



F.Y.I.

November 19, 1993

WHO'S WHO IN THE RUSSIAN ELECTIONS

On December 12, 1993, the voters of Russia will cast their ballots in the first free competitive elections for the parliament since 1918. For nearly a year, the legislative holdover from the Soviet Union—the Supreme Soviet of Russia—and President Boris Yeltsin have clashed over the issue of elections. On September 21, 1993, when President Yeltsin dissolved the Supreme Soviet, he scheduled these elections. Various political factions in Russia immediately began campaigning.

Voters will elect a two-house parliament, the Federal Assembly. It will consist of a lower house, the State Duma, and an upper house, the Federation Council, representing the regions and the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation. On the same day, voters also will cast their ballots in a referendum on the ratification of a new constitution.

The Duma is structured as the representative parliament of the Russian people. It will consist of 450 members, 225 elected by direct majority vote in each of 225 legislative districts in the country, and 225 elected through proportional representation from party lists, in which each party receives seats in proportion to the total national vote they receive. As in many other European countries, parties will need to clear a five percent minimum threshold to be represented in the Duma.

The upper house, the Federation Council, will consist of two members elected at large from each of the 21 autonomous republics and 68 regions, for a total of 178 members. Some areas which have declared themselves independent but are not so recognized by Moscow will boycott the election process. For example, the independence-seeking Muslim Republic of Chechen did not participate in the April 1993 referendum on whether to support Yeltsin or the Supreme Soviet of Russia. The republic plans to boycott the upcoming elections as well.

A number of parties have come together in blocs to compete in both the districts and nation-wide elections to the Parliament. These coalitions have a greater chance of gaining national visibility and overcoming the five percent threshold to gain representation.

In order to participate in the elections, blocs and parties had to present to the Central Electoral Commission petitions with 100,000 signatures by November 6. Twenty-one parties initially presented their petitions and signatures on time, but only thirteen remained in the race upon examination of the signatures. Some parties had submitted names of deceased individuals or incomplete identity information of signatories, and their petitions were denied.

FYI#5/93

PRO-YELTSIN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

These parties in general support a multi-party political system and market economy. In 1989-1993 the democrats were a loosely knit coalition. Today, they are split between those who are in power and support President Yeltsin, and those who are excluded from the government and are now mounting a democratic opposition to Yeltsin.

1) **Russia's Choice bloc**

Founded early in June 1993 to express the will of those who supported President Yeltsin in the April 25 referendum, this bloc has become a leading pro-reform force. Russia's Choice is the strongest contender in the elections and is expected to get 30 percent to 35 percent of the votes in the State Duma. It is headed by First Deputy Prime Minister and former Prime Minister Yegor T. Gaidar. The bloc consists of:

- ◆ **The Democratic Russia Movement**
Lev Ponomarev, Chairman
- ◆ **The Russian Association of Private and Privatizing Enterprises**
Yegor Gaidar, Chairman, and Peter Filippov, Vice-Chairman
- ◆ **The Association of Farmers and Agricultural Cooperatives**
- ◆ **The Peasant Party**
Led by Yurii Chernichenko
- ◆ **The Democratic Initiative Party**
Led by Peter Bunich
- ◆ **The League of Cooperators and Entrepreneurs**
- ◆ **The Free Russia Defenders' Union ("The Live Ring")**
- ◆ **The "Radical Democratic" faction of the old Supreme Soviet**
- ◆ **The Military for Democracy Movement**

The bloc's election list reads like a "who's who" in the Russian government: First Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar; Yeltsin's Chief of Staff, Sergei Filatov; Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev; privatization czar Anatoly Chubais; Social Security Minister Ella Pamfilova; Yeltsin's head crime fighter, Andrey Makarov; and Finance Minister Boris Fedorov. There are ten government ministers, and numerous other federal and local officials on the list. Also included are a prominent film director, Marc Zakharov; Mr. Yeltsin's political strategist, Gennady Burbulis; world chess champion Garry Kasparov; human rights activist and former prisoner of conscience Sergei A. Kovalev; and Yeltsin's military advisor, Dmitrii Volkogonov.

