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FM ST PETERSBURG
TO DESKBY 280830Z FCO
TELNO 36
OF 271410Z SEPTEMBER 93
AND TO DESKBY 280830Z MOSCOW
INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK, UKREP BRUSSELS, UKDEL NATO,
INFO IMMEDIATE ALL CSCE POSTS, TOKYO, CABINET OFFICE
INFO IMMEDIATE HM TREASURY, MODUK

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MY TELNO 35: RUSSIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: MEETING OF
REGIONS IN ST PETERSBURG

SUMMARY

1. FURTHER DETAILS OF THE MEETING OF RUSSIA'S REGIONS ON
26 SEPTEMBER. LESS THAN HALF REPRESENTED, MOSTLY BY
COUNCILS. THE FOCUS ON ELECTIONS FOR BOTH PRESIDENT AND
PARLIAMENT. AND ON A KEY ROLE FOR THE COUNCIL OF THE
FEDERATION.

DETAIL

2. I HAVE NOW OBTAINED TEXTS. [REDACTED] I HAVE ALSO
SPOKEN TO ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS (MOISEEV, DEPUTY
CHAIRMAN OF ST PETERSBURG CITY COUNCIL SOVIET) AND ANOTHER
CITY OFFICIAL INVOLVED. (TEXTS AND LISTS OF SIGNATORIES BY
FAX TO MOSCOW ONLY).

3. 40 ELECTED BODIES WERE REPRESENTED, BUT THE
ADMINISTRATIONS OF ONLY 6 REGIONS (KALMYKIA, BRYANSK, VOLOGDA,
LENINGRAD, RYAZAN, AND THE CITY OF ST PETERSBURG). THE
LESS THAN 50 PER CENT TURNOUT OF REGIONS IS ATTRIBUTED TO
SHORT NOTICE, TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES AND SOME POLITICAL
RESERVATIONS. A FURTHER FACTOR BEHIND SMALL NUMBERS FROM
ADMINISTRATIONS WERE INSTRUCTIONS FROM CHERNOMYRDIN NOT
TO LEAVE THEIR POSTS. THE INITIATORS OF THE MEETING WERE
THE SUPREME SOVIET OF KARELIA, AND THE COUNCILS OF
ST PETERSBURG, LENINGRAD OBLAST AND KRASNODAR. THE
ST PETERSBURG ADMINISTRATION TOOK AN ACTIVE PART IN DRAFTING

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THE DOCUMENTS, AND MAYOR SOBCHAK IN STEERING DISCUSSIONS.

[REDACTED] SHAKHRAI WAS
PRESENT AS AN OBSERVER.

4. THREE DOCUMENTS RESULTED:

- (A) A DECLARATION
- (B) A DRAFT TREATY
- (C) AN APPEAL TO THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT AND MAYOR OF MOSCOW TO RECONNECT THE WHITE HOUSE TO COMMUNICATIONS LINKS AND UTILITIES.

5. THE DECLARATION CALLED FOR

- (A) SIMULTANEOUS PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BY THE END OF THE YEAR
- (B) A COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION TO BE SUMMONED BY 1 OCTOBER WITH POWERS TO ORGANISE THE ELECTIONS.
- (C) SUSPENSION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND OF PARLIAMENT SINCE 21 SEPTEMBER (IE INCLUDING YELTSIN'S DECREE SUSPENDING PARLIAMENT) AND A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE.

6. THE DRAFT TREATY, COVERING MUCH THE SAME GROUND, WOULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR ESTABLISHING THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION. THE TREATY IS SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION BY THE REGIONS. IT WOULD LOSE FORCE ONCE THERE WERE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT AND PARLIAMENT.

7. THERE ARE HINTS, CONFIRMED BY ONE OF THOSE PRESENT, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION WAS SEEN AS HAVING A ROLE INFLUENCING GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS IN THE INTERIM PERIOD AS WELL AS ORGANISING THE ELECTIONS. BUT THE LATTER WOULD BE THE MAIN FUNCTION.

8. AT THE MEETING THERE HAD BEEN SOME FIRMER ANTI-YELTSIN VOICES, INCLUDING A CALL FOR THE CONGRESS OF PEOPLE'S DEPUTIES TO ORGANISE ELECTIONS. ONE IDEA, WHICH DID NOT GET MUCH SUPPORT, WAS FOR INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS TO MONITOR THE PROCESS. ANOTHER FOCUS OF DISCUSSION HAD BEEN THE STATUS OF THE MEETING (THE DOCUMENTS ONLY REFER TO QUOTE REPRESENTATIVES UNQUOTE OF THE REGIONS, NOT FULLY EMPOWERED). BUT GENERALLY VIEWS HAD BEEN CLOSE. ALL WERE AGREED ON THE NEED FOR ELECTIONS FOR BOTH PRESIDENT

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AND PARLIAMENT, AND ON A ROLE FOR THE REGIONS IN THE FORM OF THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION. THE QUESTION WAS WHEN AND EXACTLY HOW.

9. THE INITIATING GROUPS WERE NOW CIRCULARISING ALL THE REGIONS. ACCORDING TO MOISEEV THIS EVENING SOME HAD SIGNED UP TODAY (EG SARATOV). HE HAD HAD AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD CALL A MEETING OF THE REGIONS AT THE END OF THE WEEK IN MOSCOW.

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MY TELNO 34: RUSSIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: SITUATION
 IN ST PETERSBURG

SUMMARY

1. MORE ANTI-YELTSIN DEMONSTRATIONS MAKE LITTLE IMPACT.
 VICE-MAYOR SUSPENDED BY SOBCHAK FOR PRO-RUTSKOI ACTIVITIES.
 CITY COUNCIL DEBATE CONTINUES.

DETAIL

2. THE MEETING YESTERDAY OF REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME OF RUSSIA'S
 REGIONS RAISED ST PETERSBURG'S POLITICAL PROFILE (SEE MY TELNOS
 35 AND 36). IT ALSO BROUGHT OUT THE PRO-COMMUNIST
 DEMONSTRATORS: ABOUT A THOUSAND MARCHED TO THE VENUE OF THE
 MEETING.

3. SOME TWO HUNDRED PROTESTERS GATHERED THIS MORNING BY THE
 MAYOR'S OFFICE AGAINST MAYOR SOBCHAK'S TREATMENT OF THE VICE-
 MAYOR (SEE BELOW). THE DEMONSTRATORS WERE STOPPED AT THE
 PERIMETER OF THE PARK WHICH SURROUNDS BOTH THE MAYOR'S OFFICE
 AND OUR CONSULATE. THIS INVOLVED RIOT POLICE AND BARRIERS
 IN FRONT OF THE CONSULATE. THESE DISAPPEARED AS WE OPENED
 FOR BUSINESS. WE HAVE NO REASON TO THINK THAT THERE WAS
 ANY THREAT SPECIFICALLY AGAINST US. (APART FROM ONE ANGRY
 TELEPHONE CALL ABOUT OUR PRIME MINISTER'S SUPPORT FOR YELTSIN
 WE HAVE RECEIVED NO PROTESTS. NOR HAVE THE AMERICANS, WHO IN
 THE PAST HAVE BEEN A FREQUENT TARGET.) THE DEMONSTRATORS
 APPEAR TO HAVE PASSED WITHOUT ANY SERIOUS DISTURBANCES.

