

Scherer analysis sobers up Washington on Yeltsin coup

by William C. Jones

As Russian President Boris Yeltsin was deploying paratroopers to tighten his grip around the Russian parliament, causing some perturbations in the Clinton administration, Gen. Paul Albert Scherer (ret.), the former chief of German military intelligence and counterintelligence, was in the process of informing congressmen and diplomats in Washington on the type of turbulence they have to expect in the entire territory of the former Soviet Union. It was somewhat unnerving for some political circles that the former West German spy chief was also in Washington to express his grave concern about the continued incarceration of Lyndon LaRouche, whom Scherer considers one of the most important political figures on the American scene today. Scherer's visit occurred a week after an international delegation of parliamentarians and others from Europe and Ibero-America was in Washington to speak out on LaRouche's behalf (see p. 63).

Although the general emphasized that he did not come here as "the trumpeter in the panic orchestra," his stark analysis produced a sobering effect on a Washington engulfed by soap-opera illusions regarding the new darling of the moment, Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin. In his five days in the nation's capital, Scherer spent most of his time talking to congressmen about recent developments in Russia and the other countries of the Community of Independent States.

On Sept. 29, Scherer held a press conference at the National Press Club. He told the press that "1993 is a year of destiny for all of us. We must stand in judgment before God and before man for what we have done in these difficult times."

Scherer characterized the Russian President as the "leading figure of the bankruptcy administration" of the Russian state. Just a week before Scherer spoke, President Bill Clinton had given his support to Yeltsin's dissolution of the Rus-

sian parliament. Taking this as a green light, Yeltsin soon replaced the militia forces deployed outside the White House (parliament) with Russian Army paratroopers, in preparation for more decisive action.

"The Boris Yeltsin experiment is moving toward its end," said General Scherer, "and the [Russian] White House troubles are a mere prelude to general revolt." Like the Bush administration before it, the Clinton administration decided to back a new "knight on a white horse," and like his "gallant" predecessor before him, Mikhail Gorbachov, Yeltsin's star is rapidly plunging. "Banking everything on Yeltsin," said Scherer, "was a major political blunder."

The Russian attitude to the West has changed during this period, in which western aid has been strictly coupled with demands for austerity. "Two years ago, the Russians were prepared to kiss the feet of the U.S. and the West," Scherer said. "They felt liberated and were fascinated by all the new possibilities opening up to them." But that has all changed.

For one thing, there are complications on the military side. "The General Staff felt betrayed during the Persian Gulf war," said Scherer. The West had given the world an inflated picture of its own capabilities through the television media, by dish-ing up an "electronic fairy tale." Seeing the U.S. forces in action against a much weaker opponent, "the Russians concluded that their technical capabilities were not much worse than those of the Americans," Scherer said. When they saw their second-tier war matériel, which the Iraqis were using, operate against the best the United States had to offer, "they felt that they had 'killed their pig' without reason."

"The Russians then responded with an attempt to cooperate on a joint Strategic Defense Initiative program," said Scherer, referring to the April 2 article in *Izvestia* that made the first public presentation of the "Trust" proposal for coop-

eration with the United States on an anti-missile defense system. "But the West said, 'No'! The Russians then had proof that the West was not serious about cooperating." This led to the emergence of political elements that began insisting on maintaining the Caucasus in the Russian sphere of operations by assisting the Abkhazian "revolt" in Georgia, and on maintaining a Russian troop presence on the Afghan and Iranian borders of Tajikistan.