Russia's Choice has local branches in Yaroslavl, Penza, Rostov-on-Don, Voronezh, Ulyanovsk, Kursk, Omsk, Blagoveshensk, Saint Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Khabarovsk, Kaluga, Chelyabinsk, the Moscow Region, Rostov, and in the Komi Republic in the North. It draws most of its financial support from the Association of Private and Privatizing Enterprises and the Association of Farmers and Cooperatives.

Through its prominent members, the bloc controls the editorial policy of the newspaper *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* and of the two main Russian government-owned TV channels.

The bloc's platform calls for the revival of Russia on the basis of freedom, property, legality, patriotism, morality, democracy, and respect for labor. Its economic principles for the new government include harsh anti-inflationary measures, particularly an end to the loose credit policy for inefficient government-owned enterprises, cuts in import subsidies, budget reforms, and lower taxes.

Russia's Choice stands for the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, equal rights for the constituent regions and republics, and a clear-cut division of property owned federally, regionally, and locally.

To ensure the rule of law in Russian society, the bloc deems it essential to implement wide-ranging legal reform.

2) The Russian Unity and Accord Party

More "centrist" than Russia's Choice, the party was founded in June 1993. Its leader, First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai, was chief legal advisor to President Yeltsin, and his chief liaison with the regions. Former Parliamentary leader Ramazan Abdulatipov, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Shokhin, and presidential advisor Sergei Stankevich are among the party's leaders. Financial support comes from the "Entrepreneurs for a New Russia" movement, led by Konstantin Zatulin.

The proclaimed values of the party are Russia's unity and integrity, the priority of human rights, the inviolability of property rights, federalism, and local self-government. It calls itself a "party of the regions" and sees itself as a link between the regional and republic governments and the federal bodies. Issues of taxation and budget, the use of land and natural resources, as well as economic, social, and cultural development questions will be in the forefront of this party's agenda. In addition to economic development, priorities also include judiciary system reform and social security for all Russians. It views itself at the center of the political spectrum, stressing themes such as the home, the family, motherland, traditions, and continuity. The party's slogans emphasize stability, predictability, consistency of political decisions, and accountability to the electorate. It can be expected to garner as much as 30 percent of the votes in the State Duma.

THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION

Still on the democratic reform side of the political spectrum, but opposing President Yeltsin, are:

3) Yavlinsky-Boldyrev-Lukin bloc

This bloc is headed by Grigory Yavlinsky, a market economist and author of the highly publicized "500 Day Plan" for transition to the market in 1990. Two other party candidates are Yurii Boldyrev, former Inspector-General of the Yeltsin administration and Ambassador Vladimir Lukin, Russian envoy to Washington.

Yavlinsky is opposed to Yeltsin and has criticized him for his "authoritarian rule." As a result, he plans to run against Yeltsin for president in the next election, whenever it is held. The bloc has attracted the support of those among the intelligentsia who have lost confidence in the Yeltsin regime. Judging by the declarations of its leaders, the Yavlinsky bloc will advocate a more assertive role for Russia in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Thus far, Yavlinsky has not disclosed a comprehensive economic or political program, though he has promised to do so closer to election day. Yavlinsky is supported by the *Moscow News*, and is expected to gain 5 percent to 10 percent of the vote.

4) **Russian Movement of Democratic Reforms (RDDR)**

Founded on February 15, 1992, under the leadership of former Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov, the RDDR political movement has attracted the support of the pro-perestroika establishment, in particular the intellectuals of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Popov is considering a future parliamentary joint democratic opposition with the Yavlinsky bloc against Yeltsin.¹

The candidate list of this movement is topped by St. Petersburg's telegenic mayor, law professor Anatoly Sobchak, who is followed by a prominent eye surgeon and entrepreneur, Sviatoslav Fedorov. The proclaimed objectives of the movement are the adoption of a new constitution by an elected Constituent Assembly, and changing the economic reforms enacted by the Gaidar government, such as enacting a more broadly based privatization program.

The movement's manifesto envisages Russia as a federal republic led by a president, with federated republics enjoying a great amount of autonomy. In the economic sphere, the RDDR demands a revision of Russia's industrial and taxation policies. In particular, the RDDR proposes to curtail the taxation of industrial producers. It also proposes a land reform that will allow the use of privatization vouchers to buy land. In the area of foreign policy, the RDDR stands for creating a unified Eurasian state in the CIS framework, regardless of the wishes of other CIS states.

