

# The Rule of Law and Russian Culture— Are They Compatible?

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**W**hat is the relationship between current Russian cultural norms and the functioning of the legal system? If there is a conflict between those norms and the rule of law, is there any realistic hope for positive change?

At the Third International Conference on the Past, Present and Future of Russia, in Washington, D.C., I asked the audience if they thought a “well-connected Russian” would be likely to be found guilty of embezzlement from a foreign-owned firm.<sup>1</sup> None of the conference participants volunteered the opinion that justice would prevail. (The topic of my presentation involved just such a case.)<sup>2</sup> In a February 1998 survey, two-thirds of the respondents did not feel they could rely on the Russian courts to protect their rights, and 54 percent did not think the courts had the power to make fair decisions.<sup>3</sup>

The “rule of law” is considered essential to an effective democratic system. It is believed that democracy cannot function unless there is a comprehensive and effective set of rules and regulations that are fairly and consistently applied to everyone in society, in principle if not always in practice. In a truly democratic system, no one is supposed to stand above the law. This latter point was at the heart of President Clinton’s impeachment. In the 1970s, thanks to Watergate, President Nixon discovered that he was not immune to legal sanctions—much to the disbelief of Leonid Brezhnev and his colleagues, who assumed that, like themselves, the U.S. president was not subject to the laws of the land.<sup>4</sup>

Prior to the fall of communism, neither the tsars or the commissars were bound by the law—and the current legal system is definitely not reliable. For example, no high-ranking government official has yet been tried and convicted of anything, despite overwhelming evidence that many of them are living well beyond the means supplied by their official salaries.<sup>5</sup>

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According to Georgiy Satarov, a former aid to President Yeltsin and currently president of the Information Science for Democracy Fund, corruption has cost Russia over 50 billion rubles a year, or more than the 1997 budgets for science, education, health, and culture combined.<sup>6</sup> In another estimate, the British-based consulting firm Control Risks Group concluded that “corruption is costing Russia’s ailing economy about \$15 billion a year and was at least partly responsible for its financial crisis.”<sup>7</sup> With regard to the perceptions of the Russian public, the popular television program *Itogi* (results) invited viewers to register their opinion of the honesty of the new government of Yevgeni Primakov. Within a few hours, more than 16,500 people had called in and more than 92 percent of them indicated that they thought the government was corrupt.<sup>8</sup>

On a comparative basis, Transparency International’s 1998 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Russia seventy-sixth out of eighty-five countries. (Denmark was ranked first—least corrupt—and the United States was tied with Austria at seventeenth.) On a ten-point scale, with Denmark having earned a ten, Russia scored 2.4. (The United States and Austria both had a 7.5 and Cameroon, with 1.4, had the lowest score.)<sup>9</sup> In short, Russia clearly has a substantial corruption problem—and this makes justice extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

### The Roots of the Problem

The problem is not exclusively the absence of specific laws or legal procedures. Major corruption can exist only in a climate that tolerates it. To a significant extent, the same “men and women in the street” who complain, often bitterly, about high-level corruption and the general lack of justice in the Russian system are themselves a major part of the problem. Although generally on a much smaller scale than at the top of the society, many of them “lie, cheat, and steal,” or at least tolerate such behavior by others. It is seen as simply “the way things are done.”<sup>10</sup>

For example, almost everyone who can do so cheats on his or her taxes. The excuse is that the taxes are unreasonable—which is true. For instance, during his successful campaign for governor of Krasnoyarsk, retired general Alexander Lebed referred to “so-called ‘gray’ money—money honestly earned but on which you pay no taxes because the tax system in this country is crazy.” Lebed went on to say that this “is a sin that everyone in this country is guilty of. Everyone.”<sup>11</sup>

As a recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* put it, “Ordinary Russians, long accustomed to cutting corners, now routinely break laws and shirk taxes to help their business endeavors survive.”<sup>12</sup> An October 1998 *Moscow Times* article noted that “in the company of civilized people, be they bankers or businessmen, journalists or artists, if someone admits he does not pay taxes to the state, he is not judged or criticized by his colleagues and friends.” The article goes on to state that “knowing how to get around the law and the courts is considered an enviable skill or, at the very least, a just response to the state, which for many years tortured and robbed its own people.”<sup>13</sup>

In general, theft became an integral part of the Soviet system. An unusual opinion poll—unusual in the sense that such questions were seldom asked during the Soviet period—was conducted at Moscow enterprises by researchers at the USSR