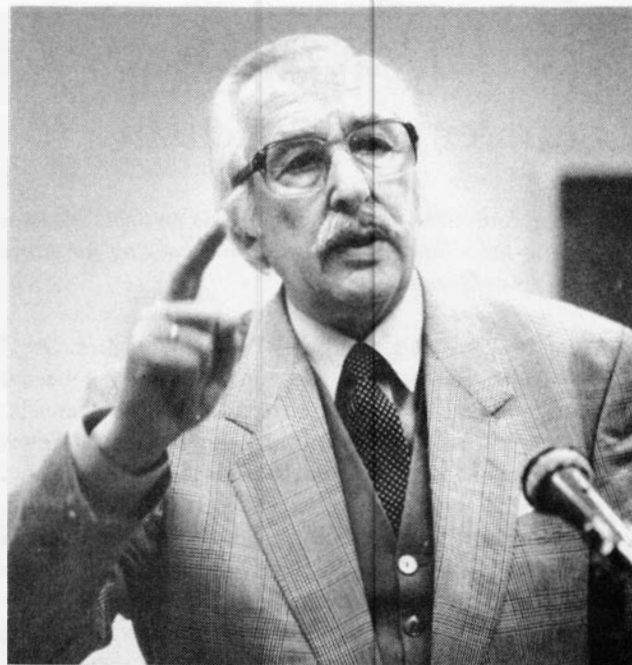
Scherer commented further on the situation in the Russian Army. "Previously, there was discipline in the Army," he said. Scherer had witnessed this as a young officer in the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front during World War II, and has more recently observed some of the elite Russian units in east Germany. "No army in the world had reacted so well as its empire collapsed as did the Russian Army. But now their best elite troops are living in tents." One sign of a radical change in the mood in the Army was signified by the recent call by Aleksandr Rutskoy, the Russian vice president, whom Yeltsin deposed in connection with the dissolution of parliament. "Rutskoy, the most decorated officer of the Soviet Air Force, was calling on the troops to mutiny," said Scherer. "You have got to understand the absolute obedience which generally reigned in the Soviet Army, to understand the awful significance of Rutskoy's call."

Scherer compared the situation today to that which sparked the Revolution of 1905, the initial phase of the revolutionary wave which led to the final overthrow of the Romanov dynasty in 1917. "The defeat of the Russian Navy by Japan and the failure of any further eastward expansion created the preconditions for [this] revolution," said Scherer. But, he explained, today's developments are more similar to the period following the October Revolution, from 1917 to 1921. "Two experiments with 'revolution from above'—Gorbachov's and then Yeltsin's—have failed," said Scherer, "and now we're facing the 'revolution from below.'"

Scherer said he considered Gorbachov one of the most successful masters of psychological warfare. As for Yeltsin, "he wanted a maximalist program," Scherer said, "but it failed. And he was a populist because of his alcoholism." The two preconditions for revolution are now in place: 1) absolute disappointment with the West, and 2) utter misery of the population.

The danger of war

In the area of nuclear disarmament, Scherer emphasized how necessary it was to proceed with extreme caution, because of the brilliance of Russian deception. "Look at Shevardnadze," said Scherer, in reference to the President of Georgia, a former high Soviet communist official. "Shevardnadze was a major general in the KGB. He says Moscow is cheating—and they are!" Scherer was reticent to give any numbers in this respect, since he felt that there was so much we do not know. But he did point to several key figures: the 228 Russian nuclear-armed submarines now in service, of



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which 8 are large Typhoon-class submarines, each carrying 120 warheads. "Obviously, these all are being tracked, but the larger ships can stay under the ice for a long time. Only one of these has to break out, and you have a first-strike capability. . . . Remember," said Scherer, "the crews of these ships have sworn an oath that, in time of war, they will never return to base."

Two general areas of conflict are of immediate significance in the short term, in Scherer's analysis, and demand a response from the West: a Russian move on the Baltic and a Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

In the Baltic states, the area of Kaliningrad is key. Kaliningrad is the only port where the Russian fleet could not be bottled up in the Baltic Sea. Therefore, the Russians have to have complete access to this area, now separated from Russia by the Baltic states.

As for conflict between Russia and Ukraine, it is almost inevitable, Scherer said. "Ukraine is self-sustaining in food and had 60% of the coal production of the U.S.S.R."

What should the West do? First, it should make binding security guarantees regarding the inviolability of the borders of Ukraine and the borders of the Baltic states. Second, it must make certain that the borders of Russia remain east of the Bug River in eastern Poland. In order to do that, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic must be admitted to NATO, in conformity with their requests. "The goal," said Scherer, "is to send a signal to the new Moscow leaders to dissuade them from the policies which would otherwise prevail. The West could have sent the right signals to aggres-

LaRouche: It is a deadly blunder to back Yeltsin

Lyndon LaRouche made these remarks on Sept. 24, concerning the Clinton administration's backing for Boris Yeltsin's cold coup.