The movement boasts chapters in St. Petersburg, Tatarstan, Nizhny Novgorod, Bryansk, Ekaterinburg, Voronezh, Chelyabinsk, Kemerovo, Tver, Samara, Altai, and Kaluga. It expects to get 10 percent of the votes to the Duma.

"CENTRIST" OPPOSITION FORCES

The following parties fall in the middle of the political spectrum between the democratic reformers and hard-line communists or ultra-nationalists.

5) **Civic Union for Stability, Justice and Progress (Civic Union)**

Proclaimed in June 1992 and officially registered in January 1993, the Civic Union was originally a coalition of "pragmatic" communist elements attempting to play the Soviet-style game under new rules. The Civic Union advocates a mixed economy with a large, heavily subsidized state sector. When it was first constituted, it drew the support of the so-called Red Directors, i.e. chiefs of state enterprises heavily dependent upon the state budget. The most prominent leader was Arkady Volsky, a senior Politburo apparatchik who worked as a speechwriter and economic advisor for the hard-line former KGB Chairman and Communist Party General Secretary Yuri Andropov, and as a troubleshooter for Mikhail Gorbachev. The bloc includes former Soviet enterprise directors, some of whom are currently operating in the private sector, while others are still part of the state-run economy.

Civic Union originally included:

➤ **The People's Party Free Russia**

Led by Alexander Rutskoy until October 4, 1993

➤ **The All-Russian "Renewal" Union**

Alexander Vladislavlev, Chairman

➤ **The Russian Democratic Party**

Led by Nikolay Travkin

1 Popov spoke at the Heritage Foundation on November 10, 1993.

- ◆ The former anti-reform parliamentary faction “Change - New Politics”
- ◆ The Russian Youth Union
- ◆ The Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs
Led by Arkady Volsky
- ◆ The Social-Democratic Center—Labor Party
Led by Boris Kagarlitsky

The combined membership of the union used to be 170,000. However, the composition of this bloc changed with the political stalemate that ended on October 4, 1993, with the arrest of coup leader Alexander Ruts koy. Signs of disunity began to appear in August 1993, when Travkin’s Russian Democratic Party quit the Union in disagreement with Ruts koy’s increasingly hard line position.

Ruts koy’s policies and his arrest have dealt a decisive blow to the populist and statist People’s Party Free Russia. This party will not be taking part in the elections.

The “Change - New Politics” parliamentary faction of the Civic Union, the most politically sophisticated element of the bloc, consists of leaders of the former Soviet Komsomol, the youth communist league.

On October 21, 1993, the Civic Union joined with the Russian Social Democratic Center to form an election bloc entitled “Civic Union for Stability, Justice and Progress.” Bloc leaders include: Arkady Volsky, Nikolay Bekh, Director General of the huge Kama Automotive Works, and Alexander Vladislavlev. Self-proclaimed Social Democrat Oleg Rummyantsev, former liberal Soviet Central Committee staffer Alexander Tsipko, and journalist Pavel Voshchanov also are leaders.

6) Russia’s Future - New Names

This movement consists of the People’s Party Free Russia’s youth branch and a youth organization of the “Civic Union.” The slate, which includes 143 candidates, is obviously a youth ticket for Civic Union, which is attempting to split the vote of the young, educated professionals, and lure them away from the democratic camp.

7) The Russian Democratic Party (DPR)

Led by populist politician Nikolay Ilyich Travkin, this party was registered with the Justice Ministry on March 14, 1993. Membership then was 40,000, although it now has at least the 100,000 needed to qualify for the December elections. DPR’s published goals are Russia’s sovereignty, development of market relations, turning government-run enterprises into joint stock companies, and raising the living standards of the nation. There are chapters in virtually every Russian region. The political aspects of the DPR’s position are reflected in the fact that it supported Yeltsin’s Decree No. 1400, which dissolved the Parliament.

