

their servant! But astonishingly, at the last minute before the primary, La Holtzman refused—to the bitter denunciation of the press. Her flimsy claim was that the voting public wouldn't have time to sift through the report before voting. An egregious blunder, since the public doesn't sift anyway, and of course Holtzman's rivals and the media made the most of her *gaffe*.

As a result, in the September primary, a walkaway for Holtzman was transmuted into a very tight three-way race. Each of the three rivals got approximately one-third of the vote, with Hevesi coming in a narrow first, and Holtzman edging out Badillo for runner-up spot, the top two then being plunged into a runoff two weeks later, in late September. Where would the Badillo vote go? It was likely to go more to Hevesi, since those who liked the incumbent Holtzman would probably vote for her from the beginning. One point was noted: Holtzman depended on the black vote, and blacks don't vote in primaries, especially in a runoff when neither Mayor Dinkins nor any other black would be running.

As soon as the election was over, Holtzman surrendered on the report, and released it, now maintaining that the public would have a full two weeks to do the sifting. In the event, they didn't need two weeks: the investigation report was damning, demonstrating Holtzman's lies about not knowing that the two Fleets were involved; the report actually accused La Holtzman of "gross negligence" in office. But if she was a tough and nasty, knuckle-wielding

leftist, but was *not* Ms. Integrity but a quasi-crook like all the rest and caught with her hand in the cookie jar to boot, why in the world vote for her?

And so in the two weeks remaining until the runoff, a massive shift took place: Hevesi was looking better and better:

Mr. Affability, Mr. Wants-to-be Comptroller; whereas La Holtzman suddenly began to look like someone who had no virtues to offset her glaring and irritating vices. And so, on September 28, Hevesi swamped Holtzman two-to-one. No one in New York is going to ask "Alan Who?" any more. If anything, it will soon be "Liz Who?" Was the timing of the Investigation Department report a mere coincidence, or was it all brilliantly plotted by Hank Morris and the gang? Who knows, but you can bet your bottom dollar on this: Hank Morris will be able to write his own ticket in the next election campaign. ■

Heil Yeltsin?

by M.N.R.

The stench of hypocrisy was everywhere as all the noisy champions of "global democracy" rushed to endorse Boris

Yeltsin's despotic coup.

"Well, yes, it was in a legal sense 'unconstitutional' but it was a Commie constitution." No it wasn't. The constitution and Parliamentary elections were post-Commie.

"Sometimes to achieve democracy in the long run, you have to

use undemocratic methods." Yeah, right. Where have we heard *that* one before? We found out quickly enough, as one pundit actually said it, in an unconscious or even conscious echo of the worst Stalinist bilge of the 1930's: "Sometimes in order to make an omelette you have to break a few eggs." Well, it all depends on whether you're the omelette or the egg. My old

friend Baldy Harper used to come back with a counter-agricultural metaphor of his own; "You *don't* break any eggs if you want any chickens."

"But it's OK; Yeltsin's opponents are "ex"-Commies, the "ex" pronounced with the same sneer that Walter Winchell used to use in early Cold War days in talking about "ex"-Commies or "ex"-Trotskyites. But what do you people think the sainted *Boris Yeltsin* is? And who says that *his* "ex-ness" is any more genuine than that of his Parliamentary opponents?

One liberal-babe TV pundit, in her high-pitched whine, was

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saying: "But Yeltsin *had* to do it, he had to end the . . . *paralysis* in government." I swear she almost said *gridlock*. Can't we envision a future, or maybe not-so-future, Bill Clinton dissolving Congress or putting barbed wire around it, "to end the gridlock" in Washington? "Well, he did what he had to do." Did he indeed? So tell me, what do *we* have to do to send our Menshevik ruling elites, our bureaucrats and media pundits, to some remote Siberia where we don't have to hear from them or about them for several decades? Where do I sign up?

It's remarkable how virtually the same events as two years ago were now played out as farce rather than heroism. When Yeltsin and *his* people barricaded themselves in Parliament and the people demonstrated in defiance of the "coup-plotters," the media and the opinion of the whole world were

with them, girding themselves against executive coercion. But now, when Parliament barricaded themselves and the people demonstrated against "coup-plotter" Yeltsin, the media tone—including Russian state-owned television—was totally different. Instead of heroes, Rutzkoi, Khasbulatov and the rest—themselves Yeltsinites two years ago—were now sneered at

and laughed at as pitiful clowns, with the Russian masses allegedly totally behind the new dictator. Even when the Yeltsinite barbed wire went up, no one complained. "The West"—headed of course by President Clinton—rushed to proclaim support, and of course, another few billions in aide for the beloved Yeltsin.

So now we know what this foggy term "democracy" is all about. You're a "democrat" if you vote and act the way we want you to, and tell you to.

You're "anti-democratic" if you vote or act the "wrong" way and defy our orders. That's about the size of it.

