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DECAPTIONED

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHARGE

DEPT ALSO FOR S/NIS, EUR/ISCA

WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC/BURNS

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
TAGS: OVIP (CHRISTOPHER, WARREN), PGOV, PREL, RS  
SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MOSCOW:  
DOMESTIC POLITICAL DYNAMICS

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

SUMMARY

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[REDACTED]  
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2. BORIS YELTSIN IS MOVING RAPIDLY TO CLOSURE ON  
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS DECEMBER 12 PLUS A REFERENDUM  
ON HIS VERSION OF A NEW CONSTITUTION.

-- POLITICIANS ACROSS THE SPECTRUM (EVEN HARDLINERS)  
ARE PREPARING TO CONTEST THE ELECTIONS AS SCHEDULED.

-- YELTSIN'S SUPPORTERS ARE DIVIDING INTO SEPARATE

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"RADICAL" AND "CAUTIOUS" REFORM MOVEMENTS.

-- THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT IS EXPERIENCED IN THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS; THE QUESTION IS THE FAIRNESS OF THE PRECEEDING CAMPAIGN IF NOW-BANNED OPPOSITION PARTIES AND NEWSPAPERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE.

-- YELTSIN DISTINGUISHES "LEGITIMATE OPPOSITION" FROM "CRIMINAL INSURRECTION", AND IS NOT NOW PREPARED TO ALLOW THE LATTER TO RUN FOR HIS NEW PARLIAMENT.

-- YELTSIN IS TAKING HIS DRAFT CONSTITUTION TO THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE ADVICE OF CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERTS, WHO BELIEVE IT WOULD GIVE TOO MUCH POWER TO THE PRESIDENT AND FAILS TO ADDRESS MAJOR FEDERAL ISSUES.

-- THE MOSCOW GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING A POLICY OF POLICE CLEANSING OF ETHNIC NON-RUSSIANS.

END SUMMARY  
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WHY YELTSIN WILL STICK WITH HIS TIMETABLE  
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3. PRESIDENT YELTSIN IS MOVING SWIFTLY TO SECURE LONG-TERM POLITICAL BENEFITS FROM THE RECENT CRISIS IN THE RUSSIAN CAPITAL. DESPITE SOME WAVERING AMONG HIS AIDES (ESPECIALLY WHEN THE BOSS WAS IN JAPAN), YELTSIN IS PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO THE SCHEDULE HE ANNOUNCED BEFORE THE OCTOBER 3-4 BLOODSHED:

-- ELECTIONS TO A NEW PARLIAMENT DECEMBER 12;

-- PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS SIX MONTHS LATER ON JUNE 14 (SOME OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ENTOURAGE PUBLICLY ADVOCATE CANCELLATION OF THE JUNE BALLOT).

4. SEVERAL FACTORS IMPEL YELTSIN TO HOLD TO THE DECEMBER 12 DATE.

-- EARLY ELECTIONS WILL GIVE LEGITIMACY TO HIS

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SEPTEMBER 21 ACTION DISSOLVING THE OLD LEGISLATURE. WITH THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD OCTOBER 3-4 (ALBEIT INITIATED BY THE HARDLINERS), THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO FULFILL HIS PROMISE OF AN EARLY RETURN TO FULL CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. TO DELAY THE VOTE INTO 1994 WOULD, IN ESSENCE, ACCEDE TO THE TIMETABLE ADVOCATED BY THE OPPOSITION DURING THE CRISIS, AND REJECTED THEN BY YELTSIN.

-- IF YELTSIN POSTPONES THE ELECTION IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS OF INADEQUATE PREPARATION TIME, HIS

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OPPONENTS WOULD ACCUSE HIM OF DOING SO TO EXTEND THE PERIOD OF PRESIDENTIAL RULE AND OF "REFORMIST DICTATORSHIP".

-- YELTSIN WANTS A REFERENDUM ON A NEW CONSTITUTION WHILE HE IS STILL IN A POSITION TO DEFINE ITS CONTENT.

