

# Russia's Elected Governors: A Force to Be Reckoned With

MARC ZLOTNIK

**W**ith some fifty gubernatorial races taking place in the second half of the year, Russia's busy 1996 electoral season has drawn to a close.<sup>1</sup> Although these elections received much less attention than the national contests for the Duma and the presidency, they could prove to be the most important in terms of Russia's future. Now, for the first time, the leaders of virtually all of Russia's eighty-nine regions have been popularly elected and no longer serve at the pleasure of the Russian president. As the governors themselves have been quick to recognize, this change promises to sharply enhance their leverage in dealing with Moscow and change the dynamic of center-periphery relations. It is also possible that it will more profoundly affect the political system in Russia as a whole.

Fearing the greater independence of the governors, Yeltsin delayed these elections until after the presidential race. Consequently, the vast majority of gubernatorial elections have taken place since last summer. Previously, gubernatorial elections were allowed by the president only on a highly selective basis.<sup>2</sup> They occurred in several waves:

- The first elections, in April 1993, were a disaster for Yeltsin, with opposition candidates winning seven of the eight elections. This experience dampened Yeltsin's enthusiasm for further gubernatorial elections.
- No other elections were held until March 1994, when the popular governor of Irkutsk, Yuri Nozhikov, easily defeated two opponents. The election appeared to be a reward for Nozhikov's support in Yeltsin's 1993 struggle with Parliament, even though the two had previously been at loggerheads and the president had twice tried to remove Nozhikov.
- A year later, Yeltsin appeared to strike a deal with the popular Sverdlovsk parliamentary leader, Eduard Rossel, allowing him to regain the governorship in return for his cooperation with Moscow and his enthusiastic support in the presiden-

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tial election. Yeltsin had removed Rossel as governor in 1993 for advocating the creation of a Urals Republic, but he remained the most popular figure in the oblast.

- Yeltsin allowed a dozen gubernatorial races to take place in conjunction with the Duma elections in December 1995. These occurred only in regions where the incumbent governors were confident of victory, were anxious run, and had the support of the local parliaments and presidential representatives. Even so, three of them lost, in two cases bringing Communists to power (Novosibirsk and Tambov).

- The election for mayor of St. Petersburg took place a few weeks before the presidential race. The extremely popular mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, was the only regional leader allowed to stand for election on the day of the first round of the presidential election (16 June 1996), as Yeltsin tried to ride his coattails.

### **The Numbers Game**

Overall, incumbents won about half of the gubernatorial elections. Of the sixty-eight current governors, thirty-two are incumbents who won elections (including nine in December 1995), thirty-one are challengers who won elections (including four in 1993 and four in 1995), and five were appointed in regions where valid elections have not yet been held (Agin-Buryat, Amur, Evenki, Kemerovo, and Tula).

Spin doctors for the Yeltsin regime and the Communists have presented sharply differing pictures of the outcome of the recent elections. Yeltsin's chief spokesman on the elections, First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Alexander Kazakov, claims that only eight (he does not specify which) of the forty-three newly elected governors are not to the liking of the center.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, spokesmen for the Communists claim victory in almost all the races that were not won by the incumbents. Both sides can point to some successes.

Opposition forces did make major gains in the gubernatorial elections and now run sixteen regions. Their most notable victories were former Vice President Rutskoi in Kursk and a supporter of Zhirinovskiy in Pskov. In addition, candidates clearly identified with the opposition won in Altai, Bryansk, Chelyabinsk, Kaluga, Kirov, Krasnodar, Kurgan, Ryazan, Stavropol, Vladimir, Volgograd, and Voronezh (see details below). In addition, Communist candidates won in Tambov and Novosibirsk in December 1995. An opposition candidate also won an extremely close election in Amur that was invalidated by the courts.

The election results, however, were a disappointment for the Communists, who fell short of their ambitious goals following the presidential election. In many regions they lacked strong candidates of their own and supported leading contenders who often were not sympathetic to their cause (for example, in Kamchatka and Leningrad). The Communists were most successful in regions where they had well-known candidates: Many of their 1996 winners were the heads of the local legislatures (Altai, Voronezh, Kaluga, Vladimir, and Kurgan) and two others were Duma deputies belonging to the Communist faction (Bryansk and Stavropol).

