

Managed Democracy? Building Stealth Authoritarianism in St. Petersburg

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Many residents of St. Petersburg and other areas say that Russian President Vladimir Putin aspires to a historical stature equal to that of Peter the Great. Putin has at least one similarity with St. Petersburg's founder: he seeks to undertake the modernization of Russia by authoritarian means. It is time to stop referring to Putin's emerging system of power as "manipulated" or "managed democracy." Putin's system is better thought of as a soft-authoritarian form of rule, established and maintained by a stealth-like violation of the fundamental principles of democracy and the rule of law.

One St. Petersburg observer noted that to attain Petrine status, "Putin, like Peter, will have to transform the entire mouth of the Neva as well as all of Russia."¹ This is only a slight overstatement of the importance that the transformation of St. Petersburg's political matrix will have on Russia's fate. Stealth authoritarianism cannot be consolidated without first being established in St. Petersburg. The Russian president could ill afford opposition in St. Petersburg—Russia's second city, and Putin's native one—to his effort to install his twenty-first century version of Peter's modernizing authoritarianism. Russia's "northern capital," with its population of five million, constitutes nearly 4 percent of Russians, and the city has been a compass for the country's political direction for centuries. In pre-communist Russia, St. Petersburg served as the country's capital. In Soviet Russia, it often competed with Muscovites for the reins of leadership in the CPSU. In 1989, under Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika, the former Leningrad dealt one of the greatest blows against a regional party leadership in the USSR by voting against CPSU candidates in the first semi-free elections to the USSR's Congress of People's Deputies. Along with Moscow, St. Petersburg was one of the first cities to shift power from the party to a popularly elected mayor. In post-Soviet Russia, Petersburg was ruled by one of the country's leading democrats, Anatolii Sobchak, and developed one of the most powerful parliaments in all Russia.

Now, as Putin moves to restore order after years of Boris Yeltsin's rather unruly democracy, St. Petersburg has become the focus of political struggle in Russia, at

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both the federal and regional levels. At the federal level, for the first time since the tsars, the country's leader is a Petersburg native. As such, President Putin has staffed much of his administration and government with former associates and acquaintances from the city on the Neva. Two of the three most powerful bureaucratic-oligarchic clans are composed of Petersburgers. The liberals—led by United Energy Systems chairman and the father of Russia's nomenklatura privatization process Anatolii Chubais, Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin, and Economics and Trade Minister German Gref—are made up of former Putin colleagues and acquaintances from the period when he was deputy mayor to Sobchak between 1991 and 1996. The so-called *chekisty*, or chekists, are made up of former Putin colleagues from his days in the KGB in St. Petersburg and East Germany, as well as in Moscow, where he led the post-Soviet KGB successor, the Federal Security Service (FSB) from 1998–99.

As the 2003–04 federal election cycle approached, Putin could ill-afford to leave St. Petersburg independent of the Kremlin and the stealth-authoritarian system he wanted to build. In the run-up to the 1999–2000 federal election cycle, Moscow's mayor, Yurii Luzhkov, was brought to heel by Putin for organizing regionally based opposition to the dominant bureaucratic-oligarchic clan of the Yeltsin era. Putin had come to play a supporting, but vital, role in this so-called Family, first as the Yeltsin-appointed FSB chief, then as premier, and finally as the crowned presidential successor. The victory over Luzhkov and others in that federal election cycle and over regional leaders through federative reforms established Putin's hegemony on Russia's political stage and enforced a system of limited illiberal managed democracy. With a new federal election cycle looming, Putin needed to remove his long-time opponent, St. Petersburg Governor Aleksandr Yakovlev, from power so the federal election cycle (and the regional cycle of gubernatorial and parliamentary elections to follow) would consolidate his new brand of stealth authoritarianism.

