to keep an array of geo-strategic or geo-political assets it took several hundred years to amass.

AUDIENCE: To conquer.

Dr. Cohen. To conquer.

Well, but if he didn't say to conquer, we know how this geo-political assets came into being in any event. We've all read Russian history. So I think the necessity of a CSCE process is high because otherwise the alternative is going to be a free for all that will result in the imperial—in imperial domination that will demand this domestic allocation of resources.

And by the way, apropos the former Supreme Soviet, they came up with a budget because of military allocations and continuation of military production that created a budget deficit that was 25 percent of the Russian GNP. This is an inflationary measure from what I remember from my ECON 101.

So, these multilateral processes and insistence on observance of international law and diplomatic pressure on the side of the United States in my opinion are necessary to preserve a semblance of a civilized involvement of Russia in the near abroad.

Mr. Goble. A footnote to that. Ariel has talked about how limited some of these forces are. Well, it only took four tanks in Moscow. One of the things that we have seen, as Crane Brinton reminded us in his *Anatomy of Revolution*, is that as revolutions proceed, people opt out of politics. As a result, you get an increasingly extremist element. And the amount of force that needs to be used to put one or another extremist agenda in place gets smaller and smaller. In many of these countries, including Russia, the amount of force that you need to throw into the game to win is very, very small. Four tanks in Moscow, seven tanks in Georgia. We're talking about very limited amounts of weaponry.

One of the consequences of this situation is that those of us who believe that this is part of a general strategy—people said, well, why aren't there a hundred tanks or a hundred planes? Because there don't have to be. You don't need that much force the way the Russians have now come supposedly to Shevardnadze's aid, they didn't according to the newspaper, they didn't even have to—they only had to show themselves. They didn't actually have to fire.

Dr. Cohen. I saw reports that they actually deployed a paratroop brigade along the Poti-Tbilisi railroad which the Georgian Ambassador yesterday denied. But I've seen our RFE/RL reports and I trust the RFE/RL more than I trust the Georgian ambassador.

Moderator Evans. I think there's a question in the back?

Ms. Carley. Patricia Carley, U.S. Institute of Peace.

Paul, you addressed in your remarks, I think, two different things entirely. One was Russia's increasing involvement in the "near abroad," as they like to call it, and I agreed with your remarks on that subject. The differences between Yeltsin and Ruskoi in terms of their policies towards the other former Soviet republics are not so great as we would like to think.

The other matter was what happened in Moscow between the President and the parliament. I'm wondering, since you were quite critical of our response to what happened during those couple of weeks, what you think we should have done? In other words, do you really believe that there was an equal legitimacy between Yeltsin and the parliament? Do you think that we should have in some way supported the parliament's right to exist to the end of its term? I know that you said that we shouldn't have celebrated his demise and maybe that in fact we should have just quietly lamented or said nothing. Given what we knew about the makeup of the parliament and its relative, I would say, illegitimacy, certainly relative to Yeltsin who is in my opinion as democratically elected a leader as Russia has ever seen, what really were our options? What should we have done if we shouldn't have supported Yeltsin the person, of whom you are also critical?

Mr. Goble. I believe that the United States would have been far better served to have adopted the public statements of such countries as Germany and Sweden, which is that we hope this very difficult problem could be resolved both peacefully and democratically.

And I think that the fact that the President of the United States called the Chancellor of Germany and told him that wasn't good enough and Germany would have to say they were for Yeltsin, period, is a very unfortunate thing to have done.

I certainly am happier to have Boris Yeltsin in power than Mr. Ruskoi or Mr. Khasbulatov. But I think we should be evaluating our relations with other countries on the basis of national interests rather than on the basis of personalities because I think we have now seen once again when we support somebody so totally that we tie our hands with respect to criticizing things subsequently. I believe that had we taken a position much like Germany and Sweden, we could have welcomed the fact that there were going to be elections and all this good thing but we could have remained critical of things like the expulsion of the Caucasians. And I think that's important. That's one part of the answer to your question.

The second part is that I remember in 1992 how angry some Americans were when the Prime Minister of Great Britain indicated how much he wanted to see George Bush reelected. At some point, there is a question about the notion of an American anointment of someone in Russia on either side. One of my biggest concerns about our involvement in the former Soviet space is that we have inverted, as I said in my remarks, the traditional concern about other countries from being concerned about how they behave internationally to how they behave domestically. We're more worried about inflation rates and the state bank, and privatization in Russia than we are about Russia's behavior with respect to her neighbors. That is an inversion of the traditional involvement of countries

in international affairs which have been more—far more concerned about how countries behave internationally than how they behave domestically.