The Yeltsin regime had also hoped to do better in the elections. At the start of the election process, Kazakov predicted that he did not expect the candidates backed by Moscow to lose more than seven or eight races.<sup>4</sup> The defeat of thirty-

one incumbents, however, was not entirely a defeat for Moscow because the Kremlin was not enthusiastic about the election of several of them. For example, the Kremlin leadership did not support Governor Nikolai Yegorov in Krasnodar and appeared to be divided in its support for the governor of Leningrad oblast. Of the fourteen governors appointed by Yeltsin after the December Duma elections, in the hope of putting stronger candidates in place, six won, six lost, and two races were not yet resolved at the time of this writing. Nevertheless, these results are probably somewhat better than if the old governors had been left in place because those who were replaced were more vulnerable.

One national-level leader who appeared to benefit from the regional elections was Alexander Lebed. With active assistance, his brother, Alexei Lebed, was elected as head of the Khakass Republic on 1 December 1996. Alexander Lebed also actively supported the winner in the January 1997 Marii-El Republic, visiting the region to campaign for him.<sup>5</sup> Lebed also supported four successful gubernatorial candidates (Chelyabinsk, Kostroma, Murmansk, and Vladimir). Lebed himself considered running for governor of Tula in March and would almost certainly have won.

Overall, the governors are likely to be a politically independent group without any strong political loyalties. Indeed, party affiliations were not an important factor in most of the elections. Now that Yeltsin can no longer remove them, and boosted by their popular mandates, even the governors he initially appointed will be much more independent. Winners among the opposition are also likely to be fairly independent and are unlikely to oppose the regime. They realize that they need to work with the center and have moderated their views accordingly. Moreover, the Communist governors were elected in many of Russia's poorest regions, so they will be particularly dependent on Moscow for assistance. According to one Russian observer, they are probably the least skillful administrators managing the areas with the greatest popular discontent.<sup>6</sup>

Driven by the financial necessity of cooperating with Moscow after their election, the opposition governors have tended to move quickly toward the political center and appear interested in cooperating with Moscow. Kursk Governor Rutskoi, for example, has publicly expressed his interest in putting past differences with Yeltsin aside, has refrained from criticizing the regime, and has had constructive meetings with Premier Chernomyrdin and Presidential Administration head Chubais. Similarly, although he was closely associated with the Communists when he was elected in April 1993, Orel Governor Stroeve quickly developed a good working relationship with Yeltsin and was supported by him to become the speaker of the Federation Council.

The big winners in the elections appear to be governors who are pragmatic business types. It was leaders who were perceived as ineffective managers who proved most vulnerable in the elections. For example, this was a key factor in the defeat of St. Petersburg Mayor Sobchak. Indeed, many of the challengers who were victorious were strong managers or businessmen, arguing that they could run the regions more effectively. According to one estimate, the so-called "Party of Strong Managers" won fifteen of the races.<sup>7</sup>

### A New Political Force

In the wake of the elections, the Federation Council will almost certainly become a more influential and independent political force. Not only has there been broad turnover in its ranks (it is made up of the executive and legislative leaders of each of Russia's eighty-nine regions), but returning members are now much less politically dependent on Yeltsin. Since December 1995, thirty-three of the sixty-eight governors have been replaced as well as two heads of republics (Marii-El and Khassia). There was additional turnover among the twenty-six legislative leaders scheduled to be elected between September 1996 and January 1997, but the effect of these elections on the Federation Council remains to be determined.<sup>8</sup> Turnover will continue in the Federation Council during 1997, as several additional gubernatorial races are held and some three dozen regional parliamentary leaders face local elections.

Signs of a more assertive Federation Council are already evident. It took a more activist approach in dealing with the 1997 budget—after Premier Chernomyrdin refused its summons to discuss the budget, forty-nine members voted against a compromise of meeting with him at the White House and thirty-eight members voted in favor of a resolution calling for the resignation of the government.<sup>9</sup> Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov already has been actively using the council to promote his political ambitions and engineered its overwhelming approval of a resolution in early December declaring that the Ukrainian region of Sevastopol is Russian territory.