Putin's Stealth Authoritarian Regime

It is time to put an end to the use of the terms “managed,” “illiberal,” and “weak democracy” to describe Russia's present regime. With the lack of rule of law, growing governmental control over the most influential mass media organs, and the disappearance of competitive elections, Russia should now be considered slightly more authoritarian than democratic. Putin's new stealth authoritarianism is at present a soft, barely authoritarian system that is implemented and functions cryptically, almost imperceptibly. It consists of six interrelated elements: (1) a constitutional order that gives the executive branch and the president preponderant, but not dictatorial, power, enabling them to dominate and partially control legislative and judicial institutions and, most important, to run directly the organs of coercion and law enforcement; (2) weak formal institutions and rule of law; (3) strong informal institutions, networks, and practices—oligarchic groupings of firms, friends, and families penetrating the state and allied with state officials—and the broad use of *kompromat* and the threat of criminal charges to persuade

actors to behave as desired; (4) a weak civil society; (5) often subtle violations of and maximum use of loopholes in the legal-constitutional order; (6) and control of the commanding heights of the country's mass media, the national television channels, from which the overwhelming majority of Russians get most or all of their news. Media hegemony allows the leadership to minimize the political impact of corruption, crime, and the regime's efforts to limit democracy.

One of the clearest signs that the regime is beginning a transition back to authoritarianism is the leadership's clever, but willful, manipulation of the electoral environment to the extent that the outcome of an election campaign is almost always a foregone conclusion. Election and media laws give incumbents advantages that are supplemented by the selective application of the laws against opponents of the authorities. The authorities' main weapon to tilt the campaign election playing field in their favor are the so-called administrative resources: the legal and illegal use of the state's bureaucratic, property, financial, and informational resources to manipulate political and electoral outcomes. Authorities deploy police (MVD, FSB), investigative (MVD, prosecutors), auditing (tax police and accounting chambers), and monitoring (election commissions) agencies and the courts to discredit, pressure, or remove most or all viable opposition candidates from important races. The selective application of the law by these institutions is perhaps the most important administrative resource at the authorities' disposal. In addition, the authorities' control of various premises is used to provide benefits to candidates whom they support and to deny benefits to opponents. The financial resources of state-owned monopolies, enterprises, banks, and other commercial and financial institutions bankroll the parties and candidates closest to the Kremlin and provide inducement to opponents to back off or be co-opted in those races where this becomes necessary. The Kremlin's control of television and many other media outlets allows it to tilt the playing field even further by providing inordinate publicity to allies, denying it to opponents, or using the airwaves and print space to attack opponents with negative publicity in the form of "black" political technologies and public relations and well-publicized criminal and corruption investigations.

The control of police, investigative, and media agencies increases the political currency of compromising materials or *kompromat* before, during, and after elections. Putin learned to wield *kompromat* during his introduction to politics in St. Petersburg in the poorly institutionalized Russian democracy of the early 1990s, which was infused with the lawlessness of the Soviet party's dissolution, nomenklatura privatization, mafia proliferation, and strong-arm politics. His KGB ties gave him access to information about politicians collected by the agency, as the Soviet nomenklatura divided into competing factions that dispersed information among various bureaucratic, oligarchic, and mafia clans. Party-state factions used their access to state property, information, and administrative resources to build legitimate, semi-legitimate, and outright criminal financial-industrial clans. As first deputy to St. Petersburg Mayor Anatolii Sobchak, Putin perfected the emerging Russian political style, a more sinister version of President Lyndon Johnson's Texas-style arm-twisting. Brian Whitmore described Putin's style of persuasion best:

Vladimir Putin had a fearsome nickname when he served as deputy mayor of St. Petersburg: the Gray Cardinal. Whenever Putin's boss, Mayor Anatolii Sobchak, was having trouble getting what he wanted out of the city legislature, he would send his loyal deputy over to talk sense into disobedient lawmakers. . . .

The dour Putin cut an intimidating presence, and St. Petersburg politicians say his methods reflected his KGB background. He would subtly make it clear to whomever he was persuading that he knew everything about them—their business dealings and those of their family members, the laws they bent and broke to get where they were, their fears and weaknesses. It was as if he had a dossier on everybody in his head and knew which buttons to push. Needless to say, Putin usually got his way.²

Finally, an important principle of Putin's leadership style is his cautious incremental change and subtle manipulation of the system to further his ends. Pressure, threat, and co-optation are considered better methods for implementing authoritarian rule. Rather than removing the outlandishly corrupt Primore Governor Nazdratenko from office, which under new laws and the manipulation of prosecutors Putin could have secured, he "promotes" Nazdratenko to the post of Minister of the Fishing Industry in Moscow. Instead of using secret police to censure or close down the independent television companies NTV and TV-6, prosecutors bring charges of financial misdoing against the unfriendly owners and state entities controlled by the Kremlin, such as GazProm, and assume ownership and management. All the actions are given a legal veneer.

