

Boris Yeltsin asks America to save the Soviet Empire

by Kathleen Klenetsky

In a desperate effort to secure Western economic aid to pacify his increasingly restive empire, Soviet dictator Mikhail Gorbachov deployed his most famous left-wing critic to the United States in the second week of September. Boris Yeltsin, leader of the "ultra-reformist" faction in the Soviet parliament, spent over a week criss-crossing the United States, bringing to U.S. government officials—President Bush among them—as well as to businessmen, academics, and other influentials, the message that unless the West swiftly moves to shore up Gorbachov with massive economic and other forms of assistance, the Soviet Union will collapse into political chaos that will endanger Western security.

Gen. William Odom, former head of the National Security Agency, told a Hudson Institute conference Sept. 13 that, regardless of Yeltsin's carefully orchestrated criticisms of Gorbachov, the "bottom line was that he came here to sing for an infusion of U.S. consumer goods into the Soviet Union in order to help Gorbachov get through the next year or two. . . . He wants to get \$50 billion from the U.S. over to the Soviet Union, and the real evidence of what he came here for will be shown when we see the results of that request." (See article, page 67.)

Yeltsin's tour, sponsored by the New Age Esalen Foundation's Soviet-American Exchange Program, began just two weeks before Secretary of State James Baker's scheduled meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where economic relations, arms control, and the prospects for a Gorbachov-Bush summit are expected to dominate the agenda. There is some reason to believe that the timing was deliberate, and that Yeltsin's assigned task was to shape the outcome of that meeting to Gorbachov's liking.

But Yeltsin's appeal may have come too late: Although as recently as two weeks before his visit, Washington had committed itself to signing a major secret deal with Moscow at the Wyoming meeting, to vastly expand trade and investment flows to the East bloc, evidence is mounting that the Bush administration may have decided to temporarily shelve the "Wyoming Accords."

The new assessment is based partly on the belief that Gorbachov's political situation has become so acute that he is beyond help, and will be ousted within a matter of months, if not sooner; partly because Moscow has not yet come across with enough economic concessions to the West; and partly because the re-eruption of the United States' own deepening economic crisis has forced a reconsideration of whether it can afford to bail Gorbachov out.

Bailout, or else

And a bailout is exactly what Yeltsin demanded. Exhibiting no shyness whatever, Yeltsin repeatedly informed everyone he met with, that the United States has a vital stake in preserving *perestroika*, and that it had better hand over sufficient money if it wants to preserve its own stability. "It is necessary to discuss how the United States could participate in measures to rescue *perestroika*, and I hope to raise this issue with President Bush if I get a chance," Yeltsin flatly declared in New York City on Sept. 10. "If *perestroika* falters and dies . . . the cataclysm will spread not just in the Soviet Union but in the United States as well," he told an audience at Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University Sept. 12.

In numerous subsequent public speeches, interviews, and other forums, Yeltsin painted a gory image of what would happen, both internally and to other countries, if the United

States doesn't "rescue *perestroika*."

The Soviet Union has "a crisis in the economic system, in the financial system—a national crisis, a nationalities crisis, a social crisis, and a crisis in the party as well," he declared on ABC's "Good Morning America" Sept. 11. Gorbachov has only six months to a year to lead the Soviet Union to progress or will face a "revolution from below." This "revolution from below," he privately confided to at least one person, will mean a bloody conflict, in which 5 to 7 million people could die, with Soviet Jews being among the most likely victims.

Yeltsin was at his most unsubtle in an interview on public television's McNeil-Lehrer Report on Sept. 11. Reiterating his prediction that Gorbachov has less than a year to reverse the economic and political crises wracking the Soviet Union, Yeltsin asserted that if he fails to accomplish this, there will be a "revolution that will push the Soviet Union over the edge into the abyss."

And, "If we go over the edge of the abyss," Yeltsin warned, "the whole world will be impacted. . . . Don't think you Americans can isolate yourselves from it."