On October 8, 1993, Travkin announced at a news conference that the party would run for parliament without joining any blocs. The list of DPR’s candidates consists of 192 names, including Nikolay Travkin himself, the anti-Yeltsin and monarchist movie director Stanislav Govorukhin, former Gorbachev adviser and socialist economist Oleg Bogomolov, and former Minister of Justice Nikolay Fedorov.

8) The Constructive-Ecological Movement of Russia

Communist treatment of the environment led to Russia’s becoming the largest chemical, nuclear, and industrial waste dump in the world. In many cities, the catastrophic environmental situation has resulted in vastly increased infant mortality rates and rampant disease. This explains the mass appeal of the environmentalist movement. However, the lack of nationally recognized names on the list,

and the general failure of the “greens” in Europe to consolidate their political support, makes the future of the environmental movement very uncertain.

9) The “Dignity and Charity” Movement

This movement is a lobby organization more than a party. It consists of groups of veterans and the disabled, as well as the environment-oriented “Chernobyl” Union. The slate is headed by Konstantin Frolov, the Vice President of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Nikolay Gubenko, a film and theater producer. Veterans of World War II and the Afghan War are among the most socially mobilized groups in Russia. Their political power has been recognized by President Yeltsin, and as a result their pensions are relatively high.

THE HARD-LINE OPPOSITION

This group combines extreme nationalists and orthodox communists. They include:

10) The Communist Party of the Russian Federation

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) has the largest registered membership of any party in Russia. Though only one of six communist parties remaining after the collapse of CPSU in the fall of 1991, it boasts half a million members and controls such important resources as the nationally published newspaper *Pravda*, plus a host of local newspapers and local governments. While having the largest membership, its popular support is estimated at not more than 10 percent of the electorate. However, it boasts a superb political organization. Despite a relatively low level of popular support, it is a significant political force, and is capable of much political agitation. Nevertheless, the party was relatively passive during the October 1993 insurrection, which saved it from being banned along with other communist groups that took part.

Gennady Zyuganov, a former Soviet Central Committee apparatchik, is the capable and dynamic leader of the party. He is a formidable enemy of the democratic reformers.

11) The Russian Agrarian Party

One of the better organized spin-offs from the former Soviet Communist Party, this group is built on the infrastructure of the collective farms (the *kolkhozes*). Typically, the chairman of the collective farm, nominated by the local government bureaucracy, controls the vote of the peasants. Therefore, the party is capable of mobilizing large numbers of voters. Moreover, it had the most number of petitioners to qualify to participate in the elections—around half a million. The “agrarians” are in favor of turning the state-owned collective farms into joint stock companies contained by old party apparatchiks. The purpose of the “agrarian” parliamentary faction will be to ensure a steady flow of subsidies to collectivized agriculture. Chaired by Mikhail Lapshin, the Agrarian Party opposes land privatization and land reform.

12) Women of Russia

The “Women of Russia” movement consists of the old communist women’s organizations, including the Union of the Women of Russia, the Union of the Women of the Navy, and the relatively new Association of Russian Women-Entrepreneurs. The slate has 44 candidates and is led by Alla Fedulova, Chairwoman of the Union of the Women of Russia, Elena Lakhova, Adviser to the President on Family Issues, and actress Natalia Gundareva.

While the low level of representation of women in other political parties (not more than 25 percent) may lead to certain gains for the women’s movement, it is still unlikely that pro-democratic women would vote for this communist front. As a result, Women of Russia might split the pro-communist vote, and actually help the democratic forces.

13) The Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia

A brainchild of the KGB and communist apparatchiks, the Liberal Democratic Party, led by Vladimir Zhirinovsky, is the *enfant terrible* of Russian politics. The party is neither liberal nor democratic. Zhirinovsky, a lawyer by profession, was a marginal figure in the earlier perestroika days, but is known to have extensive KGB contacts. Zhirinovsky advocates the re-creation (by force, if necessary) of an imperial, unitary Russia, “in the borders of 1900,”² “and if not, at least, in the borders of 1977.”³ While paying lip service to the protection of private property and law and order, Zhirinovsky’s demagoguery puts him squarely in the neo-fascist camp. His connections with, including possible financing from, the German neo-Nazis are well-documented. As he enjoys wide name recognition in Russia—he received eight million votes in the 1990 presidential elections—he is almost certain to be elected into the next Russian parliament. Zhirinovsky’s support comes from the urban poor. He promises them a host of benefits, including free vodka. However, he has lately been cultivating a “serious image,” and has thus earned the support of some people in Moscow’s intelligentsia circles.