The clever methodology of Putin's stealth authoritarianism describes the Russian term *khitryi avtoritarizm* (best translated as sly authoritarianism), which signifies a subtle, slight-of-hand, almost imperceptible authoritarianism that, by standing on the threshold of electoral democracy, sometimes seems to pass as one. Elections in Russia are now so compromised that the present Russian system seems better described as a slightly nondemocratic, that is, authoritarian, order rather than as a slightly democratic one. The undermining of the electoral process that would allow the present system to meet the minimal criteria of an already highly qualified electoral, illiberal democracy disallows referring to Putin's regime as a democracy at all. Detailed examination of the establishment of Putin's stealth authoritarianism in St. Petersburg from 2001–2003 allows us to parse its cautious methodology.

Putin and Petersburg

Because Russia's new stealth authoritarianism is based on executive branch hegemony, its establishment in any region first requires Kremlin control over the region's top executive office. A regional governor or republic president acceptable to the Kremlin was a supporter of Putin before election to regional office, was elected on the basis of Kremlin support, or was already in office but agreed to comply with the rules of the game laid down by Putin. St. Petersburg Governor Vladimir Yakovlev was already in office when Putin became president; Putin distrusted Yakovlev and had personal and political reasons for wanting him removed from Smolny. First, there had been bad blood between the two ever since Yakovlev betrayed Putin's boss, Sobchak, in 1996. Both Putin and Yakovlev were deputy mayors under Sobchak.

Putin was Sobchak's favorite deputy and was chosen to run the mayor's 1996 reelection campaign. Yakovlev decided to break with the mayor and run against him. Yakovlev defeated Sobchak, forcing him, Putin, and many other Sobchak administration officials (for example, St. Petersburg deputy mayor for finances and Putin's present finance minister Alexei Kudrin) to find new work. In 2000, as the next gubernatorial election approached, Sobchak was clearly preparing to exact revenge and run against Yakovlev. Prosecutors filed charges against Sobchak for abuse of office in acquiring apartments for members of his family, a rather common practice among Russian officials. It seemed that there was a political subtext to the prosecutor's investigation; one perhaps written in part at Smolny, which simultaneously orchestrated a media campaign against the former mayor. Sobchak was forced to flee the country, and shortly afterward suffered a fatal heart attack. Putin, already acting president, attended Sobchak's funeral, praising him as his political mentor and blaming his death directly on Yakovlev's media campaign.

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Second, Yakovlev, who worked side-by-side with Putin from 1992–96, certainly would have had access to some compromising materials on the Russian president, who was involved in several of early Russian capitalism's major St. Petersburg scandals. Putin may have felt a need to ensure that Yakovlev never became a political competitor at the federal level, where with somewhat more equal stature, the latter might deploy any *kompromat* he possessed. At the same time, the Kremlin's leading factions and Yeltsin himself chose Putin as the crowned successor to the ailing president. Yakovlev joined with Moscow mayor Luzhkov and Tatarstan President Minitimer Shaimiev to form the anti-Kremlin “Otechestvo-Vsa Rossiya” election bloc of regional leaders running in the 1999 Duma elections. Although the OVR was defeated in the elections and later co-opted by the Kremlin's Edinstvo (Unity) party to form United Russia (Edinaya Rossiya or ER), Yakovlev's emergence as a leader among those opposing the Kremlin, must have put Putin on guard.

Third, the Kremlin's effort to build stealth authoritarianism countrywide hinges considerably on the domination of the ER and allied parties (Narodnaya Party, the two-party bloc of the Party of Rebirth of Russia, and the Party of Life) in the December 2003 Duma elections, setting the stage for Putin's reelection in the March 2004 presidential vote. As Russia's second largest city and region, St. Petersburg delivered more deputies to the Duma from single-mandate districts and more votes for parties in the party list or proportional representation segment of the Duma vote than any other region in the country, except for the capital of Moscow. It was crucial for the Kremlin to secure Smolny's administrative resources before these campaigns. This could not be done reliably with Yakovlev in Smolny.