Academy of Sciences' Sociological Research Institute in 1983. They found, for example, that 90 percent of the respondents were, at a minimum, not opposed to a worker pocketing money received for fixing a radio at a state repair shop; 40 percent supported stealing the money. The general conclusion was that "a large proportion of the respondents attach no particular significance to petty thefts of socialist [i.e., state] property."<sup>14</sup>

Today, if anything, stealing is even more widespread than it was under the Communist regime. A senior researcher at the All-Russian Public Opinion Poll, Leonid Sedov, has estimated that 30 percent of the public engages in theft at least occasionally.<sup>15</sup> In this connection, many Russians are fond of saying, "An honest man is a fool." Or "A person who has an opportunity to steal and doesn't is a fool." Stealing, in fact, is often not seen as "wrong." For example, there is the saying, "A man who doesn't steal from work is stealing from his family." More often than would be the case in the United States under similar circumstances, books, money, and other items turn up "missing" at the American Home that we operate in Vladimir. Although this interferes with our ability to provide the best possible programs, none of the Russian participants in our activities has ever assisted us in identifying the guilty parties. If the opportunity arises, a significant number of people steal—and many others do not feel that this is unacceptable.<sup>16</sup>

Even if a Russian is caught doing something clearly illegal, it is widely assumed that if they have the right "contacts"—or can pay a big enough bribe—the law does not really apply to them. For example, in the fall of 1995 it was discovered that the former executive director of our firm's operations in Vladimir had embezzled a large sum of money—over 136 million (old) rubles, or approximately \$33,000 at the prevailing exchange rate. She had been hired in part because of her extensive connections in the community. Because of her "contacts," most Russians with whom I discussed the case assumed she would be able to avoid any criminal sanctions. Two Vladimir auditing firms specifically advised us to conceal the embezzlement. Their reasoning was that if she was not convicted, under an admittedly counterproductive law, the firm would be liable for all back taxes on the money she had taken (and concealed from the tax inspectors), plus huge fines and penalties—more than enough to bankrupt our operations.<sup>17</sup> However, we decided to proceed with the case—not reporting the theft would have been a crime.

The initial investigation bore out the belief that the accused's "friends" would be able to protect her. In August 1996, the charges against her were abruptly dropped. The young investigator's justification for halting the inquiry included the argument that, while the accused had used "illegal means" to obtain the money, the amount she personally kept was "owed to her." Therefore, contrary to both Western and Russian legal standards, he concluded this was a civil, not a criminal case. He further accepted her claim that the rest of the money had been used "for the benefit of the firm" despite the absence of convincing documentation in support of this assertion.<sup>18</sup>

Reportedly, when we appealed the dropping of the charges, the staff at the Prosecutor-General's Office in Moscow laughed at the "reasoning" presented in

the investigator's written explanation,<sup>19</sup> but no official action was taken against anyone involved in this decision. They were apparently just "playing by the informal rules." However, the Vladimir Oblast (region) prosecutor was instructed by Moscow to reexamine the case and ultimately the criminal inquiry was renewed.

A series of threats from the accused against our attorney, myself, and others followed the reopening of the investigation. While these efforts ultimately undermined the accused's position at her trial, no official action was taken in response to her blatant attempts to obstruct justice. Again, it was as if it was assumed this was "the way the game was played."

Further, the accused was regularly caught in blatant lies during her official testimony, but no charge of perjury was ever filed.<sup>20</sup> The rules are clearly different in Russia than in the United States, where a president's future can hang on the question of whether or not he lied under oath.

Given the widespread tendency to "lie, cheat, and steal"—and obstruct justice—can the rule of law prevail in Russia? The obvious answer is no. Justice cannot consistently prevail in Russia, not without significant changes in the general culture. The problem is not primarily due to a lack of laws, ineffective law enforcement, or high-level corruption.

Once again, it is not "they"—that is, presumably, people in positions of authority—who are exclusively responsible for this state of affairs. Rather, the general public is making a major, if not the primary, contribution to this atmosphere of corruption and failed justice through its own actions and inaction. Specifically, in addition to widespread participation in petty corruption and other forms of dishonesty and the general acceptance of the behavior, unlike the previous 1,000 years of Russian history, today political leaders on all levels must win elections to acquire their power, and they have to be reelected to retain it. In other words, the public now has the ability to "throw the bums out." If they choose not to do so, then they are tacitly accepting the current state of affairs.