4. FOLLOWING AN APPEARANCE ON THE ANTI-YELTSIN NEWS

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PROGRAMME 600 SECONDS VICE MAYOR SHCHERBAKOV HAS BEEN SUSPENDED BY SOBCHAK AND DENIED ACCESS TO HIS OFFICE AND STAFF. SHCHERBAKOV, WHO IS AN ADVISER TO KHASBULATOV, HAS BEEN TAKING A PRO-RUTSKOI LINE. AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL HE COULD NOT, HOWEVER, BE SACKED. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT RUTSKOI/KHASBULATOV HAVE ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS RELIEVING SOBCHAK OF HIS POST. ANY SUCH ORDERS ARE CERTAINLY NOT BEING IMPLEMENTED HERE.

5. DEBATE CONTINUES TODAY IN THE CITY COUNCIL AFTER A DAY'S MANOEUVRINGS ON FRIDAY. THE COUNCIL'S LEGAL DEPARTMENT ADVISED -IRONICALLY - THAT THE RESOLUTION OF THE SMALL COUNCIL AGAINST YELTSIN (MY FIRST TUR) HAD NO LEGAL VALIDITY UNDER THE RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION. A MAJORITY IN THE CITY COUNCIL VOTED TO OVERTURN THE RESOLUTION (114 TO 91), BUT THEY WERE 3 VOTES SHORT OF THE NUMBER REQUIRED BY THE COUNCIL'S RULES. IN OTHER VOTES, HOWEVER, THOSE AGAINST YELTSIN'S SUSPENSION OF PARLIAMENT CAN MUSTER ABOUT 140 VOTES, WHILE THOSE SUPPORTING THE PRESIDENT MANAGE UNDER 120.

6. LIFE OTHERWISE GOES ON NORMALLY. THE CITY COUNCIL FOUND TIME TO APPROVE THE CITY'S BUDGET. THE ONLY FLAGS AND CROWDS IN PALACE SQUARE ON A FINE DAY YESTERDAY WERE AROUND THE FINISH LINE OF A MARATHON RACE, WON BY SOMEONE CALLED ANDROPOV - PROBABLY NOT THOUGHT BY EVEN SUPERSTITIOUS RUSSIANS TO BE A HARBINGER OF A RETURN TO THE PAST. MORE SYMBOLIC PERHAPS WAS THE LONE RUNNER DRESSED IN CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORM CARRYING THE BLACK, YELLOW AND WHITE FLAG OF THE EXTREME RIGHT: HE CAME IN WAY BEHIND THE LEADERS.

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MOSCOW TELNO 1658:
RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: THE REGIONS

SUMMARY

1. YELTSIN DEFENDS HIS SUPPORTERS IN THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVES. HIS ADVISERS PLAY DOWN THE PETERSBURG CONFERENCE, BUT THE IDEA OF SIMULTANEOUS PRESIDENTIAL/PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IS STILL ATTRACTING SUPPORT. REGIONS AWAIT COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION MEETING.

DETAIL

2. YELTSIN HAS MOVED TO SECURE HIS POSITION IN THE REGIONS BY SIGNING A DECREE ON 27 SEPTEMBER FORBIDDING REPLACEMENT OF THE REGIONAL HEADS OF ADMINISTRATIONS (THE EXECUTIVE) - EXCEPT BY THE PRESIDENT - BEFORE THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY (THE FUTURE PARLIAMENT): FEDERAL OFFICIALS COMPLICIT IN THE DISMISSAL OF HEADS OF ADMINISTRATION WILL BE DISMISSED. PRIME MINISTER CHERNOMYRDIN HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH IMPLEMENTING THE DECREE.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, YELTSIN'S SUPPORTERS HAVE SOUGHT TO PLAY DOWN THE ST PETERSBURG MEETING OF REGIONAL LEADERS (TUR) AND REAFFIRM THE CENTRE'S ROLE IN RESOLVING THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS. LEONID SMIRNYAGIN, REGIONAL ADVISER ON THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL, STRESSED YESTERDAY THAT WHILE THE REGIONS HAD A ROLE IN RESOLVING THE CRISIS, FORA SUCH AS THE PETERSBURG CONFERENCE WERE NOT THE PLACES FOR IT. THE FACT THAT THERE WERE NO DEMONSTRATIONS OR STRIKES IN THE REGIONS WAS PROOF THAT THE PEOPLE HAD ACCEPTED YELTSIN'S DECREE AS PAINFUL BUT INEVITABLE. IT WAS FUTILE FOR REGIONAL AUTHORITIES TO SEEK A GREATER ROLE IN RESOLVING THE CRISIS, WHICH WAS A MATTER FOR THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND THE PEOPLE OF RUSSIA. NEITHER THE RUSSIAN PARLIAMENT NOR PRESIDENT NEEDED THE REGIONAL LEADERS AS MEDIATORS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND THE PEOPLE.

4. THE REGIONS THEMSELVES SHOW NO SIGN OF COALESCING ROUND THE PETERSBURG CONFERENCE DECLARATION AND AGREEMENT (DRAFT TREATY), WHICH FOR THE MOST PART REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE REGIONAL SOVIETS. HOWEVER, THE IDEA OF SIMULTANEOUS PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACCEPTED AT THE CONFERENCE HAS BEGUN TO ATTRACT WIDER REGIONAL SUPPORT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CHAIRMAN OF KOMI SUPREME SOVIET, YURI SPIRIDONOV, WHO DID NOT ATTEND THE PETERSBURG CONFERENCE BECAUSE HE 'DID NOT WANT TO WORK FOR SOBCHAK' (THE PETERSBURG MAYOR), HAS SAID THAT THE IDEA OF SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS 'DID NOT MAKE THE PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE FAINT ANY MORE'. THE KOMI SUPREME SOVIET SUPPORTED THE IDEA. SPIRIDONOV EMPHASISED THAT HE SAW 'NO REAL ALTERNATIVE TO YELTSIN...RUSSIA DID NOT DESERVE RULE BY COLONELS, HOWEVER BRAVE THEY WERE'.

5. OTHERWISE INDIVIDUAL REGIONS CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THEIR OWN COURSE AND PRIORITIES, WITH YELTSIN REACTING ACCORDINGLY. YELTSIN'S DISMISSAL OF THE HARD-LINE NOMENKLATURA HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION IN BRYANSK (YURI LODKIN: SEE MOSCOW TELNO 1649) WAS ACHIEVED PEACEFULLY ON 26 SEPTEMBER WHEN LOCAL POLICE ON FEDERAL INSTRUCTIONS EVICTED LODKIN'S SUPPORTERS FROM THE OBLAST ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. BUT YELTSIN HAS MADE NO SUCH MOVE AGAINST NOVOSIBIRSK, WHERE THE HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION (VITALI MUKHA) SUPPORTS THE NOVOSIBIRSK SOVIET'S CATEGORICAL DENUNCIATION OF YELTSIN'S DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT. AS CHAIRMAN OF THE INTER-REGIONAL ASSOCIATION 'SIBERIAN ACCORD', MUKHA IS IN A MUCH STRONGER POSITION THAN LODKIN IN BRYANSK. ANOTHER SIBERIAN ACCORD MEMBER AND INVETERATE OPPONENT OF YELTSIN, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE OBLAST SOVIET IN KEMEROVO (TULEEV) HAS LEFT THE MOSCOW WHITE HOUSE FOR HOME, ANNOUNCING THAT HE WILL PROPOSE THE FORMATION OF A 'SIBERIAN REPUBLIC' AT A SIBERIAN ACCORD MEETING DUE TODAY. THE HEAD OF THE ADMINISTRATION IN KEMEROVO (KISLYUK) HAS DENOUNCED THE IDEA AS CONTRARY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF A UNIFIED RUSSIA. THE IDEA HAD NOT EVEN BEEN DISCUSSED AT LOCAL LEVEL AND REFLECTED ONLY A PERSONAL VIEW OF TULEEV.