Finally, an important aspect of stealth authoritarianism is the preponderance of the executive over legislative power at the federal level. This cannot be assured solely by domination over the lower house, the State Duma, by the pro-Kremlin coalition of centrist factions coalesced around the ER faction. The upper chamber Federation Council must also be subordinated to the Kremlin. This was accomplished under managed democracy, first by reverting to the appointment of senators—one by each of the eighty-nine regions' chief executives and one by each of the regions' parliaments. Under such a system, the Kremlin is able to use various pressures, including *kompromat*, to influence the selection of senators. The St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly (SPLA) was pressured by Putin in fall 2000 into selecting Sergei Mironov as its senator to the Russian Federal Assembly's upper chamber, the Federation Council.³ Mironov is a Putin ally and was the SPLA's deputy chair, once its acting chair, and the leader and founder of the centrist St. Petersburg party Petersburg's Will or VP (*Volya Peterburg*, local predecessor to the now federal pro-Kremlin Party of Life). Soon, the reorganized Federation Council was intensively lobbied into electing Mironov as its chairman. Thus, the Kremlin's control over the upper house was threatened by the possible St. Petersburg's appointment of unfriendly senators, especially one replacing Mironov, who is closely associated with Putin. To prevent this and block Yakovlev's effort to run for a third term through the federal election cycle, the Kremlin needed to win the elections to the SPLA. To win the assembly elections, it needed to obtain administrative and informational resources in the city. This was accomplished during an apparent Kremlin-Smolny truce, or at least a standoff, in which the Kremlin used another aspect of Putin's federative reforms: the power of the Northwest Federal District's presidential envoy.

The Kremlin-Smolny Standoff

Vladimir Putin's rise to the Russian presidency did not produce an open or immediate clash between the Kremlin and Governor Yakovlev. To some extent, this reflected a standoff or even a temporary *modus vivendi* between the antagonists. First, the Kremlin made a failed bid to remove Yakovlev from Smolny. After Sobchak's death in February 2000 and Putin's election as president in March, the Kremlin picked Petersburg and Russian Social Policy Minister Valentina Matvienko to challenge Yakovlev for the governor's seat. However, her ratings in pre-election polls were so low—in the teens compared to Yakovlev's 50–60 percent—that she was withdrawn from the race, and Smolny was left to Yakovlev temporarily. This embarrassment most likely helped inspire Putin's stealth authoritarianism. After the failed challenge of Yakovlev, the two former Sobchak deputies seemed to declare a truce.

By the time Putin's federative reforms were adopted and implemented in late 2000, Putin was helping Yakovlev with a generous package of financial assistance for St. Petersburg's upcoming three-hundredth anniversary celebrations. This left the subtle impression that the federal government, and Putin in particular, were

concerned with finally solving some of the city's long-standing problems. It was not until the three-hundredth anniversary celebrations that a massive effort was undertaken to repair quickly, but likely poorly, the city's buildings, sidewalks, and especially roads, the poor state of which had damaged the Yakovlev administration's reputation. A constant procession of federal officials visited the northern capital to inspect the repairs, restorations, and the distribution of federal funds for these and other anniversary projects, warning against and implying misuse. Putin made several visits to his former native city without a hint of conflict with Yakovlev and organized numerous international meetings and visits of high-level foreign delegations to the city to foster economic ties between the northern capital and foreign businesses and raise the city's international prestige.

In turn, despite some good cause for doing so, Yakovlev offered little or no resistance to President Putin's federal reforms, in contrast to some groups in the city's legislative assembly. There was little resistance from Smolny to Putin's efforts to put an end to the unofficial, noninstitutionalized side of asymmetrical federalism by attempting to bring all regional laws and constitutions (and charters) into conformity with federal law. The SPLA, on the other hand, delayed bringing the city's law on state service and civil servants into compliance with federal law until September 2001. Some SPLA deputies were (and remain) actively involved with issues of state-building and the division of powers between the federal, regional, and local levels. In particular, the Yabloko faction consistently raised several issues important to St. Petersburg and other regions in response to Putin's federative recentralization begun in 2000. For example, the chairman of the Yabloko faction in St. Petersburg, Mikhail I. Amosov, harshly criticized Putin's policy of further centralizing tax revenues, accusing federal authorities of violating their own laws on interbudgetary issues and depriving regions of the wherewithal to address socioeconomic problems and development challenges. In 2001, Yabloko's SPLA faction produced a study highlighting the growing imbalance in the distribution of tax revenue between the federal and regional budget to rally assembly deputies against the Kremlin.⁴ Moreover, Amosov was highly critical of the federal government and, in particular, the Finance Ministry, for failing to fulfill its obligations to the city under the federal budget law.⁵ To address such problems, Amosov and Yabloko's SPLA faction sponsored a draft federal law, "On Guarantees for the Budgetary Rights of the Subjects of the Russian Federation," to be submitted to the State Duma, requiring that all transfers for each region be delineated with functional classification in a separate subsection of the federal budget and that a special regime be set up to execute the transfers.⁶