What must be looked at primarily is the axiomatics. Obviously, this was cooked up primarily with the United States, through the Chernomyrdin and other channels. This represents a full mobilization by the United States establishment, or that section around the White House, to devise what it may think is a solution to the global crisis, to bring the kind of stability in which the President can proceed with NAFTA, secondarily, but primarily with the Hillary Clinton health plan package. . . .

The crucial fact is that Washington has proceeded from a very obvious geopolitical axiomatic, and that is simply to restore the Versailles-Yalta style of condominium relationship with their designated person in Moscow, in this case Yeltsin, his being for the moment the visible aspect of the designated forces. They've put everything into it.

Now this has a certain crushing effect on the opposition to Yeltsin; but that must not blind us to the larger reality, that the whole concoction is a failure from the get-go. That does not mean that it will blow up immediately; it means it's a failure. It's going to lead the world to a new level of greater disaster, precisely because the agreement fails to address anything.

First of all, if you're going to have a condominium among powers, that means that you're going to have powers. So this way of enforcing globalism doesn't work. As a matter of fact, globalism doesn't work precisely because it must deny the existence of any nation-state as a sovereign power. In this case, the assumption is that if a foreign power, such as the United States, *controls* the Russian

partner, then they can have a Russian power, but since the ruling force in Russia is subordinate in some sense, that that somehow enables them to reinforce the globalist policy; it also creates a situation in which they cheerfully hope that they can *ignore* the laws of economics.

The coming explosion

Now we're going into winter, we're going into a great period of instability at all levels inside the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe, at the same time that the world economy as a whole is collapsing. So nothing is going to stand still. This is going to blow up; but we're going to have an explosion on a lower level of metastability, qualitatively lower, than had existed over the course of the recent summer.

So the essential thing here is *not* whether or not Washington has achieved stability for Yeltsin. That question cannot be answered, because the question is an absurd one. The question is: What kind of a new instability does this action by the United States to try to prop up and control Yeltsin, as the case of Yegor Gaidar, the case of Jeffrey Sachs, typifies it? What kind of explosion is this going to set off? We don't know the timetable yet; there are too many things to consider. Nonetheless, weeks or months is about the proper phase for a new explosion.

So this was a piece of insanity, which could lead, as some others have observed, either to Yeltsin becoming Boris Godunov, or into anarchy. We had this in Russian history before, remember, in the wake of Ivan Grozny [the Terrible], in the period between Ivan Grozny and the rise of the Romanovs. Russia could be going into that kind of process right now, on a reduced time scale or a similar time scale, in some cases. And that is the point to which the bungling by the Washington administration and its establishment core, has brought the world.

So this is a deadly blunder on the part of Washington, which demonstrates how little Washington understands the reality. As a matter of fact, Washington does not wish *to hear* about reality.

sive forces in Russia by refusing to accept the continued genocide in Bosnia. It would prove to them that the West would not tolerate this type of butchery without impunity. This mistake must be reversed now."

And what will happen in Russia proper? The present chaotic process could last three to four years. "There are no parties in the real sense of the term in Russia today, but rather movements with names, amorphous groups," said Scherer. There were attempts in 1990 to form political parties, but these attempts failed. "The leadership strata will be replaced. The way this would happen concretely could depend on hun-

dreds of different parameters. Scherer gave 13 different scenarios. In the worst of cases, with continued economic disintegration in Russia, extreme elements could take control in Moscow. "They may have the attitude, 'We are going to hell, therefore, we will also take the West to hell.'" This, combined with current nuclear capabilities, "would not only mean limited civil war with nuclear weapons, but a real strategic confrontation with the West."

In Scherer's judgment, all efforts to dismantle the military capabilities of the West, in Europe and in the United States, are extreme folly and should cease immediately.