COMMENT

6. YELTSIN WILL HOPE TO HARNESS THE SUPPORT OF THE GREAT MAJORITY OF REGIONAL EXECUTIVES TO PUSH THROUGH AN ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE AGREEMENT AT THE FORTHCOMING COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION MEETING, A DATE FOR WHICH HAS STILL TO BE ANNOUNCED. THE PETERSBURG CONFERENCE WAS AN ATTEMPT BY THE REGIONAL SOVIETS TO FILL THE VACUUM. IF ITS AIM WAS TO SPEAK FOR THE REGIONS AS A WHOLE IT HAS NOT SUCCEEDED. YELTSIN'S POSITION IN THE REGIONS IS STILL SECURE, EVEN IF, FOR REASONS OF LOCAL REALPOLITIK, HE HAS TO HANDLE SOME

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RECALCITRANT EXECUTIVES (NOVOSIBIRSK) MORE GENTLY THAN OTHERS
(BRYANSK).

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RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: HOW WILL THE WHITE HOUSE SIEGE END?

SUMMARY

1. TIGHT POLICE CORDON AROUND THE WHITE HOUSE, AND SITUATION TENSE. BUT POLITICAL AUTHORITIES STILL SAY THEY ARE HOPING FOR FURTHER DEFECTIONS AND CONTINUE TO DISCLAIM ANY INTENTION TO STORM THE BUILDING (AT LEAST IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE). RISK OF PROVOCATION REMAINS AND LIKELY TO INCREASE. RECOMMENDED LINE.

DETAIL

2. IN THE EARLY HOURS OF 28 SEPTEMBER, THE WHITE HOUSE WAS COMPLETELY ENCIRCLED, AND ACCESS TO THE BUILDING AND SURROUNDING AREA PROHIBITED. THIS OPERATION LEFT ABOUT 50 DEPUTIES STRANDED OUTSIDE. LOCAL JOURNALISTS ESTIMATE THAT ABOUT 200-250 REMAIN INSIDE THE BUILDING WITH AMPLE SMALL ARMS: THE OPEN AIR DEMONSTRATION IS REDUCED TO A FEW HUNDRED AND CANNOT NOW BE REINFORCED. THE 'DEFENDERS' HAVE BEEN INFORMED THROUGH POLICE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS OF THE AUTHORITIES' ULTIMATUM TO THEM TO SURRENDER ALL WEAPONS BY 290800Z (SOME VERSIONS PUT THE DEADLINE AT 290500Z).

3. YELTSIN AND GRACHEV HAVE REPEATEDLY STATED THAT THE WHITE HOUSE WILL NOT (NOT) BE STORMED, AND THAT THEY INTEND TO RESOLVE THIS CRISIS WITHOUT BLOODSHED. BUT A CONTINUING STALEMATE IS ALSO SEEN BY YELTSIN'S SUPPORTERS TO HAVE POLITICAL COSTS: UNTIL THE LINE IS DRAWN UNDER THE MOSCOW CRISIS, THE REGIONS WILL NOT FALL FULLY INTO LINE BEHIND YELTSIN AND COOPERATE WITH THE ELECTION PREPARATIONS.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

COMMENT

[REDACTED]

7. THE GOVERNMENT SIDE HAVE STRESSED THEIR DETERMINATION TO AVOID BLOODSHED AND HAVE SO FAR BEHAVED WITH RESTRAINT. IF THE OPPORTUNITY ARISES (E.G. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS AT A NEWS CONFERENCE) IT COULD BE HELPFUL TO NOTE THIS AND TO PUT ON RECORD OUR HOPE THAT ALL SIDES WILL DO LIKewise. IF THE WHITE HOUSE NEVERTHELESS IS STORMED, OUR DETAILED RESPONSE WILL HAVE TO DEPEND ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES: BUT IT WILL REMAIN TRUE THAT THE RIGHT PLACE FOR THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES TO GIVE THEIR VERDICT ON SUCH EVENTS WILL BE AT THE BALLOT BOX.

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MOSCOW TELNO 1673:
RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: WHITE HOUSE SIEGE UPDATE

SUMMARY

1. POLICE REPULSE ATTEMPT TO BREAK THROUGH CORDON FROM OUTSIDE. ONE POLICEMAN KILLED. HIGH LEVEL PEACE FEELERS ON HOLD WHILE AUTHORITIES CONCENTRATE ON GETTING THE WEAPONS OUT.

DETAIL

2. THE TENSIONS REPORTED IN TUR RESULTED IN PROLONGED CLASHES DURING THE NIGHT OF 28-29 SEPTEMBER BETWEEN POLICE AND ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND DEMONSTRATORS ATTEMPTING TO BREAK THROUGH THE POLICE CORDON FROM THE OUTSIDE. THE ATTACK WAS ORGANISED BY ANPILOV'S 'MOSCOW WORKERS' MOVEMENT (ALREADY NOTORIOUS FOR INSTIGATING THE MAYDAY RIOT). THE REPULSED DEMONSTRATORS SET UP ROADBLOCKS AT NEARBY TRAFFIC JUNCTIONS. THESE WERE CLEARED BY ABOUT MIDNIGHT, AND THE DEMONSTRATORS CORALLED INTO SEPARATE GROUPS AND GRADUALLY DISPERSED. SEVERAL POLICEMEN AND DEMONSTRATORS WERE HURT IN THESE CLASHES: ONE TRAFFIC POLICEMAN HAS SINCE DIED FROM HIS INJURIES.

3. BOTH THE POLITICAL AND POLICE AUTHORITIES ARE NOW EMPHASIZING THE NEED TO REMOVE ARMED CRIMINAL ELEMENTS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE. THE DEPUTY HEAD OF YELTSIN'S ADMINISTRATION (KRASAVCHENKO) HAS SAID THAT THE CORDON WILL BE MAINTAINED AROUND THE BUILDING SO LONG AS IT POSSES A DANGER TO MUSCOVITES. THE MAYOR OF MOSCOW (LUZHKOV) HAS DECLARED THAT THE OFFICIAL SUPREME SOVIET SECURITY PERSONNEL HAVE LEFT THE BUILDING, BUT HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY UP TO 600 ILLEGALLY

ARMED PEOPLE FROM OUTSIDE MOSCOW. ALL ESTIMATES NOW PUT THE NUMBER OF REMAINING DEPUTIES AT UNDER 200.

4. PRIME MINISTER CHERNOMYRDIN HAD TALKS YESTERDAY WITH THE CHAIRMEN OF THE TWO SUPREME SOVIET CHAMBERS ABDULATIPOV AND SOKOLOV, WHO SAID THAT THERE COULD BE NO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE AUTHORITIES ABOUT RESOLVING THE SITUATION BEFORE HEATING AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES WERE RESTORED TO THE BUILDING. FOR ITS PART, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CLEARLY MAKE NO SUCH CONCESSIONS UNTIL THE WEAPONS INSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE HAVE BEEN SURRENDERED.