I was sitting in Jurmala, Latvia when Mr. Yeltsin made his statement on September 21. What we saw was a country going through terrible difficulties. It is not yet a democracy. It is not yet a free market economy. We should say we are for democratization and we believe Yeltsin best articulates that. That's different than saying we are for Yeltsin who we believe is supportive of democracy.

It is my view, it's obviously a tiny minority view, but it is my view that we ought to support principles and then support individuals who are carrying out those principles rather than support an individual because we believe he's supporting it. The way you say things matters. Words matter. And I think on this one we ended up, as we have so often in the case of our dealings with Russian leaders, with our hands tied because we have said, Yeltsin, Yeltsin, Yeltsin, Yeltsin, Yeltsin, Yeltsin, Yeltsin. And then when Yeltsin does things that we can't possibly approve of, we have very little place to go.

I saw two Caucasians arrested in front of the Kievskii Vokzal in Moscow, and it was done in a particularly brutal and nasty way. That's an outrage. And when I came back from Moscow this time I expected to find some record of at least having a press guidance at the State Department that this isn't what we intended. We didn't see that.

Again I'm certainly happier with Yeltsin than with the others although I'm not sure it's my choice because I'm not a citizen of the Russian Federation. But I think it's important for us to support principles and then support individuals as derivative of that than to support individuals and then discover that they do things that we don't like. We got in that trap with Gorbachev. I think it's unfortunate that we may very well be getting in the same trap with Boris Yeltsin. People change and they don't always do what we like.

Moderator Evans. Ariel, did you want to comment on Patricia Carley's question?

Dr. Cohen. I basically agree with all Paul said. In addition I would like to point out that Boris Yeltsin is a politician and his government, his administration, is a coalition. There are people like Gaidar. There are people like Shakhrai although Shakhrai is already more towards the center of the Russian politics.

In other words, there are people who are very close to our notions of democracy, human rights, rule of law, private property, and so forth. There are other people. There are people like Oleg Lobov who is a Yeltsin loyalist, who is a military industrial Soviet style, old Soviet style boss. There are people like General Grachev who stood by Yeltsin. I discern some lack of enthusiasm in bringing the troops to shoot at the White House, that until then was the symbol of Russian democracy. And I have a three ruble commemorative coin that has the Russian White House stamped on it as a symbol of Russian democracy. The commemorating 2 years of the failed coup of 1991.

There are people like General Golushko, the former KGB chief of Ukraine who was nominated 3 days before the announcement of the dissolution of parliament, of the Supreme Soviet, on September 21, replacing Barannikov who went over to the White House. So there are old style Soviet bureaucrats, nomenklatura types who are supporting Yeltsin for whatever reasons, for reasons of their political survival, the perks, or because they like Boris Nikolaevich or because they drink with him.

It's also a generational thing. When you look at who supports Yeltsin and people in their 60's, it's a different story than people in their 30's and maybe early 40's.

If I may just project a little bit into the future, I think that we are witnessing a process of democratization. We are witnessing a process of development of private property. And it's my hope that when democracy and private property take root in Russia, the proclivity to get involved aggressively in what they call the near abroad, the former empire, will be less rather than more. You find evidence for that again in the polls.

So, this is hope that we will in 10, 15, 20, years from now will see a more democratic, more capitalist, less aggressive, and more stable Russia.

Thank you.

Moderator Evans. Before we go on, I'd like to welcome Congressman Frank McCloskey, a Commissioner on our Commission.

Frank, do you have any questions you'd like to make?

Mr. McCloskey. Only to remark that I am interested in and fascinated by the discussion so far.

Moderator Evans. Michael?

Mr. Ochs. I'm Michael Ochs, Helsinki Commission.

Paul, sometime in 1992 the Commission had a hearing at which you were a speaker. And at that point you said, you described Boris Yeltsin "as the most pro-non-Russian Russian leader that we had ever seen." Today you've described him as a person whose views on these questions, if I understood correctly, are more or less identical to those of—well, close to those of Alexander Rutskoi. I don't raise this—I don't bring up what you said a year ago to try and trap you or anything, but how do you explain this change?

Mr. Goble. Well, people in this building or this part of Washington have a saying, where you stand depends on where you sit. And in 1990 and 1991 when Mr. Yeltsin was engaged in a contest between himself as President of the Russian Federation, the RSFSR, with Mr. Gorbachev who was the President of the Soviet Union, one of the ways that you build political power and deal with undermining Mr. Gorbachev was to be incredibly solicitous to the non-Russians. That's one.

