

171

Поддерживать Ельцина, а не потенциальных путчистов

"Интернэшнл Геральд Трибюн", 16.03.93

Ричард Пайнс

Отрывок из статьи

Для построения своей политической базы г-н Ельцин пошел на переговоры с умеренно консервативными группами, а также заручился поддержкой нескольких представителей из их лагеря.

Он связался с военными, занимающими ключевое положение в решающей борьбе за власть.

Он не делает скерета из того, что он создает базу для введения чрезвычайного положения, которое позволит ему продолжать политические и экономические реформы.

Его повторяющиеся предостережения - не блеф.

Если он выберет этот путь, но вероятнее всего он не будет вводить свое диктаторское правление, которое сделало бы его уязвимым, скорее всего он создаст сильную исполнительную власть, основой которой был бы народный мандат. Возможно, он будет добиваться этого путем проведенного вопреки съезду референдума, на котором избирателей попросят одобрить президентскую форму правления с сильной исполнительной властью, а затем созвать учредительное собрание с целью предоставить стране демократическую конституцию.

Хорошим признаком является то, что после колебаний вначале Вашингтон, похоже, осознал, что успех демократии в России может потребовать таких мер, которые Западом будут расценены как неприемлемые. Следует держаться этого курса и позволять увести себя в сторону из-за заявления путчистов в том, что они борются за представительную власть против потенциальных диктаторов.

№ 01938

OPINION

Back Yeltsin, Not the Would-Be Putschists

By Richard Pipes

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts — Russia faces three options: It can continue to progress, however haltingly, toward democracy and a free market, relapse into some form of dictatorship or dissolve in anarchy.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the economy has not caused the present crisis. While it is far from satisfactory, nobody is starving and private initiative is beginning to fill the vacuum created by the breakdown of state ownership. There is food in stores, public transport is running, telephones are operating. Life goes on.

Russia's problems have always

The old Communist nomenklatura recapture power, using the

been first and foremost political and today's predicament is no different.

We are witnessing an attempt by the old Communist nomenklatura, or ruling class, to recapture power and the privileges that went with it, while using the parlous state of the economy as a pretext.

Led by an ambitious adventurer, Russian Khasbulatov, the chairman of the unrepresentative body called the Congress of People's Deputies, it is trying to gain by parliamentary maneuvering what it failed to acquire by military power in August 1991.

It cleverly conceals a bid for dictatorial authority behind claims of the defense of parliamentary democracy.

The stratagem has sown confusion among Western leaders, taught by historical experience to side with parliament against individuals aspiring

to personal power.

In this case the conflict does not pit a duly elected legislative against a power-greedy chief executive.

It is the president who has been democratically elected, while the Congress is a largely self-appointed body dating to the Soviet Union.

It is Boris Yeltsin who represents the nation. The proof is that the Congress has reneged on its pledge to hold a referendum next month in which, among other things, voters would be asked to decide whether they preferred presidential or parliamentary government.

If Mr. Yeltsin's opponents thought they could win, they would have insisted on such a referendum.

In recent months Russia has had, as in 1917, a dual government in which authority has been exercised independently by the executive and legislature. This situation cannot endure, and that is why the conflict has come to a head.

In the best of all worlds for the conservatives, who are mostly die-hard Communists, they would remove Mr. Yeltsin and vest executive power in a parliamentary cabinet.

If pushed they might acquiesce to a ceremonial head of state.

Presidential rule, they say, is alien to

at form of government is the democratic collective (which is ludicrous).

They are emulating the tactic used in October 1917 by Lenin and Trotsky, who accused Kerensky of dictatorial ambitions and demanded that he yield power to the Congress of Soviets, which they had packed with their followers. Dictatorship followed.

Should they succeed, Mr. Yeltsin's conservative opponents are unlikely to restore full-fledged communism. The system has disintegrated too far for this to be a realistic alternative.

klatura is trying to economy as a pretext.

They are more likely to follow the Romanian pattern, which retains the substance of communism under different labels.

This would entail restricting political and press freedom and introducing the so-called regulated market.

They would probably make use of Russian troops deployed in the independent republics and, in the guise of protecting the Russian minorities and maintaining regional "stability," try to re-establish the empire.

And they would resume the arms race to regain superpower status.

Could they succeed?

No, for two reasons. Most Russians, judging by opinion polls, even though disappointed by democracy have no desire for a dictatorship.

A counterrevolution would unleash social and ethnic turmoil with

which the putschists, even if initially successful, could not cope.

Mr. Yeltsin is no vacillating Kerensky but a formidable politician, unwilling to be reduced to a figurehead let alone be pushed from power. Ill-suited to routine administration, impulsive and feisty, he is at his best when fighting for his political life.

He has tried to assuage his opponents by numerous concessions, but they have interpreted each concession as a sign of weakness and an excuse to demand more until there is nothing left to concede.

To build his political base Mr. Yeltsin has negotiated with moderately conservative groups and made some inroads into their camp.

He has made contact with the military, which holds the key to any decisive power struggle.

He makes no secret that he has been laying the groundwork for the imposition of emergency rule, which would enable him to continue political and economic reforms.

His repeated warnings to this effect are no bluff.

If he takes this road, Mr. Yeltsin is much less likely to establish a personal dictatorship, which would make him very vulnerable, than to create a strong executive based on a popular mandate. This he will probably seek through a referendum held in defiance of the Congress in which voters will be asked to approve the presidential form of government, with its strong executive, and then convene a constituent assembly to give the country a democratic constitutional charter.

He should have taken such measures a year ago, when the memory of the failed August putsch was fresh and the conservative apparatus, paralyzed with fear, lay low.

The West's leverage is not formidable. Economic aid, on which some advocates of intervention rely, is not very relevant — no more than it would have been in 1917, because at issue now, as then, is political power, not the economy.

Even large-scale transfers of capital and food will not save the nascent democracy if the Russian people are not prepared to fight for it.

The most helpful thing the West can do is to throw its full support behind Mr. Yeltsin. For even reactionary Communists are sensitive to the prospect of international isolation and its economic implications.

It is a welcome sign that after initial hesitation, Washington seems to have realized that the success of democracy in Russia may require resort to methods that in the West would be unacceptable. It should persist in this course and not allow itself to be misled by the putschists' professions that they are fighting for the cause of representative government against a would-be dictator.

Like the Bolsheviks in 1917, they are exploiting populist slogans to camouflage a bid for authoritarian rule.

Their success would be fraught with the gravest dangers to their own people and the rest of the world.

The writer, a professor of history at Harvard, is author of "The Russian Revolution." He contributed this comment to The New York Times.

170

25. APR 1994 * 01938