Some politicians are even hoping that the changes in the composition of the Federation Council will now allow the Constitution to be amended. Council Speaker Yegor Stroeve called for the Federation Council to have broader authority, including the right to confirm key government leaders, including the "power ministers."<sup>10</sup> Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov has also suggested that with the changes in the council, it may now be possible to pass constitutional amendments to limit the power of the presidency—long a goal of the Communist-dominated Duma.

The regions have the critical role in amending the Constitution. To amend the sections of the Constitution affecting the powers of the president, the Parliament, and the regions, the approval of two-thirds of the Duma, three-quarters of the Federation Council, and two-thirds of the legislatures of Russia's eighty-nine federal regions is required (some sections require the approval of a Constitutional Assembly). This formula no doubt gives more power to regional leaders than was intended when the Constitution was drafted in 1993 because, at that time, elected deputies rather than regional officials served in the upper house.<sup>11</sup>

Short of changing the Constitution, Russia's elected governors promise to pose new challenges for Yeltsin. With a weak Duma, they are the leaders in the best position to stand up to the president. He will need their cooperation on the budget and taxes—matters that must come before the Federation Council—as well as to manage affairs in their areas, which gives them important bargaining power. Should it unite with the Duma on issues, the council could pose more serious challenges to the president, especially because until now he has been able to rely

on the council to prevent the Duma from overriding his vetoes. The limited leverage of the president vis-à-vis the governors was clearly recognized by an official of the Presidential Administration who suggested the need for a mechanism by which the president could remove governors.<sup>12</sup>

### Election Results

Information on the election results is derived from a variety of sources in the central media.<sup>13</sup> Although many of the challengers were supported by the Popular Patriotic Union of Russia, a union of Communist-affiliated groups, many of these candidates are not themselves Communists and some also were supported by reformist parties, such as Yabloko. The regions themselves determined the election rules. Most regions required a run-off election if no candidate received at least half of the votes in the first round, but in some regions candidates won with a plurality in one round. I have indicated when run-off elections were held.

#### *Agin-Buryat Autonomous Okrug, Chita Oblast*—Bolot

Ayushev, appointed in January 1996, and his opponent both fell just short of winning 50 percent of the vote on 27 October 1996, necessitating a new election.

*Altai Krai*—Alexander Surikov, who had been head of the krai parliament, narrowly defeated Governor Lev Korshunov, appointed in January 1994, in a run-off election on 1 December 1996. Surikov was supported by the Communists but stressed his independence during the campaign as well as his good relations with Yeltsin.<sup>14</sup>

*Amur Oblast*—Yuri Lyashko, appointed by Yeltsin in July 1996, finished 189 votes behind the Communist candidate, Assembly Speaker Anatoly Belonogov, in a 22 September 1996 election. However, the local court overturned the results, and a repeat election will be held in March. There was also an election in Amur in April 1993, but Yeltsin dismissed the winner in October 1993 for supporting the opposition in his struggle with Parliament.

*Arkhangelsk Oblast*—Anatoly Yefremov, appointed by Yeltsin in March 1996, defeated independent Duma Deputy Yuri Guskov, the former obkom first secretary, in a run-off election on 22 December 1996.

*Astrakhan Oblast*—Governor Anatoly Guzhvin, appointed in November 1992, defeated Communist Duma Deputy Vyacheslav Zvolinsky on 8 December 1996.

*Belgorod Oblast*—Governor Yevgeny Savchenko, appointed in October 1993, defeated an independent deputy to the Federation Council and a candidate from Zhirinovskiy's party on 17 December 1995.