Two, Yeltsin understood something that Gorbachev didn't understand, which is at least when you were in a relatively weak position, the best thing to do to preempt nationalism is to make concessions to it. His famous statement in Tataria—take as much independence as you can handle—after his election as President.

Now Mr. Yeltsin's problems are very different. And the West has made it clear that market reform and control of the currency is the thing we care most about. But that is something which a lot of people in Russia are not happy about because it has incredibly negative consequences for their standard of living. One way to deal with the situation is to make people feel good about Russia being a great power, of Russia taking care of its own, of Russia demonstrating—because in 1992 Russia was going through an incredible trauma to a certain extent that continues. But they were in shock. They were shell-shocked.

The reason they were—that Kozyrev and company were so prepared to agree with the Americans in 1992 was because they didn't know what to do. This world, their world, had collapsed on them.

Now, I think, you see Mr. Yeltsin as a politician. He had a reason for doing what he did in 1991 and 1990. I think he has a reason for what he's doing now. And that makes it all the more important what we say and do because we are one, only one, of the factors in his calculation. If we made it clear that we cared a lot more about democratization than

market reform, and there was some give in our aid—in how much money we would give in aid depending on—that we would be less obsessed with the market reform and control of the state bank and more worried about democratization and local government development. Or, the relations with countries that we have embassies in, then his calculation changes.

I think we're dealing with people and Yeltsin's an ex-member of the Politburo, too, who are going through an incredible evolution. Yeltsin has not had an experience on the road to Damascus, but I think he is evolving. I think this notion, and that's one of the things I'm very frightened about by our tendency to overpersonalize these relations, is that Yeltsin is a politician. A very competent politician who has played it very cleverly. And I stand by what I said a year ago and would argue that under certain circumstances Yeltsin would do it again.

But at the present time the constellation of forces that he faces in Moscow and in the Russian Federation are such that he has a different policy. That ought to tell us that if a man can shift from being a convinced Marxist-Leninist in 1980 to a pro-Balt in 1991, to a man who himself is talking about the restoration of some kind of neo-empire, that we're dealing with somebody who is very much in the process of going through an education rather than someone who in the bad old days was a Communist, and now he is a democrat.

I think what you've got is a politician who is responding as people do to the various pressures. His government isn't all of a piece. I think if you ask Boris Yeltsin what he's going to do with respect to Ukraine in 1995, he couldn't tell you. He might be able to tell you what his preferences are, but he couldn't tell you what would be politically possible within the constellation of Russian and Muscovite politics.

And I think that fact is both encouraging because it means you really are getting a kind of proto-democratic politics. I won't call it democratic politics. But proto-democratic politics of groups putting pressure to bear. It is profoundly disturbing because it makes it very difficult to say where he will be a year from now. I mean, if you're kind enough to ask me to come and speak here again a year from now, I would be delighted to be able to come and say once again Boris Nikolaevich is the most pro-non-Russian leader in the history of that country. And I have no problem saying that was true then and this is true now.

But precisely because there is this pattern, I don't want to sign on to Boris Yeltsin no matter what. And that's what I'm afraid the kinds of public statements we have made as a government do. That's dangerous.

Moderator Evans. Ariel, do you want to comment on that? We have another question.

Dr. Cohen. I'll pass.

Moderator Evans. I think there's a question in the back.

Audience Member. I'm a Senate staffer.

My first question is whether or not Boris Yeltsin's supporters are going to win the election? And if so, how? And the third question is, my recollection is that Russia presently is a parliamentary government in which members of the parliament serve in the bureaucracy, don't they? And if that's the case, are they going to control the bureaucracy? Will Yeltsin control the bureaucracy as a result of the election?

Mr. Goble. The electoral process is being structured that the people who are more or less positively disposed to Yeltsin will be in the majority but that the parliamentary

process by itself will lead to people opposing Yeltsin to demonstrate their independence. I think that the polls right now I don't take—put much stock in because I think there's going to be a lot of changes between now and December 11th.

Second, the bureaucracy plays an amazingly large role. Clearly the defense industry, the military industrial complex, and the army which came through for Boris Yeltsin on October 4th, and that's the view that they are putting forward, are now making demands. And they are big players.

I think the bureaucracy's going to play a big role in that country for a long time to come. Vastly larger than even the bureaucracy plays here. And that that will slow things down—especially if the military as it is now insisting in its public statements has sort of first claim on resources, both in terms of the foreign policy and because of “we supported Boris Nikolaevich when it mattered.”

So, I mean, very shortly that's where I would—how I would answer your question.

Moderator Evans. Ariel, do you want to comment on the election?