5. AS THE DEADLINE FOR SURRENDER OF WEAPONS APPROACHED THIS MORNING, POLICE LOUDSPEAKERS CALLED ON THE DEPUTIES TO 'REVEAL THE CRIMINAL ELEMENTS TO PREVENT CATASTROPHE'. WHEN THE DEADLINE PASSED AT 0800Z, FOUR SENIOR INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICERS PARLEYED WITH THE DEMONSTRATORS: THEN THE POLICE LOUDSPEAKERS ANNOUNCED THAT AS WEAPONRY HAD NOT BEEN SURRENDERED BY THE TIME LAID DOWN IN YELTSIN'S DECREE OF 28 SEPTEMBER, CRIMINAL OFFENCES WERE NOW BEING COMMITTED.

COMMENT

6. RUTSKOI AND THE REMAINING DEPUTIES COULD PRESUMABLY BE HELD LIABLE AS ACCOMPLICES IN THE 'CRIME' BEING COMMITTED BY THE ARMED VIGILANTES. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE AUTHORITIES PLAN TO CONTINUE THE SIEGE WITHOUT ANY ASSAULT, THEY MUST CALCULATE THAT THE POLITICAL COSTS OF A PROLONGED SIEGE WILL BE REDUCED BY DEPICTING THE DEFENDERS AS CRIMINALS.

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MOSCOW TELNO 1648:
RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY

1. YELTSIN APPEARS ADAMANT AGAINST SIMULTANEOUS PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. GOOD LEGAL GROUNDS FOR CONCERN ABOUT A POWER VACUUM: BUT AN EARLY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WOULD STILL BE TO YELTSIN'S ADVANTAGE. CRITICISM OF REGIONAL LEADERS FROM YELTSIN'S CAMP. FOUR CONSTITUTIONAL COURT JUDGES RESIGN IN PROTEST AT THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THEIR CHAIRMAN, ZORKIN.

DETAIL

SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS

2. YELTSIN GAVE A BRIEF TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON 27 SEPTEMBER DEVOTED TO THE TIMING OF ELECTIONS. IN ANOTHER FORCEFUL PERFORMANCE, HE EXPLAINED WHY HE REMAINED 'CATEGORICALLY OPPOSED' TO SIMULTANEOUS PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN DECEMBER. IF BOTH FEDERAL POWER BRANCHES WERE OCCUPIED WITH ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, THERE WOULD BE A DANGEROUS POWER VACUUM. HE HAD DECREED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN JUNE 1994, BY WHICH TIME THE NEW PARLIAMENT WOULD HAVE SETTLED IN. HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY COMPROMISE INVOLVING SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS.

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YELTSIN AND THE REGIONS

4. YELTSIN'S SPOKESMAN KOSTIKOV HAS CRITICISED THE ST PETERSBURG MEETING OF REGIONAL LEADERS (WHO RESOLVED THAT THE REGIONS SHOULD 'CONTROL DEVELOPMENTS', AND WHOSE DEMANDS INCLUDED SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS AND AN URGENT MEETING OF THE FEDERATION COUNCIL). KOSTIKOV SAID THAT THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES WERE IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE SITUATION IN THE CENTRE AND THE REGIONS. HE DENIED THE URGENCY OF A FEDERATION COUNCIL MEETING. HE ATTACKED THE MOTIVES OF THE REGIONAL LEADERS: THIS FORMER COMUNIST NOMENCLATURA WAS PLAYING THE REGIONAL CARD TO DIVIDE UP THE COUNTRY AND KEEP ITS HOLD ON LOCAL POWER.

5. SMIRNYAGIN (YELTSIN ADVISER ON REGIONAL AFFAIRS) LIKEWISE IS ARGUING THAT THE PRESENT CRISIS OF THE CENTRAL AUTHORITIES HAS TO BE SETTLED DIRECTLY BY THE PEOPLE: THE REGIONS HAVE NO BUSINESS INTERPOSING THEMSELVES AS MEDIATORS BETWEEN THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND THE VOTERS. REGIONAL OBSTRUCTION OF FEDERAL ELECTIONS WOULD BE 'REBELLION', THOUGH YELTSIN'S DECREE OF 27 SEPTEMBER ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 21 SEPTEMBER PROGRAMME (MOSCOW TELNO 1668) SHOULD CAUSE REGIONAL LEADERS TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT SOME OF THEIR ATTITUDES TO DATE.

CONSTITUTIONAL COURT 'COMPROMISE'

6. A GROUP OF FOURTEEN MOSCOW POLITICIANS ISSUED A JOINT STATEMENT ON 27 SEPTEMBER CALLING FOR A COMPROMISE TO BE WORKED OUT BY

ZORKIN'S CONSTITUTIONAL COURT, AS 'THE ONLY REMAINING LEGITIMATE BODY'. THE 'GROUP OF FOURTEEN' CONVENED BY THE CIVIC ALLIANCE LEADER LIPITSKY HAS ATTRACTED DIVERSE ADHERENTS INCLUDING YAVLINSKY AND RYZHKOV (FORMER USSR PRIME MINISTER). [REDACTED]

7. CONSTITUTIONAL COURT CHAIRMAN ZORKIN HAS STEPPED UP HIS MEDIATION EFFORTS, ISSUING STATEMENTS AT EVERY JUNCTURE AND HOLDING MEETINGS WITH SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH SIDES. HE IS CONTINUING TO PROMOTE HIS 'ZERO OPTION' OF A RETURN TO THE SITUATION BEFORE 21 SEPTEMBER (WHICH YELTSIN COULD NEVER ACCEPT: [REDACTED]

THE KREMLIN WILL NOT LOOK MORE KINDLY ON ZORKIN'S LATEST INITIATIVE, WHICH IS TO CONVENE A MEETING OF REGIONAL LEADERS IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT BUILDING AT THE END OF THE WEEK. MEANWHILE FOUR DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTIONAL COURT JUDGES HAVE DENOUNCED ZORKIN'S POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND 'TEMPORARILY RESIGNED' (NOTE: ANOTHER TWO WOULD RENDER THE COURT INQUORATE).

COMMENT

8. SOME WELL-PLACED RUSSIAN OBSERVERS ARE CONVINCED THAT YELTSIN'S OPPOSITION TO SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS IS TACTICAL. SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS REMAIN THE ONLY REAL CONCESSION HE CAN SAFELY OFFER WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE WHOLE PROCESS BEGUN ON 21 SEPTEMBER. HIS PRESENT STAND AGAINST SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS WILL MAKE THAT CONCESSION SEEM ALL THE GREATER IF AND WHEN IT COMES, AND SO HELP DEFLECT PRESSURE FOR FURTHER, MORE DANGEROUS COMPROMISES. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THAT SAID, THE LEGAL BASIS FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS NEEDS CHANGING. YELTSIN'S PRESENT POSITION IS THAT THE NEW PARLIAMENT SHOULD PASS A NEW PRESIDENCY LAW BY FEBRUARY 1994 AS THE BASIS FOR AN ELECTION IN JUNE (HE COULD NOT PROPERLY SET THE RULES FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, IN WHICH HE WOULD BE A CANDIDATE, IN THE WAY HE HAS DONE FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION).

9. THESE TACTICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES ASIDE, IT IS STRIKING HOW YELTSIN'S SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS ARE MAKING COMMON CAUSE IN FAVOUR OF SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS: THE FORMER SEE THIS AS A QUICK AND SURE PATH TO VICTORY, THE LATTER AS A WAY TO SAVE SOME FACE FOR THE 'SOVIET' SIDE.