WHERE -- AND WHY -- YELTSIN ALTERED HIS PROGRAM

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5. YELTSIN HAS MADE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT ALTERATIONS TO THE CONTENT TO HIS SEPTEMBER 21 PROGRAM.

6. YELTSIN INITIALLY CALLED FOR ELECTIONS ONLY TO THE LOWER HOUSE (THE DUMA) OF A NEW PARLIAMENT AND WAS PUBLICLY IN FAVOR OF A NON-ELECTED UPPER HOUSE COMPOSED OF THE TOP EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICIALS OF THE FEDERATION'S EIGHTY-NINE COMPONENTS. WITH THE CRUSHING OF THE "WHITE HOUSE" OPPOSITION,

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EXDIS

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WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC/BURNS

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
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DOMESTIC POLITICAL DYNAMICS

YELTSIN NO LONGER NEEDED TO COURT PROVINCIAL LEADERS  
AND ANNOUNCED THE UPPER HOUSE WOULD ALSO BE ELECTED,  
ALSO ON DECEMBER 12. (HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT  
YET ANNOUNCED HOW THE UPPER HOUSE WILL BE ELECTED OR

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HOW CANDIDATES MAY STAND FOR IT.)

7. FRUSTRATED BY OPPOSITION IN MANY REGIONAL AND  
LOCAL LEGISLATURES, YELTSIN SUGGESTED IN HIS OCTOBER 6  
SPEECH THAT THESE BODIES ALSO SHOULD STAND FOR EARLY  
ELECTION IN DECEMBER. THE PRESIDENT HAS SINCE WAFFLED

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ON THIS ISSUE, RECOGNIZING THE LACK OF TIME TO CONTEST SEATS AT SO MANY LEVELS IN ONLY TWO MONTHS. YELTSIN THEN FORMED A COMMISSION TO STUDY THE REORGANIZATION OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEGISLATURES, PRESUMABLY TO GIVE RECOMMENDATIONS (TO MAKE THEM MUCH SMALLER) TO THE NEW NATIONAL LEGISLATURE WITH A VIEW TO ELECTIONS SOMETIME NEXT YEAR. IN THE MEANTIME, THERE IS GREAT CONFUSION ACROSS THE FEDERATION: IN RESPONSE TO YELTSIN'S SPEECH, SOME REGIONAL SOVIETS SCHEDULED DECEMBER 12 ELECTIONS FOR THEMSELVES, SOME SIMPLY VOTED THEMSELVES OUT OF BUSINESS PENDING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS, SOME LACK A QUORUM TO DO ANYTHING, AND SOME ARE OPENLY DEFIANT OF THE PRESIDENT'S (CONTRADICTIONARY) ORDERS.

8. SOME PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORS WANTED A REFERENDUM IN DECEMBER ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A NEW CONSTITUTION, IN ORDER TO DRIVE WORK ON THE TEXT TO RAPID COMPLETION SOON AFTER THE NEW LEGISLATURE TAKES OFFICE. YELTSIN WENT FURTHER, ANNOUNCING A DECEMBER 12 PLEBISCITE ON THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT, DESPITE THE ALMOST UNDISPUTED FACT THE TEXT REMAINS IN MANY WAYS STILL A DRAFT. THE WORK OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE LAST SUMMER WAS PRODUCTIVE, BUT CERTAINLY NOT DEFINITIVE. YELTSIN HAD HIMSELF SCHEDULED ANOTHER

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 SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE FOR LAST WEEKEND TO WORK ON PENDING ISSUES. ALMOST AT THE LAST MOMENT, HE CANCELLED THE SESSION AND ORDERED THE REFERENDUM.