Dr. Cohen. I still think that it's too early to predict. The big question that I have is the possibility of a coalition of former Communist party which is 600,000 strong, and people who call themselves Centrists which in our parlance is Russian Imperialists. They are statist in terms of the economy. People like Civic Union. People like Christian Democrats. And you can have a parliament that will have a majority of people who are opposing the continuation of what we call a radical reform process.

In addition, the possibility of turmoil in the parliament, of people jumping from a party to another party, from a coalition to another coalition, of fights over their power vis-a-vis the executive. We saw this happening in the previous reincarnation of the legislature in Russia. The turmoil, the lack of professionalism.

Yeltsin keeps talking about the intellectualism and the culture of the members of parliament but let's face it, Comrades, these people will be elected from Perm, and from Irkutsk, and Yakutsk, and Novosibirsk, and so forth. The Russian political class is still the product of the old Soviet Union and the old Soviet political system. You will not get the British House of Lords there exactly.

And as a result, there will be a lot of squabbling. There will be a lot of bad laws created and even worse, what they call podzakonnoe zakonodatelstvo, the instructions. There is a law which says everybody has a right to do everything they want and then they have the internal instruction, in many cases unpublished, that says, yes, but in this case and in this case, and this case, and that case. And it goes on ad infinitum when they don't have a right. Where the bureaucrat has a say in how they're going to exercise their right. This kind of process, unfortunately, is going to continue, which again has dire implications for the process of economic and democratic reform.

Moderator Evans. There was one more question over here. We're running out of time but just go ahead.

Audience Member. Jayhun Molla-Zade. Until recently, I was with the Azerbaijan Embassy, in Washington.

My question is: We have witnessed these days the debates about the return of President Aristide to Haiti. Some people argued that we should support his return, others said we shouldn't. So the U.S. administration is insisting on the return of the democratically elected ally President Aristide. But at the same time, we also witnessed the replacement of democratically elected presidents both in Georgia and in Azerbaijan. And both newly

elected, so-called presidents were recognized by the U.S. Government. And there is no insistence on the return of either Gamsakhurdia or Elchibey in these republics. Is it because of Russia and, as many democrats in those republics think, that the West and the United States are giving up these republics to Russia and this view is based on Russia's interest, or simply because the United States has no interest in these republics? Even though, for example, Azerbaijan has enormous oil reserves and is located on the borders with Iran.

Thank you.

Mr. Goble. Clearly we are selective in our indignation. There were, as I understand it, some protests with respect to the displacement of the president of Azerbaijan by the U.S. Government although there was no insistence that he be returned. And unfortunately in the case of both the president of Azerbaijan and the president of Georgia, the American government took the view that these two elected presidents were inconvenient because they were both interested in having their countries behave as countries rather than branch offices of Russia. I think it is an incredibly shortsighted policy. There is an enormous risk that at some point this will lead to a major conflict with Ukraine which is the one country that can resist. And it will promote the continued militarization of Russia.

Moreover it will discredit the United States in influence. And even if the Russians are able to create this—the near abroad run through the Russian embassies as a kind of people's democracies that's not the end of the story. The consequences will not be nice. This will be an incredibly unstable part of the world, unstable precisely because of Russian involvement and Russian displacement of democratically elected leaders.

But as you have seen in this town, there is a willingness to describe as a democrat somebody who uses tanks against his own parliament. When I was in Moscow I was talking to an American journalist who said, you know, the Ukrainians are really doing terribly. The Ukraine is just a disaster. And I said, well, it depends what you look at.

The last time I looked, Mr. Kravchuk had not used the army against his parliament. The last time I looked the Ukrainians had not decided to expel everyone who looked different from Kiev. It's a question of what you care about.

Unfortunately, we are going down a road which not only leads potentially to a serious conflict between Ukraine and Russia, but also to a diminution of American influence not only in this area as people realize that we didn't mean what we said but also elsewhere in the world—an increasing cynicism about what the United States stands for.

Moderator Evans. You want to comment on that briefly?

Dr. Cohen. I think after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, we are if you remember your Hobbes, facing the Leviathan. Like Leviathan, we're back to the dilemma of how important is instability and chaos, and what price we are ready to pay not to look at it, not to see 120,000 refugees from Abkhazia. Not to see the tragedy of Bosnia and other places. And I think that there is an instinctive desire to abdicate our responsibility and let the Russians run the show.