*Bryansk Oblast*—Yuri Lodkin, a Communist Duma deputy, defeated Governor Alexander Semernev and six other candidates by winning over 50 percent of

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the votes on 8 December 1996. Semernev had been appointed governor only in July 1996. Lodkin had been elected governor in April 1993 but was removed by Yeltsin for supporting the Russian Parliament in the fall 1993 crisis. He was identified by Kazakov as a "clear opponent" of the regime.<sup>15</sup> While continuing to criticize the way reforms are being carried out, since his election Lodkin has stressed the need to develop a "constructive, businesslike" relationship with the center.<sup>16</sup>

**Chelyabinsk Oblast**—Pyotr Sumin, who was backed by the Communists, defeated Governor Vadim Solovov, appointed in 1991, and eight other candidates on 22 December 1996. Sumin had won the gubernatorial election in April 1993 on a staunchly anti-Yeltsin platform, but the election was held in defiance of Moscow and the results were invalidated by a local court. Sumin, running as a candidate of Lebed's party, the Congress of Russian Communities, was elected a Duma deputy in December 1995.

**Chita Oblast**—Governor Ravil Geniatulin, appointed in February 1996, won a single-round election with 31 percent of the vote on 27 October 1996, defeating four challengers.

**Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, Magadan Oblast**—Governor Alexander Nazarov, appointed in 1991, was elected on 22 December 1996 with 63 percent of the vote.

**Evenki Autonomous Okrug, Krasnoyarsk Krai**—Governor Anatoly Yakimov, appointed in 1991, was narrowly defeated by the head of the local legislature on 22 December 1996. As a result of charges of vote fraud, the local electoral commission nullified the results and a repeat election will be held in March 1997.

**Irkutsk Oblast**—Governor Yuri Nozhikov, elected on 27 March 1994, had been appointed by Yeltsin in 1991. Before his election, Nozhikov survived two attempts by Yeltsin to remove him, but since 1993 they have been working cooperatively.<sup>17</sup>

**Ivanovo Oblast**—Governor Vladislav Tikhomirov, appointed in February 1996, received just over 50 percent of the vote on 1 December 1996, defeating a candidate of the Liberal Democratic Party and an independent businessman.

**Jewish Autonomous Oblast, Khabarovsk Krai**—Governor Nikolai Volkov, appointed in December 1991, defeated an independent entrepreneur, winning 72 percent of the vote on 20 October 1996.

**Kaliningrad Oblast**—Independent port manager Leonid Gorbenko defeated Governor Yuri Matochkin, appointed in 1991, in a very close run-off on 20 October 1996. Gorbenko was supported in the race by Sergei Shakhrai's Party of Unity and Accord (PRES) and by Vladimir Shumeiko. After the Communists' candidate was eliminated in the first round, they supported Gorbenko.

**Kaluga Oblast**—Valery Sudarenkov, the Communist head of the oblast legislature, defeated Governor Savchenko, appointed in March 1996, in a run-off election on 9 November 1996. Sudarenkov was supported by the Communists, but upon his election, Alexander Kazakov of the Presidential Administration commented that as a member of the Federation Council his positions were always "balanced and thought out" and that he has better experience than Savchenko.<sup>18</sup>

**Kamchatka Oblast**—Governor Vladimir Biryukov, appointed in 1991, won a run-off election on 1 December 1996. The Communists in the region decided

against running their own candidate because the region needs financial support from the center and they believed that Moscow would not give money to a Communist governor.<sup>19</sup>

**Kemerovo Oblast**—Governor Mikhail Kislyuk, appointed in 1992, will face an uphill battle in an election to be held in early 1997. The popular Communist speaker of the oblast legislature, Aman Tuleev, would almost certainly have won the gubernatorial election had he not agreed to become the Russian minister for CIS affairs.

**Khabarovsk Krai**—Governor Viktor Ishaev, appointed in 1991, won 77 percent of the vote against Duma Deputy Valentin Tsoi and four other candidates on 8 December 1996.

**Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Tyumen Oblast**—Governor Alexander Filipenko, appointed in December 1991, overwhelmingly defeated an independent candidate on 27 October 1996.

**Kirov Oblast**—Vladimir Sergeenkov, who was backed by the Communists, defeated an independent in a run-off election on 20 October 1996. When asked why he could accept some other Communist-supported governors and not Sergeenka, Kazakov claimed that, unlike the others, he does not have the experience necessary to do the job.<sup>20</sup> However, he is probably fairly moderate because he was supported by Yabloko and PRES in addition to the Communists. The incumbent governor, Vasily Desyatnikov, appointed in December 1991, was eliminated in the first round of voting.