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RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: OVERNIGHT UPDATE, 29-30 SEPTEMBER

SUMMARY

1. NEW ULTIMATUM TO CLEAR THE WHITE HOUSE. APCS DEPLOYED AROUND PERIMETER. ESTIMATE OF STRENGTH AND EQUIPMENT OF 'DEFENDERS'. SECOND NIGHT OF CLASHES WITH DEMONSTRATORS TRYING TO BREAK THROUGH THE CORDON. PATRIARCH OFFERS GOOD OFFICES. PROMINENT HARDLINER LEAVES WHITE HOUSE OVERNIGHT, AND SAYS MORE WILL FOLLOW.

DETAIL

2. AT A MEETING OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL CHAIRED BY YELTSIN ON 29 SEPTEMBER, PRIME MINISTER CHERNOMYRDIN WAS MANDATED TO NEGOTIATE A PEACEFUL END TO THE WHITE HOUSE SIEGE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DISSOLVED SUPREME SOVIET. (COMMENT: CHERNOMYRDIN HAS IN FACT BEEN HOLDING SUCH TALKS ALL WEEK.)

3. THE AUTHORITIES LATER ISSUED A FURTHER ULTIMATUM TO KHASBULATOV AND RUTSKOI TO SURRENDER WEAPONS AND CLEAR THE BUILDING BY 4 OCTOBER OR FACE 'GRAVE CONSEQUENCES'. FULL IMMUNITY HAS BEEN OFFERED TO ALL WHO LEAVE BEFORE THE DEADLINE. DESPITE THIS ULTIMATUM, THE AUTHORITIES HAVE REPEATED THAT THEY DO NOT (NOT) INTEND TO USE FORCE.

4. STEPASHIN (DEPUTY MINISTER OF SECURITY AND FORMER HEAD OF THE SUPREME SOVIET DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE) HAS MADE CLEAR IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW YESTERDAY THAT HE IS HEADING THE GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE DEALING WITH THE WHITE HOUSE CRISIS. HE SAID THAT THE DEFENDERS, EQUIPPED WITH 600-800 FIRE ARMS, INCLUDE ELEMENTS FROM THE RIGA OMON, TRANSDNIESTRIAN DEFENCE FORCES AND THE 'FASCIST RUSSIAN NATIONAL UNITY ORGANISATION' (COMMENT: WHOSE SWASTIKA

ARMBANDS WERE MUCH IN EVIDENCE IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE DEMONSTRATION.)

5. FOR THE SECOND DAY IN A ROW, PRO-SOVIET DEMONSTRATORS TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO BREAK THROUGH THE POLICE CORDON IN THE EARLY EVENING. THERE WERE CLASHES WITH THE POLICE AND OMON, BUT SO FAR NO REPORTS OF ANY DEATHS OR SERIOUS INJURIES. THE SECURITY FORCES HAVE NOW DEPLOYED ELEVEN APCS AND SIX EARTH-MOVERS AROUND THE PERIMETER.

6. DURING THE NIGHT, A PROMINENT OPPOSITION DEPUTY AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE RED-BROWN NATIONAL SALVATION FRONT (KONSTANTINOV) LEFT THE WHITE HOUSE WITH ELEVEN OTHERS. KONSTANTINOV TOLD THE POLICE THAT MORE MAY FOLLOW. (NOTE: THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED BACK IN: THE ONLY PEOPLE TO BE ADMITTED SINCE THE BLOCKADE WAS IMPOSED HAVE BEEN JOURNALISTS.) LATEST ESTIMATES PUT THE NUMBER OF REMAINING DEPUTIES AT FEWER THAN 150.

7. THE PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA ALEXEI II HAS APPEALED ON BOTH SIDES TO 'RESPECT EACH OTHER'S HUMAN DIGNITY, AND HAVE THE COURAGE TO NOT TO YIELD TO ANY PROVOCATIONS'. ALEKSEI HAS OFFERED HIS GOOD OFFICES, AND THE SUPREME SOVIET LEADERS HAVE INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE PART IN TALKS AT HIS DANILOVSKY MONASTERY RESIDENCE.

COMMENT

8. THE DEPARTURE OF KONSTANTINOV AND CO. IS A VALUABLE DEVELOPMENT, AS IT REDUCES STILL FURTHER THE HARD CORE REMAINING PRESENCE. THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY RISK OF HAVING THE LIKES OF KONSTANTINOV AT LARGE IS OUTWEIGHED BY THE NEED TO END THE TENSION OF THE WHITE HOUSE SIEGE AND DRAW A LINE UNDER THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT, ALLOWING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN TO BEGIN IN EARNEST.

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MY TELNO 37: RUSSIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: SITUATION IN
 ST PETERSBURG

SUMMARY

1. CONFUSION ABOUT POSSIBLE FURTHER MEETING OF REGIONS IN
 ST PETERSBURG TOMORROW. SOBCHAK'S VIEWS. MORE SMALL
 DEMONSTRATIONS.

DETAIL

2. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] THE CITY ADMINISTRATION HAD YESTERDAY RECEIVED
 INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO PREPARE FOR A
 MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE REGIONS IN
 ST PETERSBURG TOMORROW. THIS HAD BEEN CONFIRMED BY
 TELEPHONE WITH SHAKHRAI AND YAROV. THE LATTER WOULD
 REPRESENT YELTSIN. FROM THESE CONVERSATIONS IT SEEMED
 THAT YELTSIN HAD ACCEPTED THE NEED TO CONTINUE THE
 PROCESS BEGUN AT THE MEETING HERE ON 26 SEPTEMBER.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SEPARATELY AN INVITATION HAD BEEN
 RECEIVED TO A SIMILAR MEETING IN MOSCOW.

3. FURTHER ENQUIRIES HAVE FAILED TO CONFIRM OR OTHERWISE
 CLARIFY WHAT, IF ANYTHING, IS HAPPENING HERE TOMORROW.
 CITY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN BELYAEV, ONE OF THE INITIATORS OF
 LAST SUNDAY'S GATHERING HAS FLOWN TO MOSCOW. MAYOR
 SOBCHAK'S STAFF TELL US THAT HE TOO IS DUE TO GO TO THE

CAPITAL TOMORROW.

4. WHEN THE RCDS DELEGATION CALLED ON SOBCHAK YESTERDAY, HE DISTANCED HIMSELF FROM THE DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE MEETING HERE LAST SUNDAY AND SPECIFICALLY THE IDEA OF SIMULTANEOUS PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. IN PARTICULAR HE STRESSED THAT MORE TIME WAS NEEDED FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES OTHER THAN YELTSIN TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES. HE WONDERED WHY YELTSIN DID NOT TAKE UP THE IDEA AS HE WOULD CLEARLY WIN AN EARLY ELECTION. SOBCHAK IS, HOWEVER, REPORTED AS HAVING SPOKEN IN THE CITY COUNCIL SESSION THIS MORNING IN FAVOUR OF EARLY SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS.

5. BELYAEV YESTERDAY PROPOSED THAT A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE BE ELECTED IN DECEMBER. THIS WOULD DRAW UP AN ELECTION LAW AND TAKE ANY OTHER NECESSARY CONSTITUTIONAL DECISIONS UNTIL ELECTIONS IN MARCH FOR A NEW PARLIAMENT AND IN JUNE FOR PRESIDENT. THIS APPEARS TO BE A PERSONAL INITIATIVE, POSSIBLY WITH STEPANOV FROM KARELIA (IE TWO OF THE INITIATORS OF LAST SUNDAY'S MEETING). IT HAD NOT BEEN ENDORSED IN ADVANCE BY ST PETERSBURG CITY COUNCIL, WHICH HAS STILL TO FORMULATE AN OFFICIAL POSITION ON THE POLITICAL CRISIS.