But does this mean that Russia is doomed to corruption and the unfair treatment of those who do not have the necessary connections or sufficient resources to pay substantial bribes? Based on my own personal experience, as well as the observations of others and additional evidence, I can confidently respond: "Not necessarily—there is hope."

### **Factors in Favor of the Rule of law**

The factors contributing to this hope for the future include an underlying respect for integrity among many Russians, a religious revival, the practical need for honesty and reliability/predictability in a modern economy, and the fact that the world is watching to an extent never before possible.

### **Underlying Respect**

Most of the Russians I know seem to realize that dishonesty, corruption, and all the related "sins" are harming them, their children, and Russia in general. Even though it is hard to break old—in some cases centuries old—habits, there is the apparent desire to do so. Not every Russian believes that "an honest man is a

fool.” For example, there is the tremendous respect that Russians have for people such as Andrei Sakharov—foremost because of his consistent integrity. Most recently, this respect for integrity has been demonstrated by the widespread public reaction to the murder of Duma Deputy Galina Starovoitova, human rights advocate and outspoken democratic political leader.<sup>21</sup>

The ongoing discussions of honesty and corruption—in the media and around the kitchen table—are healthy and productive. In this connection, Grigory Yavlinsky, the leader of the Yabloko party and a probable candidate for president in 2000, generated significant media attention with charges of corruption against several high-ranking members of the current government. People seem to be paying increasing attention to this issue—rather than simply accepting “business as usual”—and Yavlinsky is trying to use this concern for honesty in high places to strengthen his bid for the presidency.<sup>22</sup>

During an interrogation concerning the embezzlement case in which my firm was involved, I found the occasion to acknowledge a fact that in a minor way benefited the defendant. After she and her attorney had left the investigator’s office, it was suggested to me that it would be best not to agree with her when it wasn’t necessary to do so, that is, when she didn’t have concrete evidence supporting her claims. (In this case, she claimed to have used some of the money she had laundered to pay some minor expenses, which I initially disputed. However, as the interrogation proceeded, I remembered that what she had said about the expenses was basically correct, and so acknowledged.) I pointed out that “the truth was the truth.” To this our attorney replied: “I doubt these walls have ever heard such an honest man.” When I defended the “value” of telling the truth, another Russian present agreed with me—and I am sure he is not alone. (Our operation’s reputation is based in part on our acknowledged integrity, which is very ably upheld by the Russian staff.)

When a Russian friend and her young daughter were staying with an American family while the mother taught a university course, they became involved in a discussion about a specific question of integrity. The host mother’s reply to the girl’s question of “Why not?” was a simple: “It wouldn’t be honest.” The Russian mother appreciated that, and her young daughter accepted it.

While many Russians are inclined to disagree, there is in my opinion, no “fundamental flaw” in the Russian character that makes dishonesty—and the related sin of corruption—inevitable. The natural desire for integrity, however, does need to be encouraged.

### **Religious Revival**

Unfortunately, several centuries of tsarist control of the Russian Orthodox Church, followed by seventy-four years of communism, went a long way toward undermining the moral teachings and authority of religion in Russia.<sup>23</sup> The Communists worked especially hard to discredit religion in general and the Orthodox Church in particular. Scientific atheism was supposed to rule the day, and the authorities had significant success in diminishing the church’s role in society. For example, by and large, only elderly women attended church services. As a sub-

stitute for religious moral teachings, Soviet leaders tried to impose “Communist morality.” This, however, turned out to be ineffective—in large part because it was exceptionally hypocritical. The leaders increasingly failed to practice what they preached. The result was that basic morality went into significant decline.<sup>24</sup>

With the fall of communism, there has been a resurgence in religious activity. Opinion polls regularly show the Russian Orthodox Church as being one of the most respected, and usually the most trusted, institution in the country.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, especially where the Orthodox Church is concerned, one important factor undermines the role of religion in Russian society. Under both the tsars (especially beginning with Peter the Great) and the Communists, the church was largely coopted by the state.<sup>26</sup>

The hypocrisy and other problems that this bred have not been fully overcome. This obviously diminishes the ability of the church to act as an effective moral guide for Russian society. In this connection, however, it should be kept in mind that the Roman Catholic Church, for example, has suffered its historical bouts

with substantial degrees of corruption and hypocrisy, sometimes reaching all the way to the pope. However, that has not kept the Catholic Church from playing an important moral role in society most of the time. No religious group, Christian or non-Christian, is immune to human failings. But, generally speaking, that does not keep religion from playing a positive role.