**Komi-Permyak Autonomous Okrug, Perm Oblast**—Governor Nikolai Poluyanov, appointed in 1991, won the election with about 70 percent of the vote on 17 November 1996.

**Koryak Autonomous Okrug, Kamchatka Oblast**—Russia's only woman governor, Valentina Bronevich, received 46 percent of the vote on 17 November 1996 in a one-round election, defeating Governor Sergei Leushkin, appointed in 1991, and several other candidates. She was supported by the Patriotic Union but ran as an independent and had previously served as head of the local electoral commission.

**Kostroma Oblast**—Viktor Shershunov, supported by the Communists and Lebed's Honor and Motherland movement, decisively defeated Governor Valery Arbuzov, appointed governor in 1991, in a run-off election on 22 December 1996.

**Krasnodar Krai**—Communist Nikolai Kondratenko defeated Governor Nikolai Yegorov on 22 December 1996, receiving 82 percent of the vote. Turnout did not reach the 50 percent level required for a valid election on 27 October 1996, when Kondratenko received 58 percent of the votes and Yegorov received only 25 percent. Yegorov resisted efforts to lower the turnout requirements, but it was lowered by the legislature to 25 percent. The Kremlin had not supported Yegorov's election and after the October vote sought to appoint Kondratenko as acting governor, but he refused to accept.<sup>21</sup> Yegorov had previously served as governor, but he went to Moscow where he headed the Presidential Administration until July 1996, when he was reappointed as governor.

**Krasnoyarsk Krai**—Valeriy Zubov was the only pro-Yeltsin reformer elected

governor in an April 1993 round of elections. He should be up for election again in 1997.

**Kurgan Oblast**—Oleg Bogomolov, the Communist speaker of the oblast Duma, received 67 percent of the vote, running unopposed in an 8 December 1996 run-off election. Incumbent Governor Anatoly Sobolev, appointed in August 1995, was eliminated in the first round, receiving only 13 percent of the vote. The candidate who finished second, however, charged Bogomolov with cheating and withdrew from the race in the hope of invalidating the run-off because, according to the election law, Bogomolov could not run unopposed.<sup>22</sup> It is not yet clear if Bogomolov's election will be considered valid.

**Kursk Oblast**—Former Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, who was supported by the Communists, won 79 percent of the vote on 20 October 1996, defeating Governor Vasily Shuteev, appointed in 1991, and two other candidates. Local officials were attempting to block Rutskoi's candidacy on the grounds that he had not been living in the oblast, but their efforts were overturned by the Russian Supreme Court three days before the election. Since his election as governor, Rutskoi has sought to mend relations with the regime, saying that "any governor, if he wants to achieve something good, should not be in conflict with the center."<sup>23</sup>

**Leningrad Oblast**—Independent candidate Vadim Gustov defeated Governor Alexander Belyakov on 29 September 1996, winning 53 percent of the vote. In an interview the following day, Gustov stressed his independence, pointing out that he was supported by Yabloko as well as by the Communists.<sup>24</sup> Kazakov pointed out that he was elected with the help of Vagit Alekperov, the powerful head of Lukoil, and the Menatep Bank.<sup>25</sup>

**Lipetsk Oblast**—Mikhail Narolin was elected on 11 April 1993, defeating pro-Yeltsin Governor Vladimir Zaitsev, appointed in 1992, and twelve other candidates.<sup>26</sup> Although Narolin did not actively campaign for Zyuganov, his sympathies apparently were with the Communists.<sup>27</sup> He should be up for election again in 1997.

**Magadan Oblast**—Valentin Tsvetkov, an independent Duma deputy, defeated Governor Viktor Mikhailov, appointed in 1991, on 3 November 1996. Tsvetkov was supported by the Communists, but during the campaign he distanced himself from them. He was described by Kazakov as a "very reliable" person.<sup>28</sup>

**Moscow City**—Mayor Yuri Luzhkov won the election with almost 90 percent of the vote on 16 June 1996. Luzhkov was the only regional leader that Yeltsin allowed to run for election on the same day as the presidential race. Yeltsin was clearly hoping to ride the coattails of the popular mayor and had plastered the city with posters emphasizing their ties.