6. THE CHAIRMAN OF LENINGRAD REGIONAL COUNCIL, GUSTOV, APPEARED ON THE PRO SUPREME SOVIET TV PROGRAMME 600 SECONDS LAST NIGHT AND TOOK AN ANTI-YELTSIN LINE. PRO-COMMUNIST DEMONSTRATORS GATHERED THIS MORNING TO QUOTE DEFEND THE REGIONAL COUNCIL BUILDING UNQUOTE WHICH IS NEAR AUR CONSULATE. AGAIN OUR STAFF WERE GREETED BY RIOT POLICE, THIS TIME MORE SERIOUSLY EQUIPPED. THE DEMONSTRATION QUICKLY DISPERSED AND THE CONSULATE'S WORK WAS NOT IMPEDED.

7. 600 SECONDS CONTINUES TO BE BROADCAST WITH DAILY REPORTS FROM INSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE. BUT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CITY COUNCIL'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE, LENKOV, WHO IS ALSO A LEADER OF A NEW CENTRIST GROUPING, COMPLAINED AT THIS MORNING'S BRIEFING FOR CONSULS GENERAL ABOUT MEDIA CENSORSHIP. THE PRO-YELTSIN MANAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL TV STATION WAS NOT GIVING TO CENTRIST AND OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS, ANY AIR TIME. THE INHABITANTS OF ST PETERSBURG

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SHOULD NOT HAVE TO RELY ON THE BBC TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS
HAPPENING IN THEIR CITY. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

8. THE CITY'S EVENING NEWSPAPER HAS A TELEPHONE LINE FOR
READERS TO COMMENT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] BUT HIS EXPERIENCE AND THAT
OF OTHER JOURNALISTS WE HAVE SPOKEN TO IS THAT MOST READERS
ARE MORE INTERESTED IN THE PRICE OF BREAD OR THE CRIME
RATE. RUSSIAN AND FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN HERE CONTINUE TO
TELL US THAT THE POLITICAL CRISIS HAS NOT SO FAR HAD A
PERCEPTIBLE EFFECT ON BUSINESS, EXCEPT FOR THE HOTELS
WHERE BOOKINGS ARE DOWN.

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RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: OVERNIGHT DEVELOPMENTS 29 SEPTEMBER-
1 OCTOBER

SUMMARY

1. AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND SUPREME SOVIET ON TERMS FOR
LIFTING BLOCKADE OF WHITE HOUSE. YELTSIN AGAIN RULES OUT POLITICAL
COMPROMISE WITH RUTSKOI/KHASBULATOV.

DETAIL

WHITE HOUSE

2. A DRAFT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED OVERNIGHT ON LIFTING THE
WHITE HOUSE BLOCKADE. THERE ARE THREE STAGES:

- (I) AUTHORITIES TO RESTORE HEATING, ELECTRICITY AND A FEW
TELEPHONE LINES:
- (II) WHITE HOUSE LEADERS TO SURRENDER ALL WEAPONS (WITH EXCEPTIONS
OF PISTOLS CARRIED BY RUTSKOI'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD):
- (III) THE POLICE CORDON TO BE REMOVED, AND SECURITY CHECKPOINTS TO
BE POSTED AT ALL ENTRANCES TO THE BUILDING - THESE
CHECKPOINTS TO BE JOINTLY MANNED BY SUPREME SOVIET GUARDS AND
INTERIOR MINISTRY (MVD) PERSONNEL.

3. THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED FOR THE AUTHORITIES BY FILATOV (HEAD
OF YELTSIN'S ADMINISTRATION), SOSKOVETS (FIRST DEPUTY PRIME
MINISTER) AND LUZHKOV (MAYOR OF MOSCOW): AND FOR THE SUPREME SOVIET
BY ABDULATIPOV AND SOKOLOV (CHAIRMEN OF THE COUNCILS OF
NATIONALITIES AND REPUBLICS).

4. FROM THE LIGHTS NOW VISIBLE INSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE, IT APPEARS

THAT THE AUTHORITIES HAVE ALREADY CARRIED OUT POINT (I). THE DEADLINE FOR THE CRUCIAL POINT (II) HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC. BUT WE HAVE OBSERVED THE DEPLOYMENT OF ELITE FORCES TO CONTROL WHAT WILL BE A DELICATE AND POSSIBLY DANGEROUS OPERATION. THE NEW DEPLOYMENTS INCLUDE A COMPANY OF ABOUT 50 MVD 'SPETNAZ' ARMED WITH RIFLES, AND THE FIRST GENUINE MILITARY (AS OPPOSED TO MVD) DEPLOYMENT SINCE THE CRISIS BEGAN IN THE FORM OF A GROUP OF MOTOR-RIFLE PERSONNEL, AND SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS (ENGINEERING AND ARTILLERY) VISIBLY ADVISING THEIR MVD COLLEAGUES AROUND THE PERIMETER.

5. LAST NIGHT'S NEGOTIATIONS ARE DUE TO CONTINUE TODAY UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PATRIARCH ON A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. SOSKOVETS WILL AGAIN BE REPRESENTING THE GOVERNMENT.

COMMENT

6. THE WHITE HOUSE DEAL LOOKS MOST LIKELY TO UNRAVEL ON POINT (III). THE AUTHORITIES WILL NOT ACCEPT THE SUPREME SOVIET VIGILANTES ON JOINT CHECKPOINTS: AND THE SUPREME SOVIET LEADERS MAY BE RELUCTANT TO ENTRUST THIS ROLE TO THEIR OFFICIAL MVD-SUBORDINATED SECURITY PERSONNEL LEST THEY OVER-FRATERNIZE WITH THEIR MVD COLLEAGUES ON THE GOVERNMENT'S SIDE.

7. THE PATRIARCH'S 'POLITICAL' NEGOTIATIONS LOOK DOOMED. AS YELTSIN MADE CLEAR AT A MEETING YESTERDAY WITH DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATIONS, HE WILL NOT MAKE ANY COMPROMISE REMOTELY ACCEPTABLE TO RUTSKOI/KHASBULATOV.

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MY TELNO 38: RUSSIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: REGIONAL MEETING
 IN ST PETERSBURG

SUMMARY

1. GOVERNMENT DOMINATED MEETING OF REGIONS OF NORTH
 WEST RUSSIA POINTS TOWARDS COMPROMISE.

DETAIL

2. TODAY'S MEETING IN ST PETERSBURG INVOLVED TEN REGIONS
 OF NORTH WEST RUSSIA. ALL WERE REPRESENTED BY HEADS OF
 ADMINISTRATION (IE MOSTLY YELTSIN APPOINTEES) BUT SOME
 COUNCIL CHAIRMEN WERE ALSO PRESENT, INCLUDING FROM
 ST PETERSBURG AND KARELIA. YAROV REPRESENTED YELTSIN.

3. THE MEETING WAS CLOSED BUT - WITH A LITTLE DIFFICULTY -
 THE AMERICANS AND I WERE ALLOWED INTO THE BUILDING AT THE
 END AND WERE ABLE TO PICK UP COMMENTS FROM
 SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS. A DOCUMENT WAS AGREED BUT WAS NOT
 IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE TO US (IT SEEMS NOT EVERYONE HAD
 SIGNED UP). BUT I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS POINTED IN THE
 DIRECTION OF SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS, DATE UNSPECIFIED,
 WHILE NOT EXCLUDING THE ALTERNATIVE OF PHASED PARLIAMENTARY
 AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. IT RECOGNISED A ROLE FOR
 THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION RESTRICTED TO ORGANISING
 THE ELECTIONS.

