

Yeltsin seeks second chance with country's new parliament

MOSCOW — On the eve of President Clinton's visit, Boris Yeltsin opened Russia's unruly new parliament Tuesday by urging lawmakers to cooperate with him and give his economic reforms "a second wind." Three months after he sent tanks to crush the old, hard-line parliament, the Russian president warned the new lawmakers they must agree to "a complete and categorical exclusion of violence from the political life of the country."

Clinton arrives for a summit Wednesday to a Russia wracked by political struggle and bitterly divided over Yeltsin's free-market reforms and pro-Western tilt. The American president is expected to strongly endorse Yeltsin and shun his political foes, including extreme nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

"It's not enough to meet just with the leader ... Clinton should feel the political climate in Russia and its problems," said Nikolai Ryabov, a Yeltsin ally and head of the Election Commission.

Yeltsin stood stiffly and spoke with little emotion throughout his 17-minute address to the upper chamber, the Federation Council.

His sober appeal for dialogue contrasted sharply to his fighting mood when he called in the army Oct. 4 to resolve his conflict with his hard-line enemies, whose supporters had rioted in the streets.

"Despite the diversity of parties in parliament, there is a fundamental basis for constructive work together," Yeltsin said Tuesday.

He urged parliament to pass laws easing the transition to a market economy.

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—Yeltsin Russian President

Since the stunning success of extreme nationalists and Communists in December's parliamentary elections, doubts have emerged about Yeltsin's commitment to his painful "shock therapy" reforms.

Yeltsin has ordered a Cabinet reshuffling to trim the bureaucracy, and some reformers could lose their jobs. Yeltsin has pledged that Yegor Gaidar, architect of his free-market transition, will remain.

Addressing the lower house, or Duma, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said Tuesday that the government "must avoid unjustified lurches and shock-type decisions."

"Society's patience is largely exhausted" with painful economic upheaval, the prime minister said. "We are at a new stage in the reforms. The government's efforts will be concentrated on stabilizing the economy and forming favorable conditions for Russia's manufacturers."

Clinton is likely to propose ways the West could help develop a social safety net to help cushion Russians from the pain the reforms are causing.

NATO leaders threaten Serbs

BRUSSELS, Belgium — President Clinton and his NATO allies warned Serb forces Tuesday of a new determination to launch air strikes if needed to relieve embattled Muslim enclaves in Bosnia. "My resolve is there," Clinton said.

At the end of a two-day summit, the 16 Western leaders announced their willingness to order bombing raids if Bosnian Serbs continue to prevent the opening of a major airport for aid supplies or the rotation of encircled peace keepers.

"Whether they occur or not depends upon the behavior of the Bosnian Serbs from this moment forward," Clinton told reporters at the end of the meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Serb chief of staff, Manojlo Milovanovic, warned U.N. troops would also suffer in any air campaign because his forces would stay close to peacekeepers. "They cannot strike at us without also hitting U.N. forces," he said.

Clinton and other leaders insisted there was a new mood among

the allies to carry out the threats first issued last June to use their formidable air power to ease the situation in Bosnia.

"I made it clear that for our part we were prepared to follow through," Clinton said.

And if the Bosnian Serbs don't get the message, he said later, after meeting with officials of the 12-nation European Union, "We'll see if our resolve is there. My resolve is there."

"We don't believe it is necessary to have air strikes to protect 150 Canadian peace keepers in Srebrenica," Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien said.

Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers said there was "still a margin of uncertainty" about whether an allied air campaign would be launched.

The NATO leaders raised the prospect of bombing raids to evacuate the Canadians from Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia and force open the airport at Tuzla, a key conduit for aid to the north.

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— President Clinton

The allies also reaffirmed their readiness to conduct air strikes "to prevent the strangulation of Sarajevo, the safe areas and other threatened areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina."

The Bosnian crisis dominated the final day of the NATO summit.

The leaders also declared a readiness to let their former foes in Eastern Europe join the elite fraternity one day.

In their final statement, they endorsed the U.S. proposal for a "Partnership for Peace," which invites East Europeans to take part in military exercises and other limited activities.

Health leaders seek smoke-free America

WASHINGTON — Health leaders and seven past surgeons general called on the government Tuesday to tax cigarettes \$2 more a pack, ban smoking in public places, restrict tobacco ads and fully regulate cigarettes in an effort to make America smoke free by the year 2000.

"This nation remains in tobacco's death grip" three decades after first being told cigarettes cause cancer, Dr. Alfred Munzer, president of the American Lung Association, said as the group sought President Clinton's endorsement of their plans.