To answer your question, I think you're right on both accounts. I think the United States—(a) doesn't care as much about this part of the world and (b), it is willing to give Russia carte blanche to get involved in all of the areas of the former empire with the exception of the Baltic States, hopefully. And the Ukraine being a gray area. I think there are a lot of people in this town who don't care about Ukraine and that's why I have to

go to be at noon at the panel that I am hosting at the Heritage Foundation on U.S./Ukrainian relations.

Moderator Evans. We have time for one more concluding question from Congressman McCloskey.

Mr. McCloskey. Thank you.

I see intuitively, Dr. Goble, the truth of everything you're saying. I share your fears and concerns. I guess where I'm perplexed on this is with the State Department. I'm not asking for a personal judgment here. I'm in enough of a dog house right now but——

Mr. Goble. I've been there a long time myself, too.

Mr. McCloskey. I'm a generalist in the field, and I'm someone who was 64th in a class of 126 in high school and who never having aspired to being a Rhodes Scholar, I see someone like Strobe Talbott over at the State Department, and I hold him in total awe due to his knowledge of Russian culture, Russian history, the Russian language, and nuclear strategy. He's a key player, obviously, in this administration. At recent hearings, Mr. Lantos and I and others raised concerns along the lines you have and, as it happens, this was the very day that Yeltsin abolished the parliament.

I'm not looking for any kind of a negative rap on the administration, but what is the problem over at the State Department? Can't Talbott see this? Isn't someone raising this within the Department?

Mr. Goble. Oh, people are raising it within. I think the problem is not Ambassador Talbott himself, but the position that has been created that he occupies. The fact is that we are dealing with the former Soviet Union minus the Baltic States as more of an entity, a single entity and more isolated from the State Department process than we ever did when the Soviet Union was the Soviet Union.

Ambassador Talbott's people, those people who work on the so-called independent states and commonwealth affairs, report through him not through the Bureau of European Affairs. One of the consequences of that is that you're going to sum up the interests in that part of the world, of Russia plus all the others, inevitably the Russian interest is going to be the most important. That's just the way it is. If you were dealing with Central Asia as part of the Near East Bureau or with Ukraine as part of the Eastern European Division of the Bureau of European Affairs at State, you would have entirely different kind of set of interests that would articulated.

I have great respect for Strobe Talbott but I think the job he was given, wherever he would have—with obviously his own Russian interests rather than, shall we say, broader interests about the other countries here, who are 150 million people after all, and the fact that the Russians have 45,000 nuclear warheads, 15,000 more than they ever acknowledged, necessarily means that we focus on Russia.

Also, I think there's another thing at work here. An awful lot of people in this town, at the State Department, the Pentagon, and elsewhere, invested a great deal in Boris Yeltsin because they saw Boris Yeltsin when he was in opposition to Gorbachev as very much a knight on a white horse.

There were a lot people in the bureaucracy like that: I was one of them. I thought Yeltsin was wonderful. Compared to Gorbachev, he's a walk in the park. But, I mean, Gorbachev's foundation 1 month—6 weeks ago issued a report suggesting the dispatch of the Russian army into Estonia, Latvia, North Kazakhstan, and Eastern Ukraine. That's not helpful in my view. And it's certainly not what Mr. Yeltsin is doing.

But I think that there is a debate within the administration. The Pentagon is not at the same place as the State Department. But the way in which this administration has chosen to structure the formation of policy about this part of the world is unfortunate because it necessarily means that the Russian interests will be given disproportionate weight.

I'm very sorry that Strobe Talbott did not want to be Ambassador in Moscow. But I think that the current arrangement is an unfortunate one. And if the U.S. News and World Report of this week is to be believed, Mr. Clinton plans not only to run this part of the world through a czar of sorts but to have other regions of the world dealt with this way.

One of the things that will do is prevent the introduction of competing ideas that are a normal process of the State Department, Pentagon, and intelligence community process. I think that we will live to regret that hegemonic regionalist approach we're adopting.

Mr. McCloskey. Basically you're saying that Talbott, as a czar of sorts, cannot deal with and develop the nuances and policies that need to be developed?

Mr. Goble. The Office of Independent States and Commonwealth Affairs—the old office of Soviet Affairs is no longer really part of the Bureau of European Affairs. It reports through Talbott, not through the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. That's the problem.

Thank you very much.

Moderator Evans. Thank you. We're going to have to bring this meeting to a close. I want to thank both Paul Goble and Ariel Cohen for a very lively and informative discussion.

I'd like to mention before closing that the Commission will be holding a full scale hearing on events in Russia and their implications for future U.S. policy. It will be next Wednesday, November 3, at 2 in room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Thank you all very much for coming.

[Whereupon, the briefing was concluded at 11:46 a.m.]