

Yeltsin wins game; hard-liners hit road

The battle for control of Russia, at least for now, is over.

If it was a chess game, no one emerged as grandmaster. But it isn't always necessary to possess a brilliant strategy and to execute it flawlessly. Sometimes, all you need to do, amid all of the spectators and all of the critics, is win. That's exactly what President Boris Yeltsin did when he ordered an assault on rebel lawmakers holed up in the Russian parliament building, declaring that the time for talks was "over."

Obviously, A stalemate had existed for two weeks in the heart of the Russian capital, as members of the conservative Supreme Soviet refused to adhere to a presidential decree ordering them to disband.

Yeltsin had earlier pledged not to use force to resolve the conflict, but his chief opponents, mostly hard-line former Communists, made no similar promise. It was no surprise, then, that they were responsible for the first appearances of bloodshed: minor incidents of violence Saturday, as well as a riot Sunday, which allowed hard-line supporters to gain control of several buildings in the vicinity of the parliament, including the principal offices of Moscow.

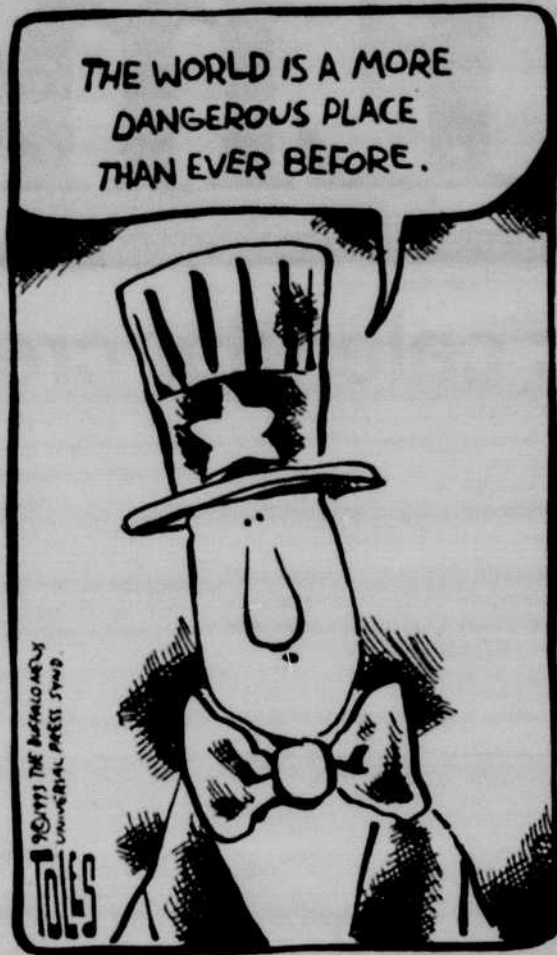
It was also not surprising when Yeltsin reciprocated, ordering Monday morning's attack on the parliament. The principal rebel leaders, speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov and Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, surrendered near the end of the 10-hour battle, which left the White House, as the parliament building is called, smoking and scarred by pro-Yeltsin tank blasts.

The hard-line bent of the parliament may have made life difficult for Yeltsin, as he tried to push for much-needed social and economic reforms, but it seems hard to justify the forced overthrow of a parliament simply because it fails to rubber-stamp the president's agenda. What would Americans do if President Bill Clinton up and told Congress to disband? At least, after the cheering died down?

Such analogies are not very useful in this case, however, because the relationship between the Supreme Soviet and the president in Russia is nothing like American-style "checks and balances." Gridlock in American lawmaking is a necessary nuisance, delaying decisions until a reluctant compromise is reached. Gridlock in Russian lawmaking threatens the very survival of the state.

Yeltsin has promised elections for a new Federal Assembly in December. Even if his actions in disbanding the Supreme Soviet were un-constitutional, as even he admits they are, there shouldn't be any harm in waiting a couple of months for the new legislature, replete with more reform-minded lawmakers, to form.

It was unfortunate that so much blood had to be shed before Yeltsin was able to maneuver his pieces into a commanding position. Even in checkmate, his opponents would scarcely admit that they were beaten. Of course, they knew all too well what would happen should their king be taken and the game be lost: The voters in Russia would never invite them to another match.