**Moscow Oblast**—Governor Anatoly Tyazhlov, appointed in 1991, won a run-off election against the reformist deputy head of the oblast Duma, Valery Galchenko, on 30 December 1995. Galchenko complained that Tyazhlov had manipulated the election process, denying him access to the local media and rigging the run-off.

**Murmansk Oblast**—Yuri Yevdokimov, a local businessman, defeated Governor Yevgeni Komarov, appointed in 1991, in a run-off election on 1 December

1996. Yevdokimov was supported by the two parties associated with Alexander Lebed and in the second round gained the support of the Communists. Between rounds of the elections, Kazakov called both candidates reformers with whom the Kremlin would be able to work.

**Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Arkhangelsk Oblast**—Vladimir Butov, an independent businessman, defeated Governor Vladimir Khabarov, appointed in March 1996, on 13 December 1996. Butov has been described as “the classic type of new entrepreneur” and an active supporter of the market economy.<sup>29</sup>

**Nizhny Novgorod Oblast**—The popular reformist Governor Boris Nemtsov, appointed in 1991, easily defeated a candidate supported by the Communists and three other candidates on 17 December 1995.

**Novgorod Oblast**—Reformist Governor Mikhail Prusak, a leader of Our Home Is Russia, appointed as governor in 1991, defeated six other candidates on 17 December 1995.

**Novosibirsk Oblast**—Communist candidate Vitaly Mukha defeated Governor Ivan Indinok in a run-off election on 24 December 1995. Mukha had previously served as governor but was removed by Yeltsin in 1993 for not supporting him in his conflict with Parliament, following which Indinok was appointed. Since his election, however, Mukha has tried to develop good relations with the Kremlin, and he remained neutral in the presidential election.

**Omsk Oblast**—Governor Leonid Polezhayev, a supporter of Our Home Is Russia appointed in 1991, won reelection with 65 percent of the vote, running against five other candidates on 17 December 1995.

**Orel Oblast**—Yegor Stroyev defeated reformist Governor Nikolai Yudin, appointed in December 1991, on 4 April 1993. Although Stroyev was close to the Communists at the time of his election, he developed good relations with Yeltsin and was supported by the president to become speaker of the Federation Council. He should be up for election again in 1997.

**Orenburg Oblast**—Governor Vladimir Yelagin, a leader of Our Home Is Russia, won the election on 17 December 1995. Yelagin was appointed to the job in 1991 and appears to have close ties to Premier Chernomyrdin, who is from the region.

**Penza Oblast**—Anatoly Kovlyagin was elected on an anti-Yeltsin platform on 4 April 1993. He should be up for election again in 1997.

**Perm Oblast**—Governor Gennady Igumnov, appointed in January 1996, defeated Sergei Levitan, an independent newspaper publisher, in a run-off election on 22 December 1996.

**Pskov Oblast**—Duma Deputy Yevgeny Mikhailov defeated Governor Vladislav Tumanov, appointed in 1992, in a run-off election on 3 November 1996. Mikhailov is the only Liberal Democratic Party candidate to win an election, and between rounds, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy campaigned hard for him in the region. In addition, when the Communists' candidate was eliminated in the first round, to the surprise of Moscow, they threw their support to Mikhailov.<sup>30</sup>

**Primorsky Krai**—Governor Yevgeny Nazdratenko, appointed in May 1993, was elected on 17 December 1995, winning 75 percent of the vote. His opponent

was the independent leader of the opposition in the region. Nazdratenko runs the region with an iron hand, including the local media, so it was very difficult for his opponent to campaign.

**Rostov Oblast**—Governor Vladimir Chub, appointed in 1991, turned back a challenge from Communist Duma Deputy Leonid Ivanchenko on 29 September 1996. The Communists challenged the results, claiming fraud, and passed a resolution in the state Duma setting up a commission to investigate.

**Ryazan Oblast**—Vyacheslav Lyubimov, the Communist candidate, defeated Acting Governor Igor Ivlev, appointed in October 1996, in a run-off election on 22 December 1996. Kazakov said that the election of Lyubimov would be “unacceptable” to the regime. One of

Ivlev’s backers was the Agrarian Party.