Non-Qualifying Parties

Many parties failed to qualify for the upcoming elections. Among the democratic forces, these include:

- 1) **The pro-market August bloc**, which included the “Party of Economic Freedom” of entrepreneur Konstantin Borovoy.
- 2) **The Association of Independent Professionals**, led by Yeltsin’s advisors Peter Filippov and Sergei Vasilyev. These two are strong supporters of the market economy, and would have been Yeltsin allies. Filippov and Vasilyev will most probably retain important roles in the next government.
- 3) **New Russia**, a democratic bloc that included famous criminal investigator and corruption fighter Telman Gdlyan, and a democratic Christian leader, Alexander Ogorodnikov.

Among the hard-line opposition are:

- 4) **The Motherland bloc of socialists and “ultra-patriots.”** Primarily part of the nationalist camp, this group includes the Socialist Workers’ Party, the Revival Union, the Union of Cossacks, the Union of Petroleum Industrialists, the Women’s League, the Russian Union of Labor Collectives, and the Congress of Russian Communities. The list had 179 candidates, led by Viktor Stepanov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Karelian Republic.
- 5) **The Russian Christian-Democratic Party.** This group is hardly Christian, and definitely not democratic. Instead, it represents the xenophobic, ultra-nationalist streak of Russian politics, and can be compared to the extreme right in Europe. On October 18, 1993, Viktor Aksyuchits, Chairman of the Russian Christian Democratic Movement, held a news conference at which he made public the names of the first three candidates to run on the RCDM ticket for the State Duma: Aksyuchits himself, former weightlifting world champion and writer Yuri Vlasov, and radio host Tatyana Ivanova. The list had 114 candidates and included representatives from the Slavic Culture and Language Foundation, Russian Assembly of Noblemen, and the Russian Merchant Union.

2 By this they mean the old Russian Empire, including Poland and Finland. Source: *Predvybornaya Platforma Liberal’no-Democraticeskoy Partii Zhirinovskogo*, Moscow, October 1993.

3 By this they mean the old Soviet Union, including the Baltic states. *Ibid.*

- 6) **The Constitutional-Democratic Party (Party of People's Freedom)** Another ultra-nationalist party, the Constitutional Democrats submitted its list of 153 persons to the Central Electoral Commission October 21, 1993. The list included such Russian chauvinist figures as Mikhail Astafiev, anti-Semitic writer and mathematician Igor Shafarevich, and KGB-affiliated TV personality Alexander Nevzorov. The Moscow regional list was headed by such well-known reactionaries as writers Yurii Bondarev and Pyotr Proskurin.
- 7) **The Russian All-People's Union.** Currently appealing the Central Election Commission's refusal to allow it to run, this hard-line imperialist party favors the revival of the Soviet Union. It includes some of the more outspoken opponents of the Yeltsin regime. The slate has 220 candidates, including hard-liners such as Sergei Baburin, Nikolay Pavlov, Svetlana Goryacheva, and General Valentine Varennikov, who was a "State Emergency Committee" member during the August 1991 coup.
- 8) **The National-Republican Party.** This is another ultra-nationalist party, with symbolism and ideology reminiscent of the German Nazis and today's neo-Nazis. Its leader, Nikolay Lysenko, formed a paramilitary organization to combat democracy in Russia. It has provided martial arts training and racist indoctrination to its black-uniformed supporters.

CONCLUSION

Russia is facing the most open parliamentary election campaign since 1918. The democratic reformers are split, with some democrats now opposing Yeltsin. Nevertheless, the democratic parties, at this point, appear capable of winning a sizeable bloc of votes in the December election.

However, if a coalition of hard-liners and "centrist" anti-reform forces gains a working majority in the next legislature, the future of the Yeltsin administration and his reforms will be jeopardized. If these elections are deemed by the West to be "free and fair," then an anti-democratic outcome will present Yeltsin and his U.S. supporters with a serious political dilemma.

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