LETTERS

Lollipops

Everything is not jolly at Lollipops. I am outraged that the *Emerald* would treat the objectification of women as jolly and fun (*ODE*, Sept. 20). Admittedly, the boy who wrote the article did not think these bars objectify women. Yet in the same paragraph, he compared the female dancers to paintings being sold at auctions.

He continued by claiming that the women earned so much money at these bars that he wished he could be a woman, too. So I suppose he wishes he, too, could earn, like a woman, 66 cents for every dollar a man earns annually. I suppose he would like to be the one out of three women who are sexually abused during their lifetime or perhaps one of four million women who are victims of domestic violence each year in this country.

I'm sure this boy call me uptight for trashing a place where he has had so much "harmless" fun. But strip bars not only hurt the women they employed but all women. I wonder how a man who frequents these bars treats his wife and his co-workers? I wonder how seriously he takes a woman in an interview after a previous night of watching another woman put her breast in a man's face for \$5. Is he going to hire a woman, pay her an equal wage, promote her to vice president?

It's ironic that this sexist article appeared in the back to school issue. What a way to welcome women to their academic experience.

Tamara Dykeman
Eugene

Surly Sunday

This is a letter of special thanks to Mike Healy of AM•A•CHA Records, all of the bands (The Lonely Crowd, Jasper, Three Headhunters, Compost, Kpants, Agent 86, Oswald 5-0, Two Minutes Hate) and people who donated their time and money to Surly Sunday.

Even though it was a money-losing event, the more than expected turn-out made it worthwhile and showed that more events like this need to take place. Supporting local music not only improves the scene here for local bands, but also brings bands in from all across the country who want to play here.

So get out there and see these bands at the clubs or set up basement shows/parties. If you are under 21, more cheap, all-ages shows are coming (you'd be surprised at how many bands want to play all-age shows here), so be sure to go to them. If you don't show up, don't expect any more. Finally, listen to the locals show on KWVA (4 to 6 p.m. Saturdays) to hear these bands and find out who is playing and when. Alternative rock still sucks!

John Blebl
Eugene

Health care

Like most of you I eagerly awaited the unveiling of Clinton's health care reform plan. And I have to honestly tell you, I was impressed with what was laid out before us. His proposal is comprehensive and well thought out.

Let's not fool ourselves. We have a lot of work ahead of us. This is a costly overhaul at a time when we are running an annual budget deficit of \$300 billion. Specifically I have some reservations with the way the president intends on paying for his program. I would like us to begin the universal coverage before we implement the president's new entitlement programs. We need a better understanding of the costs and savings involved in health care reform, and I wish there were more of the Oregon plan in the president's plan.

The Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan would expand on the existing health care system to provide universal coverage.

Folks, we have to sit down, roll up our sleeves and make the necessary changes The president has issued a challenge to the Con-

gress and it is our responsibility to meet the challenge.

Sen. Bob Packwood
R-Oregon

The whaler

Susanne Steffen's article "Who owns the whales in international disputes?" (*ODE*, Sept. 20) perhaps should have been a letter to the editor in *Norway Today* entitled "Eat Willy." Its pro-whaling bias will most likely be criticized by others for its western, capitalistic conceptions of human domination of nature.

The sovereignty argument implicit in Susanne's article, no nation owns the whales therefore no nation has the right or authority to dictate other nations' policy is archaic and dangerous. Nations can no longer unilaterally make policy that affect regional or global environments.

It is important to understand why Norway would embrace eco-hypocrisy in such a blatant manner. Waving the Norwegian flag and professing sovereignty infringement in the name of whaling brought Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland the short-term political support that she needed in recent elections.

Norwegians, 52 percent polled, worry about international boycotts stemming from their nation's whaling. Burger King has already canceled a multimillion dollar agreement to purchase Norwegian fish, and the 1994 Winter Olympics to be hosted by Norway presents the opportunity for a boycott.

If there exists a common perception, or even misperception that some other beast than humans deserve special or "near divine status" and thus concern, regard and protection, then this should be seen as an opportunity to foster, rather than quell, such a rare, shared concern, with the hope being that love for Flipper and Willy, and cooperation to ensure their survival will spill over to you and me.

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