4. YAROV TOOK THE LINE WITH THE PRESS
 AFTERWARDS THAT THIS MEETING WAS THE FRIENDS OF THE PRESIDENT
 OFFERING HIM ADVICE ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE PRESENT
 CRISIS. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
BELYAEV, CHAIRMAN OF ST PETERSBURG CITY COUNCIL, WHILE
NOT DISAGREEING FUNDAMENTALLY, WAS MORE DISMISSIVE OF A
MEETING MANIPULATED BY GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRATS. [REDACTED]
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MOSCOW TELNO 1693
RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: 1 OCTOBER

SUMMARY

1. WHITE HOUSE DEPUTIES REJECT OVERNIGHT AGREEMENT. BLOCKADE LOOKS SET TO CONTINUE, BUT YELTSIN REITERATES COMMITMENT TO A PEACEFUL OUTCOME. THE GOVERNMENT MEANWHILE TAKES BATTLE TO THE REGIONS.

DETAIL

2. WE NOW HAVE FULLER DETAILS OF THE OVERNIGHT AGREEMENT (CALLED 'PROTOCOL NUMBER ONE') ON ENDING THE WHITE HOUSE BLOCKADE. THE PROTOCOL HAS TWO PARTS:

(I) COLLECTION OF ALL UNREGISTERED WEAPONS WHICH ARE TO BE PLACED UNDER JOINT GUARD OF THE SUPREME SOVIET SECURITY AND MOSCOW POLICE: HEATING AND POWER SUPPLIES TO BE RESTORED FOR THIS PURPOSE: INITIAL REDUCTION OF POLICE CORDON:

(II) MOVE TO END THE CONFRONTATION BY THE SIMULTANEOUS WITHDRAWAL OF ALL ARMED PERSONNEL ON BOTH SIDES.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POINT (II) IS TO BE CONDITIONAL UPON A FURTHER AGREEMENT ON LEGAL AND POLITICAL GUARANTEES FOR DEPUTIES STILL IN THE WHITE HOUSE. THIS WAS THE SUBJECT OF A SECOND PROTOCOL UNDER DISCUSSION THIS MORNING AT THE PATRIARCH'S DANILOVSKY MONASTERY RESIDENCE.

3. AT A KREMLIN BRIEFING FOR G7 AMBASSADORS THIS MORNING, QUESTIONS FROM THE JAPANESE AND CANADIAN AMBASSADORS PROMPTED A CONFUSED DISCUSSION ABOUT WHETHER THE AUTHORITIES WERE NOW

QUALIFYING THEIR EARLIER POSITION ON NON-USE OF FORCE. KRASAVCHENKO (FIRST DEPUTY HEAD OF YELTSIN'S ADMINISTRATION) CONFIRMED THAT THE FORMER DEPUTIES WOULD BE GIVEN FULL IMMUNITY AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO (NO) STORM OF THE WHITE HOUSE: BUT THE AUTHORITIES DID NOT ALTOGETHER RENOUNCE 'FORCE' ('NASILIYE') IN THE SENSE THAT THEY RESERVED THE RIGHT TO ARREST AND PROSECUTE THE CRIMINALS IN THE WHITE HOUSE (FOR INSTANCE, THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF THE POLICEMAN DURING THE ATTACK ON THE CIS HEAD QUARTERS ON 22 SEPTEMBER, WHO HAD SINCE TAKEN REFUGE IN THE WHITE HOUSE).

4. THE RUMP CONGRESS MET THIS MORNING TO CONSIDER 'PROTOCOL 1' AND VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY TO REJECT IT. IT THEN RESOLVED TO STRENGTHEN ITS NEGOTIATING TEAM AT THE DANILOVSKY MONASTERY, BY DELEGATING DEPUTY SPEAKER VORONIN. HAVING RESTORED POWER SUPPLIES TO THE BUILDING (TUR), THE AUTHORITIES ADMITTED LARGE NUMBERS OF JOURNALISTS. KHASBULATOV MADE THE MOST OF THIS BY HOLDING A PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH HE WELCOMED THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS AS A SIGN THAT THE PARLIAMENT'S CAUSE WAS JUST, AND SAID THERE WOULD BE NO SURRENDER OF WEAPONS WITHOUT A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. THE SUPREME SOVIET'S 'POWER MINISTERS' (ACHALOV, DUNAEV AND BARANNIKOV) DECIDED DURING THE NIGHT TO OPPOSE 'PROTOCOL 1' ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE WAS NO PROVISION FOR THE REPEAL OF THE 21 SEPTEMBER DECREE AND THAT THE CONGRESS HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED. ACHALOV HAS ALSO DENOUNCED ANY MOVE TO 'ABANDON THE PARLIAMENT'S DEFENCES'. COMMENTING ON THESE DEVELOPMENTS AT THE G7 AMBASSADORS' BRIEFING, KRASAVCHENKO SAID THAT THE DEPUTIES WERE NO LONGER FREE AGENTS, BUT SUBJECT TO INTIMIDATION FROM THE ARMED ELEMENTS IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

5. YELTSIN WENT ON TELEVISION THIS AFTERNOON TO DENOUNCE THE WHITE HOUSE LEADERS' DECISION TO 'TEAR UP' THE OVERNIGHT AGREEMENT. HE AGAIN RULED OUT USE OF FORCE AGAINST THE WHITE HOUSE AND SAID THAT SOMEHOW A PEACEFUL SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND. BUT HE MADE CLEAR THAT THE BLOCKADE WOULD BE MAINTAINED UNTIL THE WEAPONS WERE SURRENDERED, SAYING THAT THE AUTHORITIES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR PREVENTING THE VIOLENT ELEMENTS GETTING OUT OF THE WHITE HOUSE AND 'SHEDDING MORE RUSSIAN BLOOD'.

6. YELTSIN'S SPOKESMAN KOSTIKOV AMPLIFIED THIS BY SAYING THAT THE WHITE HOUSE LEADERS WERE CLEARLY DETERMINED TO WRECK ATTEMPTS AT A SETTLEMENT, AND REPEATING THE POINT ABOUT INTIMIDATION OF THE REMAINING DEPUTIES BY 'CRIMINAL ELEMENTS'. HE SAID THAT YELTSIN WOULD PRESS AHEAD WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 21 SEPTEMBER DECREE, AND THAT ANY 'ZERO OPTION' WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

COMMENT

7. YELTSIN'S SIDE MAY BE OVERSTATING THE INTIMIDATION FROM
ACHALOV'S FIGHTERS. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE AUTHORITIES
SENSIBLY HAVE RETALIATED THIS EVENING BY TURNING THE ELECTRICITY
OFF AGAIN.

8. YELTSIN WILL CONTINUE NEGOTIATING TO GET THE WEAPONS OUT IN
RETURN FOR LETTING THE RUMP PARLIAMENT REMAIN IN SESSION IN THE
WHITE HOUSE. WITH THE SECURITY THREAT REMOVED, THE POLITICAL
DOWNSIDE OF THE WHITE HOUSE RESISTANCE WOULD BE MUCH REDUCED:
INDEED, THE SIGHT OF THE DEPUTIES BACK IN PSEUDO-BUSINESS WOULD DO
YELTSIN NO HARM AT ALL WITH PUBLIC OPINION.