RUSHING A CONSTITUTION -- NOT FOR THE AGES  
 -----

9. YELTSIN WANTS TO COMPLETE THE LONG AND OFTEN TEDIOUS PROCESS OF CONSTITUTION WRITING (HE HAS BEEN AT THIS FOR TWO YEARS), AND MAY NOT TRUST THE NEW PARLIAMENT TO DO SO EXPEDITIOUSLY OR ON HIS TERMS. UNFORTUNATELY, IN DECEMBER HE WILL PRESENT THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE A HALF-BAKED DOCUMENT DELINEATING SEPARATION OF POWERS IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, BUT WITH A PREPONDERANCE OF AUTHORITY IN THE HANDS OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (MORE SO, FOR EXAMPLE, THAN IN DE GAULLE'S CONSTITUTION FOR THE FIFTH REPUBLIC). EVEN MANY REFORMERS WORRY ABOUT ESTABLISHING A NEW RUSSIAN

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DEMOCRACY SO HEAVILY TILTED TOWARD PRESIDENTIAL POWER.

10. THE TEXT ALSO DOES NOT ADEQUATELY DEFINE THE RESPECTIVE ROLES AND POWERS OF THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENTS AND DOES NOT RESOLVE THE NEURALGIC ISSUE OF THE COMPETITIVE STATUS OF THE GEOGRAPHICALLY-DRAWN REGIONS AND THE ETHNICALLY-BASED REPUBLICS. THE NEW CONSTITUTION, AS WRITTEN, MIGHT ESTABLISH WORKABLE RULES OF THE GAME FOR GOVERNMENT IN MOSCOW, BUT NOT AN ADEQUATE BASIS FOR DEALING WITH THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL CHALLENGE FACING THE NEW LEGISLATURE (AND YELTSIN'S GOVERNMENT AS WELL): MAKING THE UNWIELDY RUSSIAN FEDERATION ACTUALLY WORK.

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WHEN YOU SEE A POLITICIAN RUN, YOU KNOW HE'S RUNNING  
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11. DESPITE CONTINUING CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE DECEMBER ELECTIONS, POLITICIANS OF MOST STRIPES ARE CONDUCTING THEMSELVES IN EXPECTATION IT WILL TAKE PLACE AS SCHEDULED. NINETY-TWO PARTIES ARE NOW REGISTERED TO FIELD SLATES CANDIDATES. EVEN MANY HARDLINE NATIONALISTS AND COMMUNISTS HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION TO RUN FOR THE NEW DUMA, WHILE SELF-STYLED "CENTRISTS" OF VARIOUS HUES ARE PREPARING PROGRAMS AND PROFILES. THE JOCKEYING AMONG POLITICIANS AND PARTIES IS HECTIC, AND CONFUSING EVEN TO THE INSIDERS.

12. THE SHORT TIME REMAINING, COMBINED WITH THE REGISTRATION RULES FORMULATED BY THE GOVERNMENT, WORK TO THE ADVANTAGE OF LARGE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS WITH SUBSTANTIAL PRIVATE FUNDING (I.E., PRO-YELTSIN

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PARTIES, AND PERHAPS THE COMMUNISTS). THESE  
CONDITIONS DISADVANTAGE MEDIUM-SIZED AND SMALLER  
PARTIES TO FIELD SLATES OF CANDIDATES ACROSS THE  
COUNTRY AND TO COMPETE WITH LARGER PARTIES.

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EVEN REFORMERS ARE SCHISMATIC  
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13. IN CLASSIC RUSSIAN FASHION, EVEN THE PRESIDENT'S

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ADHERENTS CANNOT AGREE AMONG THEMSELVES ON PROGRAMS AND CANDIDATES. REFORMERS WILL STAND FOR ELECTION UNDER TWO COMPETING STANDARDS (NOTE THAT SITTING GOVERNMENT MINISTERS WILL RUN FOR THE NEW PARLIAMENT).

-- "RUSSIA'S CHOICE" IS THE VEHICLE FOR THE ADVOCATES OF "RADICAL" REFORM: FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS GAYDAR AND SHUMEYKO, FOREIGN MINISTER KOZYREV, AND SUCH WORTHIES AS FILATOV, CHUBAYS, POLTORANIN, BURBULIS, VOLKOGONOV, KOVALEV, ETC. (PLUS MOST OF THE NOW-VENERABLE "DEMOCRATIC RUSSIA" (DEMROSSIYA) SLATE).