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**St. Petersburg**—Vladimir Yakovlev defeated Mayor Anatoly Sobchak, who had been elected in June 1991, in a run-off election on 2 June 1996. Yakovlev had been Sobchak’s first deputy and won the election because of his claims of being able to run the city more

efficiently, not his stance on policy issues. Both candidates supported Yeltsin’s reelection. Premier Chernomyrdin supported Sobchak in the election, while Moscow Mayor Luzhkov supported Yakovlev.<sup>31</sup>

**Sakhalin Oblast**—Governor Igor Farkhutdinov, appointed in April 1995, won a one-round election with 40 percent of the vote on 20 October 1996. The Communist candidate finished a distant third.

**Samara Oblast**—Governor Konstantin Titov, appointed in September 1991, defeated Communist Duma Deputy Valentin Romanov and a local businessman on 1 December 1996, receiving 61 percent of the vote. Titov is a reformist governor and an active leader of Our Home Is Russia.

**Saratov Oblast**—Governor Dmitry Ayatskov, appointed in April 1996, won 81 percent of the vote, defeating a candidate supported by the Patriotic Union, Anatoly Gordeev, and a candidate supported by Forward Russia! on 1 September 1996.

**Smolensk Oblast**—Anatoly Glushenkov, running with Communist support, defeated reformist Governor Valery Fataev in an April 1993 election. In the 1996 presidential election, however, Glushenkov supported Yeltsin and would not meet with Zyuganov when he visited the region.<sup>32</sup> He should be up for election again in 1997.

**Stavropol Krai**—Alexander Chernogorov, a Communist Duma deputy, defeated Governor Pyotr Marchenko, who was appointed in July 1995, in a run-off election on 17 November 1996. Gennadiy Zyuganov and other leading Communists campaigned actively for Chernogorov between rounds of the election.

**Sverdlovsk Oblast**—Eduard Rossel defeated Governor Alexei Strakhov in a

run-off election on 20 August 1995. Rossel had been removed as governor by Yeltsin in 1993 for pressing for the formation of a Urals Republic. Before Yeltsin allowed the election, Rossel appeared to have mended fences with him and was a strong supporter of Yeltsin in the presidential election.<sup>33</sup>

**Tambov Oblast**—Alexander Ryabov, the Communist head of the local Duma, defeated Governor Oleg Betin, appointed in March 1995, in a run-off election on 24 December 1995. Ryabov was the only governor to support Zyuganov in the presidential election.

**Taimyr Autonomous Okrug, Krasnoyarsk Kray**—Governor Gennady Nedelin, appointed in 1991, won election on 22 December 1996 with 64 percent of the vote.

**Tomsk Oblast**—Governor Viktor Kress, a supporter of Our Home Is Russia, appointed by Yeltsin in October 1991, was elected on 17 December 1995.

**Tula Oblast**—Governor Nikolai Sevryugin was appointed in October 1991. The election has now been postponed until 23 March 1997. Alexander Lebed is among those considering running.

**Tver Oblast**—Vladimir Platonov, a reformist candidate who ran on the Yabloko list for the Duma, defeated Governor Vladimir Suslov on 17 December 1995. Suslov was supported by the Communists and had been appointed in October 1991.

**Tyumen Oblast**—Governor Leonid Roketsky, appointed in 1992, defeated independent banker Sergei Atroshenko in a run-off election on 12 January 1997, winning 59 percent of the vote.

**Ulyanovsk Oblast**—Governor Yuri Goryachev, appointed in January 1992, finished first in a one-round election on 22 December 1996, winning 42 percent of the vote. Goryachev has close ties to the Communists and was one of the few incumbent governors not supported by Moscow.

**Ust-Orda Autonomous Okrug, Irkutsk Oblast**—Valery Maleev, an independent sovkhos director who was supported by the Patriotic Union, defeated Governor Alexei Batagaev, appointed in 1991, and a Communist candidate on 17 November 1996.

**Vladimir Oblast**—Nikolai Vinogradov, the Communist head of the oblast Duma who was endorsed by Alexander Lebed, defeated Governor Yuri Vlasov, appointed in October 1992. In the 8 December 1996 election, Vinogradov received 63 percent of the vote.