In addition to the revival of the Orthodox Church, Western religious groups have flooded Russia in recent years. School officials in the Vladimir region went to the trouble of asking American missionaries to teach courses on “moral values” in the public schools. This of course generated some controversy: Why should “outsiders” need to teach morals to Russians?<sup>27</sup> However, one of the goals of the school officials obviously was to expose the students to native speakers of English, along with lessons in morality.

Unfortunately, most of the Western missionaries I have met in Russia have not been playing an entirely positive role. In fact, often their activities have been counterproductive. They generally have very little understanding of Russian culture (they seldom learn the language), and they tend to place most of their emphasis on “winning souls to Christ.” As a result, in addition to their activities’ angering Orthodox Christians, they are frequently manipulated by many of the Russians with whom they deal. For example, many families have as their primary goal arranging for their children to study in the United States. To achieve this, they say whatever the missionaries want to hear—which is exactly how they dealt with the Communist Party in their efforts to get ahead under the Soviet regime. In other words, the missionaries often end up encouraging “corrupt practices.”

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All of the world's great religions have among their core teachings "thou shalt not lie, cheat, or steal." Despite the problems noted above, all in all, the religious revival will definitely reinforce the basic desire for integrity.

### **Practical Need**

It is much more difficult for businesses to operate in a climate of corruption and with an unreliable legal system than if they can rely on the rule of law. A reliable legal climate is simply good for the bottom line, and it makes daily life much easier. Evidence of growing recognition of the practical value of the rule of law is the fact that, prior to the economic collapse in August 1998, more and more business disputes were being brought to arbitration courts as opposed to being settled by "enforcers." With any luck, once the current instability ends, this trend will continue.<sup>28</sup>

In this connection, small businesses that want to stay in business for any length of time have a special need to operate with integrity. It is true that, especially in the beginning, there was an "anything goes" attitude on the part of many Russian entrepreneurs. For example, one young man who had quit graduate school to start a business told an American: "One of the hurdles I had to overcome was getting used to the idea that if it's in my interest to deceive someone, I have to do that."<sup>29</sup> In Vladimir at least, it was not long before clients recognized this type of behavior and, as competition grew, took their business elsewhere. It does not take much dishonesty to undermine the reputation of a small business and to force it to shut down.

As businesses that are established on a foundation of honesty grow—those that do not have this foundation by and large will not prosper over time—they should continue to function with integrity. In the process, they will demonstrate to the rest of society that honesty does pay.<sup>30</sup>

### **The World Is Watching**

As never before during Russia's thousand-year history, the rest of the world is watching. During the Communist period, a major effort was made to limit the access of both Russians and foreigners to accurate information about the country's problems. Now the combination of the loss of the old censorship and modern communications technology—from the Internet to satellite TV—has made it impossible to keep the world from knowing what is going on behind the former iron curtain, and impossible to keep Russians from knowing what the rest of the world thinks about their country. When a reporter who is investigating corruption in the Russian military is killed by an exploding package, or an honest policeman who is uncovering corruption among local officials is shot, or a well-respected national politician is gunned down, the whole world knows.

Given the need to attract foreign investment and substantial loans, Russian officials are being forced to take into account the opinions of others to a much greater extent than ever before. Specifically, according to one editorial, "international lenders have concluded that bribery and other corruption undercut their investments."<sup>31</sup> While this concern by outsiders clearly does not make it impos-

sible to ignore the requirements of the rule of law, it does make it more difficult and costly to do so.

Average Russians are regularly reminded of the requirements of “civilization,” as they travel abroad in rapidly growing numbers, as they interact more extensively than ever before at home with foreigners, and as they have essentially unrestricted access to the world’s traditional media, not to mention the rapidly growing Internet. In the face of all this interaction and scrutiny, it is much more difficult today than in the past to pretend that all is well when that is clearly not the case.

Almost certainly, the probability of critical scrutiny by the media played a role in ultimately blocking the influence of our former executive director’s “friends” in her embezzlement case. While they were able to get the initial investigation halted, her *svyazy* (connections) were not able to prevent the reopening of the case and the accused’s ultimate conviction. In the not too distant past, she almost certainly would have been let off the hook—and without any public discussion of her case. (She was found guilty in February 1998 and is now serving a five-year sentence in a penal colony.)