-- "RUSSIA'S UNITY AND CONCORD IS THE HOME FOR PRO-YELTSIN CANDIDATES WITH LESS REFORMIST ZEAL AND WILL FIELD A SLATE HEADED BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SHAKHRAI, REPORTEDLY WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF PRIME MINISTER CHERNOMYRDIN, FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SOSKOVETS, PLUS SHOKHIN AND STANKEVICH.

FROM "WHITE HOUSE" TO THE HUSTINGS OR THE SIDELINES?  
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14. AN UNANSWERED QUESTION IS WHO WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RUN. WE ARE RELIABLY INFORMED THAT MEMBERSHIP IN A BANNED POLITICAL ORGANIZATION WILL NOT PREVENT AN

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 INDIVIDUAL FROM RUNNING FOR LEGISLATIVE OFFICE IN HIS/HER OWN RIGHT, SO LONG AS THE INDIVIDUAL IS NOT CHARGED WITH A CRIMINAL OFFENSE. MOST OF THE POLITICIANS DETAINED AT THE SURRENDER OF THE "WHITE HOUSE" WERE RELEASED SOON THEREAFTER. IT IS NOT NOW CLEAR IF CRIMINAL CHARGES WILL BE BROUGHT AGAINST ANY OR ALL OF THESE FIGURES BETWEEN NOW AND ELECTION DAY (OUR IMPRESSION IS THE ISSUE HAS NOT BEEN DECIDED).

15. RUNNING AS AN INDIVIDUAL IS ONLY PART OF THE BATTLE FOR THE NEW DUMA, HOWEVER, WHERE HALF THE SEATS WILL BE APPORTIONED TO COUNTRY-WIDE PARTY LISTS. IF OPPOSITION GROUPS CANNOT RUN AS PARTIES COUNTRY-WIDE, THEIR ABILITY TO ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANT STANDING IN THE DUMA WILL BE HAMPERED EVEN BEFORE THE VOTING. THUS, THE CONTINUING BAN ON TEN HARDLINE NATIONALIST AND

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COMMUNIST POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS REMAINS A KEY ISSUE FOR THE PRE-ELECTORAL PERIOD, AND FOR THE ULTIMATE LEGITIMACY OF THE NEW LEGISLATIVE BODY. WE DO NOT YET KNOW IF SOME OR ALL BANNED GROUPS (AND NEWSPAPERS AS WELL, SEPTEL) WILL BE ABLE TO ALTER THEIR NAMES AND MASTHEADS, AND THEN CARRY ON MORE OR LESS AS BEFORE. SO FAR, THE EVIDENCE IS CONTRADICTORY, BUT NOT ENCOURAGING.

YELTSIN NOT SEEKING RECONCILIATION  
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16. BORIS YELTSIN'S FACE DURING HIS OCTOBER 6 SPEECH WAS PROOF THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT HAD CAST HIS HARDLINE OPPONENTS INTO A PERSONAL ANATHEMA. FROM THE SPEECH

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AND FROM YELTSIN'S PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, WE KNOW HE MAKES A CLEAR DISTINCTION IN HIS OWN MIND BETWEEN LEGITIMATE POLITICAL OPPOSITION AND ARMED INSURRECTION: THE LATTER CATEGORY INCLUDES THOSE LEADERS OF THE "WHITE HOUSE" STILL IN LEFORTOVO PRISON AND THOSE POLITICAL PARTIES/MOVEMENTS AND NEWSPAPERS WHICH, IN YELTSIN'S VIEW, WERE GUILTY OF INCITEMENT TO THE CIVIL UNREST AND ARMED INSURRECTION.

