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SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER



NEWS

FROM:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1993

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DOLE ON YELTSIN

THE NEWS THAT PRESIDENT YELTSIN HAS SUSPENDED THE RUSSIAN PARLIAMENT AND CALLED FOR DECEMBER ELECTIONS HAS COME AS A SURPRISE, DESPITE THE FACT THAT RUSSIA HAS BEEN ON THE BRINK OF POLITICAL CRISIS FOR SOME TIME NOW.

WHILE WE DON'T HAVE THE DETAILS OF WHY PRESIDENT YELTSIN MADE THE DECISION TO TAKE THIS ACTION AT THIS TIME -- ALTHOUGH IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER WILL BE GIVING A BRIEFING VERY SOON WHICH MAY OFFER US MORE INSIGHT INTO YELTSIN'S DECISION -- WE ALL KNOW THAT YELTSIN HAS HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY, ESPECIALLY IN RECENT MONTHS, IN IMPLEMENTING CONSTITUTIONAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS BECAUSE OF OPPOSITION FROM THE CONGRESS AND THE SUPREME SOVIET. IT MAY BE THAT YELTSIN MADE THE JUDGMENT THAT THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY TO GUARANTEE THAT THE REFORM PROCESS WILL CONTINUE WITHOUT TAKING THIS DRASTIC STEP.

AND, WHILE IT'S NOT CLEAR WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF PRESIDENT YELTSIN'S ACTION WILL BE, WE KNOW THAT BORIS YELTSIN HAS BEEN STEADFASTLY COMMITTED TO DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC REFORM IN RUSSIA. CLEARLY THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE VOICED SUPPORT FOR THOSE REFORMS IN LAST APRIL'S REFERENDUM.

SO, IN MY VIEW WE HAVE TO WATCH THE SITUATION CLOSELY, KEEP THE UNITED STATES ON THE SIDE OF DEMOCRACY IN RUSSIA, AND HOPE THAT THE DECEMBER ELECTIONS WILL RESULT IN A MANDATE FOR YELTSIN AND REFLECT THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE'S SUPPORT FOR GENUINE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM.

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Remarks delivered on Senate floor at approximately 5:55 PM.