**Volgograd Oblast**—Nikolai Maksyuta, the Communist head of the city council, defeated Governor Ivan Shabunin, appointed in 1991, in a run-off election on 29 December 1996.

**Vologda Oblast**—Governor Vyacheslav Pozgalev, appointed in June 1996, received 80 percent of the vote in a 6 October 1996 election against an independent local businessman and four other candidates.

**Voronezh Oblast**—Ivan Shabanov, the Communist speaker of the oblast Duma, defeated Governor Alexander Tsapin, appointed in September 1996, in a close race on 8 December 1996. Zyuganov visited the region on the eve of the election to campaign for Shabanov.

**Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Tyumen Oblast**—Governor Yuri Neelov, appointed in August 1994, received 69 percent of the vote on 13 October 1996, running against an independent Duma deputy and two other candidates.

**Yaroslavl Oblast**—Governor Anatoly Lisitsyn, appointed in 1991, defeated the first secretary of the local Communist Party Vladimir Kornilov on 17 December 1995.

#### NOTES

1. In this article, I use the term “governor” to refer to the heads of Russia’s sixty-eight federal regions, which include oblasts, krais, autonomous okrugs, and the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. The twenty-one ethnic republics have had the right to elect their leaders since 1991.

2. For details on earlier elections, see Marc Zlotnik, “Russia’s Governors: All the President’s Men?” *Problems of Post-Communism* (November–December 1996): 26–34.

3. Aleksandr Kazakov, interview in *Trud*, 28 December 1996.

4. Aleksandr Kazakov, INTERFAX, 24 September 1996.

5. Neither the Khakass nor the Marii-El elections are discussed because they were for republic leaders.

6. Anatoly Sergov, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 21 December 1996.

7. Gleb Cherkasov and Vladimir Shlak, *Segodnya*, 26 December 1996.

8. The dates for the elections can be found in *Rossiskiy vestnik*, 7 August 1996. Because the new speakers will not be elected until the legislatures meet and organize, many of them have not yet been selected.

9. *Kommersant-Daily*, 6 December 1996.

10. See Semen Shatskoi, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 11 January 1997.

11. A supplement to the 1993 Constitution specified that the first deputies to the Federation Council would be elected, but the Constitution was vague on how deputies would be chosen after that. After a heated debate in 1995, Yeltsin issued a decree saying that in the future the heads of the executive and legislative branches of each region should also serve as their regions’ deputies to the council. At the time, Yeltsin appeared to pick this formula so that his hand-picked governors could help serve as a check on the more independent Duma.

12. Sergei Samolov, *Segodnya*, 27 December 1996.

13. For a summary of the results of the elections since the presidential race, see Cherkasov and Shlak, *Segodnya*.

14. See Leonid Smirnyagin, *Rossiskiy vestnik*, 3 December 1996.

15. Alexander Kazakov, press conference, INTERFAX, 9 December 1996.

16. Yuri Lodkin, interview in *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, 28 December 1996.

17. See Zlotnik, “Russia’s Governors.”

18. Alexander Kazakov, INTERFAX, 10 November 1996.

19. See *Segodnya*, 1 October 1996.

20. Alexander Kazakov, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 22 November 1996.

21. Stepan Kiselev, *Izvestiya*, 13 November 1996.

22. ITAR-TASS, 30 November 1996.

23. Alexander Rutskoi, *Komsomolskaya pravda*, 28 November 1996.

24. Vadim Gustov, interview on *Hero of the Day*, 30 September 1996.

25. Alexander Kazakov, cited in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 13 October 1996.

26. See M. McFaul and N. Petrov, eds., *Politicheskiy al'manakh Rossii 1995* (Moscow: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1995), 428.

27. See *Rossiskiy vestnik*, 20 March 1996.

28. *Izvestiya*, 6 November 1996.

29. Felix Babutskiy, *Rossiyskiye vesti*, 15 December 1996.
30. Kazakov, INTERFAX, 22 November 1996.
31. See Stepan Kiselev, *Izvestiya*, 30 May 1996.
32. See *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, 5 April 1996.
33. See Zlotnik, "Russia's Governors."