But isn't Boris Yeltsin a fan of the free-market, and his opponents resisters of free-market reform, and therefore don't you have to break some eggs, and do what you have to do? It's interesting that these days, every swindler and ideolog-

ical racketeer calls himself a champion of "the free market." Where can we find ourselves a term that no one will filch? Look, Yeltsin is a power-hungry thug and an "ex"-Commie who was simply shrewder than his old rival Gorbys. He saw faster than Gorbys that the Communist system was falling apart, and that the winners—and more particularly, the guys with the

money—were the scions of Western Keynesian social democracy, that is the U.S.-Western European Establishment.

For Yeltsin it's strictly Market, Schmarket. His lovability stems not from any understanding or devotion to the free market, but from willingness to take orders from the Western Establishment, for example, from the Keynesian Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs, from the IMF and the World Bank and other instruments of Rockefeller domination, e.g. he is willing to impose a Central Bank, monetary inflation, and a Russian version of the IRS. Some free marketeer! As long as he displays willingness to continue to obey orders in return for Western do-re-mi he will continue to be the object of adoration and apologetics from liberal/neocon punditry. But let Yeltsin turn on his masters, and he will suddenly turn out to be a terrible dictator, and he will go the way of poor old Noriega, whose fate is a lesson for foreign rulers who might be tempted to kick over the U.S.-UN traces.

I'm not saying, of course, that the Rutzkoi forces are paragons of libertarian virtue. On the contrary, the only hope for Russia is the decomposition of the swollen Russian imperium, its deconstruction into autonomous regional and ethnic republics. And here only Yeltsin's defeat will speed such a result along, for only Yeltsin in this entire crew seems to have the willingness and the capacity to become another centralizing, despotic Czar.

As for the United States, why O why can't we get out of the "Fight or Aid" syndrome, the

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crazy notion that our only relation to other countries in the world can either be to prepare to fight them, spending billions on missiles and arms, or to spend billions to aid them, prop them up, speed their "development," etc. (Sometimes, of course, we do both at the same time, as in Somalia.) Can't we simply butt out? Can't we pursue that wonderful program that Edmund Burke celebrated in the policy toward the Ameri-

can colonies of the brilliant English politician Robert Walpole: "salutary neglect"? "Salutary neglect"—what a wonderful concept! and how remote from the minds and hearts of twentieth-century Americans! When will we learn that we don't *have* to take sides in every damned conflict on the face of the globe, that we don't *have* to pick rulers of every country? *We really don't.* ■

plish liberal goals through the "market."

Speaking of liberal goals, remember federal aid to education? The neocons are jumping on that train as well, but they want aid for private schools as well. Writing in the *Washington Times* (10/5/93), American Enterprise Institute scholar Robert Hahn comes out for a "\$10 billion National Choice Initiative" that would give federal vouchers of \$1,000 per child. It would tax the people, then give them their own money back with strings attached, so as to force private schools to obey the Department of Education.

Insight magazine recently asked Bill Bennett: what's wrong with cutting taxes as a way of giving parents the money to spend on school tuition? His answer: we couldn't be sure people would spend their money on education. So much for "choice."

What are the problems with public schools? Violence, drugs, falling test scores, and low graduation rates—all of which has been true for at least thirty years. It's not enough to condemn public schools. We have to understand why they've failed, in part so we can avoid repeating the same errors if vouchered schools are established.

Here are some theories as to why public schools have failed:

First, public funding makes public schools immune from the market and its discipline, so no one worries about trying to serve customers; public funding also makes efficient cost accounting impossible.

Yet the voucher system would fail on the same terms. Vouchers

Defeat "Choice"

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

"School choice" promoters—that is, people who oppose school districts and want tax subsidies for private schools—ask us to believe that their only opposition is the National Education Association. Yet all over the country, conservatives are organizing to prevent their private schools from being statized, which is exactly where vouchers will lead.

In California, the anti-voucher movement has gained a new set of converts in the suburbs. "When Kemp and Bennett stump for Proposition 174," Damon Darlin explains in *Forbes* (10/25/93), "they are finding many deaf ears among voters who stood foursquare with Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon." Why is that? "Those with good schools want to preserve the status quo—and suburbanites are the ones who tend to turn out for ballot initiatives. Inner-city minorities tend to stay home."

Why do suburbanites think school choice will harm their schools? The secret is in a clause (174,a,6) that voucher advocates haven't exactly trumpeted. It allows students to attend any school to which buses can take them, without regard to district lines.

What would happen if school-district lines are erased? School-districts are correlated to home prices. Mix up the districts and the values of homes would take a roller coaster ride.

Property values aren't all that's at stake, of course. There is also the quality of the schools. And suburbanites know that busing innercity kids doesn't change their behavior, which often includes an opposition to learning and a propensity to drugs and gangs.

Erasing lines of demarcation is called "interdistrict school choice," but it's no different from what the paleo-left has always wanted. In the sixties, liberals didn't dare propose the outright elimination of district lines; they simply bused kids around to stir up the demographic pot. Leave it to the neocons to try to accom-