IN MOSCOW, SHADES OF THE BALKANS?  
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17. THE CONDUCT OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN MOSCOW THESE PAST TWO WEEKS IS ALSO CAUSE FOR SERIOUS CONCERN. THE EMERGENCY RULES AND CURFEW WERE USED BY THE SECURITY FORCES TO ENGAGE IN SYSTEMATIC POLICE CLEANSING OF NON-RUSSIAN PEOPLE FROM CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASIAN STATES. THOUSANDS OF SUCH PEOPLE WERE EXPELLED FROM THE CITY FOR LACK OF A SOVIET-ERA

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           DOMESTIC POLITICAL DYNAMICS

RESIDENCE PERMIT (A REQUIREMENT ABOLISHED LAST SUMMER  
 BY THE SUPREME SOVIET BUT RETAINED BY THE MOSCOW CITY  
 AUTHORITIES). WE ALSO HAVE MANY REPORTS OF BEATINGS  
 AND HARASSMENT OF PEOPLE BASED ON THEIR ETHNICITY.

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18. THE QUESTION IS HOW FAR THIS POLICY WILL NOW GO  
 WITH THE CURFEW ENDED. MOSCOW MAYOR LUZHKOV OPENLY

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CALLS FOR ENFORCEMENT OF RESIDENCE RULES AND CLAIMS PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT. LUZHKOVA HAS ALSO CHEERED ON THE POLICE IN THINLY-VEILED RACIST TERMS AND GONE SO FAR AS TO ADVOCATE SALES ONLY OF "GOOD, RUSSIAN" PRODUCE AS OPPOSED TO THE SINISTER, "EXOTIC" FRUITS AND VEGETABLES OFFERED BY CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASIAN MERCHANTS. MOSCOW IS (AND HAS BEEN FOR MANY YEARS) A COSMOPOLITAN EURASIAN CROSSROADS WITH A SUBSTANTIAL NON-SLAVIC MINORITY. THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT POPULAR WITH MANY RUSSIAN MUSCOVITES, A VIEW ENHANCED BY THE RESULTS OF MARKET REFORM AND THE GROWTH OF ORGANIZED CRIME. THE MAYOR'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST DARK-SKINNED PEOPLE HAS PLAYED WELL WITH THE MASSES, AND MAY TEMPT THE AUTHORITIES TO MORE EXCESSES IN THE RUN-UP TO ELECTION DAY.

FOR THE UNITED STATES: TO OBSERVE -- AND TO JUDGE?  
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19. YELTSIN HAS ASKED THE OUTSIDE WORLD, IN PARTICULAR THE UNITED STATES, TO SEND OBSERVERS TO MONITOR THE DECEMBER ELECTIONS. THIS REQUEST CREATES A DILEMMA FOR US (AND FOR OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES, AS WE KNOW FROM CONSULTATIONS WITH ALLIED EMBASSIES): TO QUALIFY AS FREE AND FAIR MEANS MORE THAN THE CONDUCT ON ELECTION DAY; IT ALSO INCLUDES THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE ELECTION IS HELD AND THE OPENNESS OF THE

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 CAMPAIGN WHICH PRECEDED IT. THE RUSSIANS KNOW VERY WELL HOW TO CONDUCT THE ACTUAL BALLOTING; AND THERE IS LITTLE HISTORY OF VOTE-RIGGING IN THIS COUNTRY (THERE NEVER NEEDED TO BE). THUS, THE VOTING ON DECEMBER 12 WILL PROBABLY GO ALMOST AS SMOOTHLY AS DID THE APRIL 25 REFERENDUM. THE QUESTION WILL BE THE DEMOCRATIC CONTENT OF THE ENTIRE ELECTORAL PROCESS. THE TEST WILL BE IN ALLOWING SUFFICIENTLY BROAD PARTICIPATION TO MEET A REASONABLE STANDARD OF FREE AND FAIR, WITHOUT INCLUDING GROUPS ADVOCATING ARMED FORCE TO OVERTHROW THE CURRENT SYSTEM.

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