### Conclusion

There are, of course, no guarantees. At a minimum, the economic and political turmoil that began in August 1998 is a significant setback to Russian progress. However, the factors discussed above—coupled undoubtedly with other forces—do have a good chance of altering Russian culture over time to the point where it will be possible to consistently apply the rule of law.

The “other forces” undoubtedly include government action. However, the focus of this essay has been on the need for cultural change. Only when Russian culture has been altered will there be a decent foundation for effective government policy.

Russians want to be able to “live normally.” This desire for stability and predictability, coupled with the critical feedback that for the first time in over a thousand years is now possible on a large scale in Russia, make hope for the future realistic.

### NOTES

1. The conference was held in Washington, D.C., 8 and 9 June 1998. It was organized by the American University in Moscow, *Kontinent*, publishing house “Voskresenie,” and the Russian Academy of Sciences. It was sponsored by Russia House (Washington, D.C.) and Incombank (Moscow). My participation was made possible by travel funds from Illinois State University.

2. See Ronald R. Pope, “Inching Toward Justice in Russia,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 July 1998, 11. (Reprinted in *Johnson’s Russia List* #2264, 14 July 1998.) The conference paper appears in *Kontinent* 98 (Winter 1999): 72–82.

3. Public Opinion Foundation poll, February 1998 ([www.fom.ru](http://www.fom.ru)); as cited in Vladimir Shlapentokh, “Go to Moscow Kenneth Starr! The Russians Need You,” *Johnson’s Russia List* #2126, 31 March 1998.

4. On the Soviet leadership’s view of Watergate, see Hedrick Smith, *The Russians* (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), 241–44. On the origins of the relationship between the



legal system and the Soviet/Russian leadership, see Roy A. Medvedev, *Let History Judge* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 502.

5. For example, apparently hundreds of millions of dollars in Russian government and Western aid intended for the coal industry has disappeared—and no one has been prosecuted. See Kathy Lally and Will Englund, “Corruption of Coal Industry Infuriates Russia’s Miners,” *Baltimore Sun*, 19 July 1998, 1A (*Johnson’s Russia List* #2272, 19 July 1998). Also see Carol J. Williams, “The Germ of Post-Soviet Russia Is Corruption,” *Los Angeles Times*, 20 September 1998, A14 (*Johnson’s Russia List* #2387, 20 September 1998); Jonas Bernstein, “Another Battle in Russia’s Phony War on Corruption,” *Washington Post*, 29 June 1997, C2.

6. Itar-Tass, Moscow, 18 June 1998 (*Johnson’s Russia List*, #2231, 20 June 1998). Also see Williams, “The Term of Post-Soviet Russia Is Corruption”; Cathy Young, “Russian Studies,” *Chicago Tribune*, 6 September 1998, Sec. 1, 17 (*Johnson’s Russia List* #2353, 7 September 1998); Victor M. Sergeev, *The Wild East: Crime and Lawlessness in Post-Communist Russia* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1997).

7. “Corruption Costs Russia \$15 bn a Year-Consultant,” Reuters (London), 13 October 1998 (*Johnson’s Russia List* #2429, 14 October 1998).

8. Michael Wines, “Surprising Russian Stir on Unsurprising Issue: Corruption,” *New York Times*, 3 November 1998, A3.

9. “Transparency International Ranks 85 Countries in Largest Ever Corruption Perceptions Index,” news release, 22 September 1998 ([www.transparency.de](http://www.transparency.de)).

10. See Richard C. Paddock, “In Russia, Stealing Is a Normal Part of Life,” *Los Angeles Times*, 21 September 1998, A8; Mumin Shakirov, “ESSAY: Criminalized Society Favors Cruel Punishment,” *Moscow Times*, 14 January 1998 ([www.moscowtimes.ru](http://www.moscowtimes.ru)); Williams, “The Term of Post-Soviet Russia Is Corruption.”

11. Quoted in Martin Walker, “After Yeltsin: Russia Faces Free-fall,” *Transitions* (June 1998): 21. Also see Sujata Rao, “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Tax Collector?” *Moscow Times*, 1 August 1998 (*Johnson’s Russia List* #2293, 1 August 1998).