Yeltsin delivered fundamentally the same warning in public and private discussions in New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Indiana, Minneapolis, and Washington state. The cross-country love-in was interrupted several times, when representatives of the National Democratic Policy Committee, the political action committee of the LaRouche wing of the Democratic Party, confronted Yeltsin with evidence that Moscow was behind the assassination of former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, and had then run a classic KGB disinformation operation to pin the blame on Lyndon H. LaRouche.

Bush hedging bets

Although his original itinerary did not include a meeting with Bush, Yeltsin loudly proclaimed his desire to meet with the President almost the moment he alit from his Aeroflot jet in New York Sept. 9. By Sept. 11, the administration let it be known that Secretary of State Baker would meet with the man whom some observers have characterized as the "Russian Mussolini." And by Sept. 12, the White House had invited Yeltsin to stop by for discussions with National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and his deputy Robert Gates, as well as Vice President Dan Quayle and the President himself.

Yeltsin told reporters afterward that he had presented Bush with a 10-point program that "would serve to rescue *perestroika*." Although neither he nor the White House would give details of that program, it was believed to have included proposals for American construction of mass housing in the Soviet Union; increasing private investment there; and management assistance from the United States.

Nor did Yeltsin or the White House reveal how his proposals were received. While Bush spokesman Marlin Fitzwater issued a public statement explaining that, "We do want

to be clear that United States policy is to support *glasnost* and *perestroika* and the reforms under way in the Soviet Union," there were enough signals sent by other members of the administration to suggest that the Bush crowd is now focusing its sights on the post-Gorbachov era.

James Baker, the architect of the apparently backburned multi-billion dollar "Wyoming Accords," was cited in the press as having complained to Yeltsin that Moscow wasn't moving quickly enough on the issues of price reform and ruble convertibility.

The following day, Sept. 14, Baker's second-in-command at State, Henry Kissinger alter-ego Lawrence Eagleburger, told a Washington seminar that the West shouldn't try to bankroll Gorbachov's economic program. "Already we are hearing . . . we need to take measures to ensure the success of Gorbachov's reforms," Eagleburger said in remarks at Georgetown University. "This, however, is not the task for American policy nor should it be that of our Western partners. Our task . . . is to devise policies which will serve our interests whether Mr. Gorbachov succeeds or fails and our common goal ought to be the maintenance of the security consensus which has served the West so well for the past 40 years."

The word now emanating from Bush circles is that the most that can be expected from the Baker-Shevardnadze meeting in Jackson Hole is a tentative agreement to conclude a chemical weapons pact.

These signs should not be interpreted to mean that the Bush administration has suddenly woken up to the fact that it is pure insanity for the United States to attempt to expand economic relations with the East bloc, without first junking its own post-industrial, neo-malthusian economic policies, and without taking the necessary steps to restore the West's military leverage.

What it does suggest is that Washington considers Gorbachov a lost cause, and has decided to hedge its bets, until the succession crisis resolves itself. It also may indicate, as some sources have suggested, that the accelerating U.S. economic crisis, signaled by the collapsing Campeau leveraged buy-out deal, has persuaded some influential American financial circles that the United States may soon have to start using all its economic resources to bail *itself* out.

Yeltsin himself may be one of the bets which the Bush administration is hedging. Rumors flew through Washington during his trip, that, aside from trying to wrest some money out of the United States, another key purpose of his visit was to present himself to the Establishment as a possible successor to Gorbachov. Calling this "absolutely credible," one Midwest lawyer who helped arrange part of Yeltsin's tour said that "it's obvious from the fact that Yeltsin asked to meet with top American businessmen, the people who make the decisions about economic policy. Yeltsin believes that these are the people who run the U.S., and he wants to show them that he's the kind of person they can deal with."

Yeltsin drew lavish praise from David Rockefeller, who

called him a "charming and impressive person," as well as Eastern Establishment sovietologist George F. Kennan, who commented that Yeltsin is "not to be underestimated."