Health groups marked the 30th anniversary of the original surgeon general's report on tobacco by scolding Congress and presidents alike for their past efforts to restrict a habit still blamed for 420,000 deaths a year.

Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders said 2 million lives have been saved since her predecessor, the late Dr. Luther Terry, first warned Americans on Jan. 11, 1964, that smoking caused cancer.

Two million people also have died of smoking-related lung cancers alone in that period. Back then, more than two in every five adults smoked. Today only one in four is a smoker.

Terry's crusade led to warning labels on cigarette packs.

Cigarette ads were banished from the airwaves, airlines created no-

“This nation remains in tobacco's death grip...”

— Munzer

president of the American Lung Association

smoking sections and eventually smoking was banned on most domestic flights and in many offices.

Former Bush administration Surgeon General Antonia Novello said tobacco is still "the least regulated consumer product" in the United States and is marketed "with reckless abandon" at the young by companies that need to replace smokers who die and the 1 million who kick the habit each year.

Former President Jimmy Carter sent Clinton a letter urging him to stand up to tobacco interests and seek a \$2 tax increase on each pack of cigarettes. Clinton has already proposed a 75-cent hike to pay for health reforms. Congress has to approve any change.

The seven past surgeons general said the country won't become smoke free by the year 2000 if the tobacco industry keeps its "strangle hold over the Congress and the administration."

They urged Clinton "to speak forcefully in favor of regulation of tobacco products," including tighter controls

on advertising and bans on smoking in federal buildings and other public places. They also advocated full authority for the Food and Drug Administration to regulate cigarettes.

The Coalition on Smoking or Health handed out a 30-year report card filled with Ds and Fs for Congress, the White House and most of the executive branch.

Their highest mark, a B-plus, went to the Environmental Protection Agency, which last January branded secondhand smoke as cancer-causing and blamed it for 3,000 lung cancer deaths a year among nonsmokers.

One of the Fs went to the Federal Trade Commission. American Heart Association Vice President Scott D. Ballin said the FTC lets cigarette makers "promote smoking as something that is sexually attractive, sophisticated, healthy and makes us physically fit, cool and successful."

Elders, who will release the 24th surgeon general's report next month focusing on smoking and youth, said, "Any form of tobacco is lethal."

Bobbitt denies striking wife as trial continues

MANASSAS, Va. — John Bobbitt returned to the witness stand Tuesday and denied ever striking his wife before she cut off his penis, saying the worst he ever did was "push her, hold her down, restrain her from hitting me."

On the second day of his wife's malicious wounding trial, Bobbitt disputed a court record that a defense lawyer said showed Bobbitt pleaded guilty to assaulting his wife, Lorena. "I never pleaded guilty to nothing," Bobbitt said.

Mrs. Bobbitt, 24, is charged with malicious wounding for cutting off her husband's penis after he came home from a night of drinking June 23.

If convicted, the Ecuadoran-born manicurist could get up to 20 years in prison and be deported.

Bobbitt, 26, was acquitted late last year of assaulting his wife.

The defense opened its case Tuesday by calling Bobbitt to the stand as

an "adverse" witness. On Monday, he testified for the prosecution, which rested its case Tuesday morning.

Both times, and in his own trial in November, he denied ever forcing his wife to have sex.

Mrs. Bobbitt contends that prolonged sexual, physical and verbal abuse by Bobbitt during their four-year marriage forced her to cut off his penis in an "irresistible impulse." Bobbitt is seeking a divorce.

Amalia Hoyt testified for the defense about an incident in which Bobbitt gave his wife bikini underwear for Christmas in front of several friends. Mrs. Bobbitt was embarrassed and walked away, she said.

"He said 'Why are you trying to hide it?'" Ms. Hoyt said. She said Bobbitt pushed his wife against the wall several times.

"She was really scared," Ms. Hoyt said.

Terri McComber, who used to work with Mrs. Bobbitt, testified that

Bobbitt would criticize his wife's appearance, but could turn violent if other men paid attention to her.

On a trip with the Bobbitts to Ocean City, Md., Ms. McComber said somebody whistled and Bobbitt believed it was directed at her and his wife.

"He came up, grabbed her by the hair," she said. "He said the weekend was over. We're going home."

Defense attorney Blair Howard showed Bobbitt records from a court case that the lawyer said showed Bobbitt pleaded guilty in March 1991 to assaulting his wife.

Bobbitt disputed the records. Commonwealth's Attorney Paul B. Ebert said the court did not issue a final finding of guilt in the case.



Bobbitt said it was his wife who sometimes assaulted him.

In one instance, he said, she became upset when they weren't allowed in a restaurant because he was wearing sneakers and began hitting him as they drove home.

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