12. Williams, “The Term of Post-Soviet Russia Is Corruption.”

13. Shakirov, “ESSAY.”

14. A. S. Grechin, “Experiment in the Sociological Study of People’s Feelings on Law and Order,” *Sotsiologicheskkiye issledovaniya* 2 (April-June 1983): 121–26 (*Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 27 July 1983). For a good anecdotal discussion of theft during the Soviet period see Smith, *The Russians*, 81–86.

15. Paddock, “In Russia, Stealing is a Normal Part of Life.”

16. See *ibid.* and Williams, “The Term of Post-Soviet Russia Is Corruption.”

17. Our activities include a popular not-for-profit American English program; a remodeling business, from which the money was stolen; some tourism; assistance with trade deals; and a variety of “noncommercial” projects, including support for educational and art exchanges and police training. For more information, see our Website: [www.serendipity-russia.com](http://www.serendipity-russia.com).

18. Investigator A. M. Naumov, “Decision Concerning the Dropping of the Criminal Case As the Result of a Change in the Situation,” Prosecutor’s Office, City of Vladimir, 12 August 1996. (The title of this report is misleading. Naumov makes no specific claim of a “change in the situation” in the text of his report.) On the question of the general attitude toward the legal profession during the Soviet period, see George Feifer, *Justice in Moscow* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964), 343. Also see “Legal System Under Fire for Abuses” (a collection of articles from the Soviet press), *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 30 November 1983.

19. Reported by Valeri Skorbilin on the Vladimir television evening news, 16 February 1998.

20. For a detailed account of this case, see Ronald R. Pope, “A Connecticut Yankee in Tsar Yeltsin’s Court: Justice in Russia,” unpublished manuscript.

21. On Sakharov, see Fred Coleman, *The Decline and Fall of the Soviet Empire* (New

York: St. Martin's Press, 1996) 115–17; Smith, *The New Russians*, 99. On Starovoitova, see Peter Graff, "Deputy's Murder Unites Russia in Mourning and Fear," Reuters (Moscow), 23 November 1998 (*Johnson's Russia List* #2488, 23 November 1998).

22. Wines, "Surprising Russian Stir"; *RFE/RL Newslines*, Vol. 2, No. 12, Part I (3 November 1998).

23. On the failure of the Russian Orthodox Church to live up to its responsibilities during the tsarist and Soviet periods, see Barbara Wolfe Jancar, "Religious Dissent in the Soviet Union," in *Dissent in the USSR*, Rudolf L. Tokes (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 203–04.

24. See Itar-Tass, "Prosecutor: Russian Corruption Has Historical Background," 2 July 1998 (*Johnson's Russia List* #2252, 8 July 1998); Kathy Lally, "Corruption in Russia Wears Police Uniform," *Baltimore Sun*, 6 July 1998, 1A (*Johnson's Russia List* #2252, 8 July 1998); Williams, "The Term of Post-Soviet Russia Is Corruption." On high-level Soviet corruption, see especially Michael Voslensky, *Nomenklatura* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), 188–92. For a good general discussion of corruption in the Soviet Union, see Smith, *The Russians*, 81–101.

25. See Andrei A. Zolotov, "Poll Reveals Boost to Religion in Russia," *Ecumenical News International*, 14 November 1996 ([www.umn.org/htboost.htm](http://www.umn.org/htboost.htm)); Stephen White, Richard Rose, and Ian McAllister, *How Russia Votes* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1997), 54; Harry Eckstein, Frederic J. Fleron, Jr., Erik P. Hoffmann, and William M. Reisinger, *Can Democracy Take Root in Post-Soviet Russia?* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), 81.

26. I am indebted to Vitaly and Julia Brukman for reminding me of the debilitating influence of state control of religion in Russia.

27. Andrei A. Zolotov, "Why Russia Restricts Religions," *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 October 1997.

28. On the growing professionalism of the Russian court system, see Geoffrey York, "Russian Courts," *The Globe and Mail* (Canada), 13 July 1998 (*Johnson's Russia List* #2265, 14 July 1998).

29. Young, "Russian Studies."

30. I am indebted to George Zorin for bringing this specific argument to my attention in this context. For a discussion of the important role of small business in the restructuring of the Russian economy, see Ronald R. Pope, "What Is to Be Done?" *Johnson's Russia List* #2295, 3 August 1998; posted on the Center for Civil Society International website: [www.friends-partners.org/~ccsi](http://www.friends-partners.org/~ccsi).

31. Editorial, "Spotlights on Corruption," *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 August 1997, 20.