For all of the oppositional activity of Amosov and Yabloko, the Kremlin left them untouched and even cooperated with them in the pivotal Petersburg election campaigns held during the effort to remove Yakovlev. St. Petersburg was not a major violator of federal law, compared with almost all of Russia's other eighty-eight regions. In March, it was one of only four of the Northwest Federal Okrug's (SZFO) eleven regions that Vladimir Zubrin, deputy prosecutor-general for the SZFO, singled out (along with Pskov Oblast and the Komi and Karelian Republics) for presenting "serious difficulties" and ignoring demands by the

prosecutors to change laws violating federal legislation.⁷ But no distinction was made between the branches of power in Petersburg responsible for the “difficulties.” Moreover, in August 2001, Zubrin protested a Yakovlev order for the creation of the city-owned St. Petersburg Electric Networks.⁸ Like many other regions, Petersburg was tardy in bringing its laws into compliance and persistent in adopting new laws violating federal law. But the federal center aimed criticism more at Yakovlev than at the Legislative Assembly.⁹ The Kremlin seems to have had a subtle two-track strategy toward Yakovlev, which is consistent with a gradualist, calculating, and surgical approach to establishing stealth authoritarianism. On the one hand, it supported the city’s three-hundredth anniversary celebrations and international business contacts in order to court Petersburg’s elite. On the other hand, it shortchanged other budget items and the city’s population, which could then be turned against Yakovlev when the right time came.

The Kremlin Softens Its Target

The appropriate time came in 2002 with the approach of the St. Petersburg legislative and gubernatorial elections set for 2003–04. The Kremlin prepared the institutional and organizational groundwork for applying administrative resources during the election and turned up the heat on the administration through media and anticorruption campaigns. The Kremlin orchestrated a carefully calibrated campaign to impugn the Yakovlev administration’s integrity by casting doubt on the sincerity of its efforts to combat organized crime, implying Smolny ties with Petersburg mafia groups, and then charging four of Yakovlev’s deputy governors with corruption and abuse of office. This campaign was preceded by a Kremlin takeover of several city media outlets to publicize the campaign and other *kompromat* against Yakovlev. The media and anticorruption campaigns were orchestrated by the Northwest Federal District (FO)—one of seven federal districts created by Putin as part of his federative reforms to regain control of the regional branches of federal agencies, such as the MVD, prosecutors, and tax police. He appointed loyal *apparatchiks* as his presidential representatives to head each FO and established FO offices of federal agencies to monitor their regional offices. In the Northwest FO, he appointed fellow Petersburg chekist and long-time associate Viktor Cherkesov as his presidential envoy. The groundwork for a fierce war of *kompromat* was laid, as Cherkesov and the Northwest FO directly or indirectly took control of a number of media outlets in the city.

Yakovlev and the St. Petersburg administration at Smolny initially retained control or at least enjoyed the support of the local television and radio company, Television and Radio Company (TRK) “Peterburg”; the city’s daily *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, *Peterburg-Ekspress*, and the largely apolitical *Vechernii Peterburg*; and the national newspaper St. Petersburg supplements, *Izvestiya SPb* and *Komsomolskaya pravda*. During its first year, however, the Northwest FO took over partial to full control over the Petersburg broadcasts of Russia’s state television and radio company VGTRK (RTR & Radio Rossii), the Petersburg branch of the Russian news agency ITAR-TASS, the news agency *RosBalt*, the

weekly *Petersburgskii chas pik* (whose editor is Cherkesov's wife Natalya Chaplina), and the influential Petersburg daily *Nevskoe vremya*. In the wake of the 2002 SPLA elections, the FO also won control of TRK "Peterburg" in preparation for the gubernatorial election that capped off the installation of stealth authoritarianism in the city. With the legislative assembly elections set for late 2002, the second half of 2001 was preparatory, with a series of highly publicized corruption investigations of key members of the Yakovlev administration.