9. THESE WHITE HOUSE VICISSITUDES WILL HAVE LESS LONG TERM
IMPORTANCE THAN THE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TODAY BY SENIOR MEMBERS OF
THE GOVERNMENT TO RALLY SUPPORT IN THE REGIONS IN PREPARATION FOR
THE CRUCIAL MEETING OF THE FULL FEDERATION COUNCIL (WHICH
VICE-PREMIER SHAKHRAI HAS NOW ANNOUNCED WILL BE HELD ON
4-5 OCTOBER).

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SUBJECT: CURRENT SITUATION AND COMMENTARY

6. JUST BEFORE LEAVING I CAUGHT SIGHT OF GEORGI ARBATOV, WELL-KNOWN PUNDIT, AND ASKED HIM FOR HIS VIEWS ON CURRENT SITUATION. MAIN LINES WERE:

A. THE LAST YEAR PLUS HAD BEEN VICTIM OF THOSE WHO WOULD/COULD NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR EITHER THE BASIC ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES OR THEIR SOLUTION.

B. EVENTS IN THE PERIOD HAD BEEN OCCURRING IN A VACUUM OF IRRELEVANCE - REFERENDUM, PRESENT STAND-OFF ETC ALL HAD NO POTENTIAL FOR STABILISING THE UNEASY BASIS OF LIFE IN THE FSU.

C. YELTSIN WAS WAVERING, RESPONDING TO THE STIMULI OF OPPOSING VIEWS FROM SEPARATE GROUPS OF ADVISERS. HE, ARBATOV, LOOKED FORWARD TO NOVEMBER WHEN HE COULD RELAX IN THE PEACEFUL SURROUNDINGS OF AN OXFORD-BASED SEMINAR BEFORE TALKING TO HIS PUBLISHERS IN LONDON.

7. DEFENCE DEPARTMENT HERE WILL NO DOUBT HAVE TO MAINTAIN ITS ROUTINE WATCH ON EVENTS, THEREFORE, CERTAINLY INTO NEXT WEEK.

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RUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS: CIVIL CONFLICT ERUPTS IN MOSCOW

SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING VIOLENT CLASHES YESTERDAY INVOLVING ONLY A FEW HUNDRED RED/BROWN DEMONSTRATORS, ANTI-YELTSIN OPPOSITION HAVE SEIZED THE INITIATIVE ON THE STREETS THIS AFTERNOON. SECURITY FORCES ROUND THE WHITE HOUSE HAVE COLLAPSED. OPPOSITION NOW IN CONTROL OF AT LEAST PART OF THE MAIN MOSCOW TV/RADIO STATION. REPORTS OF TROOP MOVEMENTS ROUND MOSCOW. YELTSIN'S POSITION NOW UNDER GRAVE THREAT, EVEN THOUGH OPPOSITION DEMONSTRATORS STILL NUMBER ONLY SEVERAL THOUSAND. STATE OF EMERGENCY IN MOSCOW.

DETAIL

- 2. YESTERDAY A FEW HUNDRED (AT MOST) 'RED/BROWN' DEMONSTRATORS ARMED WITH MOLOTOV COCKTAILS MANAGED TO BLOCK PART OF THE MOSCOW RING ROAD FOR SEVERAL HOURS.
- 3. EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON THE SAME PATTERN APPEARED TO BE DEVELOPING, BUT THE DEMONSTRATORS THIS TIME MANAGED TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE RING ROAD AND MARCH ON DOWN TO THE WHITE HOUSE, WHERE THEY FORCED THEIR WAY THROUGH THE SECURITY FORCES LINES. AT THIS STAGE THE PROTEST RAPIDLY GATHERED MOMENTUM, WITH AT LEAST TWO HUNDRED INTERIOR MINISTRY PERSONNEL DEFECTING TO THE RUTSKOI/KHASBULATOV SIDE.
- 4. THE DEMONSTRATORS THEN MOVED ON TO OCCUPY PART OF THE OLD COMECON BUILDING NEARBY WHERE THE MAYOR OF MOSCOW'S OFFICE IS. THEREAFTER THEY HAVE BEEN STREAMING AWAY FROM THE CENTRE OF MOSCOW TO THE OSTANKINO BUILDING (THE MAIN MOSCOW RADIO/TV HEADQUARTERS).

AT 1945 (LOCAL) BOTH NATIONAL STATE CHANNELS AND MOSCOW TV WENT OFF THE AIR. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT IS HAPPENING THERE, BUT THE DEMONSTRATORS NOW NUMBER SEVERAL THOUSAND, MANY OF WHOM ARE WEARING FLAK JACKETS AND ARE ARMED WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. SHORTLY BEFORE THE TV WENT OFF THE AIR THE MAYOR OF MOSCOW APPEARED, SAYING THAT AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED NEAR THE WHITE HOUSE WITH ONE SENIOR CITY SECURITY OFFICIAL TAKEN HOSTAGE. LATEST REPORTS ARE THAT THE OPPOSITION HAS OCCUPIED THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE RUSSIAN TV BUILDING. HEAVY FIGHTING IS NOW GOING ON IN THE AREA.

5. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHO IS LEADING THE OPPOSITION 'FORCES', ALTHOUGH ANPILMOV (ONE OF THE MOST VIRULENT COMMUNIST OPPONENTS OF YELTSIN AND THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE VIOLENT CLASHES IN MOSCOW IN MAY) HAS BEEN PROMINENT.

6. LATEST REPORTS FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE AUTHORITIES AND THE RUTSKOI/KHASBULATOV CAMP (UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE RUSSIAN PATRIARCH) WERE THAT THE RUTSKOI SIDE WAS DEMANDING SIMULTANEOUS PARLIAMENTARY/PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN MARCH BUT UNDER THE OLD CONSTITUTION AND WITH 'PRESIDENT RUTSKOI' RUNNING THE COUNTRY UNTIL THEN. YELTSIN HAS DECLARED A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN MOSCOW: THERE ARE REPORTS OF TROOP MOVEMENTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE CITY. YELTSIN HIMSELF IS IN THE KREMLIN. KHASBULATOV HAS SAID THAT 'THE DECISIVE PHASE HAS BEGUN - THE KREMLIN SHOULD BE SEIZED TONIGHT'. YELTSIN'S PRESS AND SECURITY SERVICES HAVE CONFIRMED THAT HE IS IN THE KREMLIN.

7. THE DEMONSTRATIONS AND ASSOCIATED RIOTING HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO A SMALL SECTION OF NORTH MOSCOW. THE REST OF THE CITY HAS BEEN CALM, WITH TRAFFIC CIRCULATING REASONABLY FREELY.

COMMENT

8. A DISASTROUS DAY FOR YELTSIN, WITH AT MOST SEVERAL THOUSAND HARD LINE COMMUNIST/NEO-FASCISTS MANAGING TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE IN THE FACE OF INEPT AND/OR HALF-HEARTED RESISTANCE FROM THE SECURITY FORCES. IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW MANY OF THE SECURITY FORCES HAVE ACTUALLY DEFECTED TO RUTSKOI, BUT CERTAINLY THE DEMONSTRATORS HAVE MANAGED TO COMMANDEER A LARGE NUMBER OF MILITARY TRUCKS AND BUSES. IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW YELTSIN CAN SURVIVE AS PRESIDENT NOW WITHOUT A MAJOR AND VIOLENT SHOW-DOWN WITH THE OPPOSITION. THE KEY QUESTION NOW IS WHETHER THE ARMY WILL REMAIN LOYAL TO YELTSIN AND, IF THEY DO, WHETHER THEY WILL BE PREPARED TO UNLEASH ON THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS THE FORCE REQUIRED TO REGAIN CONTROL OF THE

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