Who invited Yeltsin

The main sponsor which arranged the Yeltsin tour was the **Esalen Institute's** Soviet-American Exchange Program. Esalen regularly organizes seminars on the psychology of U.S.-Soviet relations, and Esalen leaders frequently travel to the Soviet Union for discussions on parapsychology, spirituality, and the like.

Esalen was founded in 1962 in Big Sur, California by the late Aldous Huxley, a key figure in the creation of the drug counterculture. (Appeasement of dictators was old hat to the author of *Brave New World*: Huxley in 1937 cofounded with Bertrand Russell the Peace Pledge Union, which campaigned for peace with Adolf Hitler.) His Esalen Institute became a mecca for hundreds of Americans to engage in weekends of T-Groups and Training Groups; for Zen, Hindu, and Buddhist transcendental meditation; and for "out of body" experiences through simulated and actual hallucinogenic drugs.

Besides Esalen, **Norwest Bank**, which was scheduled to introduce Boris Yeltsin to the chief executive officers of leading Midwest corporations, seems to have special qualifications for the job. In 1985, Norwest was accused by a Montana farmer of abetting drug trafficking. In that case, Dick Kurth, his wife Judith, and his grown son and daughter, were convicted of marijuana cultivation. Kurth, named Montana Farmer of the Year in 1985, got into dope-growing in desperation; the farm that had been in his wife's family for four generations, was going bankrupt.

At the time of his arrest in 1988, Kurth revealed that an officer at the Fort Benton, Montana branch of Norwest had suggested that cultivation of marijuana might solve his financial problems. At the same time that the bank canceled all his lines of credit, Kurth reported, Norwest employees advised him on how to deposit the dope money so as to go undetected by federal regulations designed to spot drug-money laundering. The bank denied his accusation and was not investigated. Kurth was sentenced to 20 years in prison; he has just been denied parole. Norwest Bank is now trying to take his farm in a bankruptcy proceeding.

Bush called 'personally responsible' for LaRouche

During the week of Sept. 11-15, Lyndon LaRouche, a former U.S. presidential candidate and current candidate for the U.S. Congress, was subjected to gross mistreatment in the course of a surgical procedure conducted at the Rochester Federal Medical Facility in Minnesota. Mr. LaRouche is a prisoner at Rochester Federal Prison, while his conviction last year of various charges, in a politically motivated trial, is under appeal. While on a severely restricted diet and under strong medication in preparation for the surgery, LaRouche, who is 67 years old, was nonetheless forced to work eight-hour shifts in his prison job before and after the procedure.

EIR contributing editor Warren Hamerman issued the following comments on this situation on Sept. 16 from Rochester:

"The mistreatment of Lyndon LaRouche, in the context of previous assignments to heavy labor, reflects an intent of someone in the prison system to kill him in the obvious way.

"If political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche is forced to die in the prison system, the world and history will read

this as President George Bush's personal intent. Whether that is true or not, the world will see it so, and fairly. If Lyndon LaRouche dies in prison, only Bush could be blamed, and fairly so.

"The work assignment of LaRouche requires an estimated intake of 3,000 calories per day in the estimation of LaRouche himself—an expert in industrial engineering practice with over 20 years' experience.

"The surgical procedure which LaRouche underwent is traumatic. In the evaluation of his personal physician: 'Under this condition in West Germany, you are advised by your physician that you have to rest for the time the laxative is affecting you, usually two days before the procedure, and at least one day after the treatment. To my great astonishment, I learned that Mr. LaRouche had to work during a treatment with a supposedly strong laxative, and was called for duty less than 12 hours after his treatment. I feel obliged to raise my utmost concern about this procedure, and I want to assure you that this is not *lege artis* medical treatment you apply to an elderly patient in Germany.'

"Just as Lyndon LaRouche was targeted, railroaded, and imprisoned for his politics, so too he is now being mistreated in prison for the same reason. George Bush, based on his personal knowledge and complicity, in events central to LaRouche's imprisonment, shall be held individually accountable for LaRouche's fate.

"Further precise bulletins on political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche's situation shall be released as required."