Yakovlev did not oppose Putin's effort to reassert federal control over the regional prosecutor's and internal affairs' offices, but he might wish he had. Both offices were used by the FO to do the Kremlin's bidding in Petersburg, not only to fight corruption but to discredit Yakovlev's rather corrupt administration. By 2002, the city MVD (GUVD) chief and the deputy chief of the MVD responsible for the Northwest FO were replaced. Then federal authorities began a thorough inspection of the Petersburg GUVD to root out corrupt Yakovlev cronies. By August 2003, as the gubernatorial election began, new city prosecutor Nikita Vinnichenko announced that some sixty GUVD officers had been charged for various crimes, including taking bribes, exceeding or abusing office, and negligence, and that a number of officers were being investigated for involvement in murder.¹⁰ Moreover, when Minister of Internal Affairs Boris Gryzlov introduced his new deputy minister responsible for the police in the Northwest FO, he focused criticism on the city's crimefighters, sending shock waves through the city's political elite. Gryzlov's attack on the city's failure to root out the Tambov organized crime group was seen as a warning to Yakovlev, who was viewed by some as the group's protector.¹¹ With his parliamentary immunity set to expire on January 1, 2002, when he had to surrender his seat in the federation council, Yakovlev became vulnerable to removal from office on charges of a crime, should federal prosecutors choose to bring charges. Putin's federative reforms also put the city prosecutor's office firmly under the control of the Northwest FO and, thus, the federal authorities. Also, under Putin's federative reforms, new laws allowed for so-called federal intervention to ensure regional compliance with federal law. One intervention mechanism allowed the president to remove regional heads from office upon presentation of evidence of "grave crimes" committed by such an official.¹² The threat of such a charge would be a useful weapon for Putin in dissuading Yakovlev from seeking a third term.

On September 7, 2001, a research institute affiliated with the prosecutor general's office claimed in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* that Petersburg ranked as the fifth most corrupt federation subject. At the same time, major corruption scandals began to rock the city. From mid-2001 through 2002, four of Yakovlev's vice governors and a city committee head were subjected to various charges of corruption and abuse of office by federal law enforcement organs. In summer 2001, Yakovlev's right-hand man, Deputy Governor Valerii I. Malyshev, was forced to leave his post on a temporary basis, accused by prosecutors of taking bribes in the form of zero interest loans, a mobile telephone, and furniture in exchange for his 1996 designation of EKSI Bank as depository for the city's R200 nondeval-

uated rubles account for St. Petersburg's 2004 Olympic committee.¹³ Yakovlev voiced suspicions that there was a political subtext to the charge.¹⁴ In the fall, an inspection commission to St. Petersburg dismissed Vladimir Shamakhov, chief of the Northwestern customs administration, and Aleksandr Puchkov, chief of the Baltic customs. That winter, another deputy governor close to Yakovlev, Aleksandr Potekhin, who had been in charge of media and public relations at Smolny, was charged by prosecutors with conducting business while in office and was forced to step down. In February 2002, the audit chamber's St. Petersburg office uncovered the misappropriation of money from the city's road fund. The extensive coverage by St. Petersburg media close to Northwest FO envoy Cherkesov

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suggested that federal authorities were behind this venture. This investigation threatened a third Yakovlev vice governor, Finance Committee Chairman Viktor Krotov.

Months later, two additional corruption scandals shook Smolny, one claiming a fourth vice governor in nine months.

In early March, the city's long-brewing “insulin affair” was

brought to a head by investigators. The St. Petersburg internal affairs department accused the vice governor and chairman of the city's health committee, Anatolii Kagan, with illegal financial machinations with city budget funds designated for the purchase of medical and pharmaceutical products. The misappropriation of funds cost the city five million rubles, according to investigators. Kagan's machinations included the use of the funds to pay a non-existent debt, as well as payment of purchase prices that nearly tripled market prices and the misapplication of exchange rates to siphon funds for non-budget purposes. Investigators forwarded material to prosecutors, and police ordered Kagan not to leave the city. Around the same time, the head of the city's sport committee, Valentin Mettus, also was charged with abuse of office.

In late March, the St. Petersburg prosecutor's office and internal affairs department developed a more serious investigation of scandal on the Neva. The Petersburg administration's finance committee was charged with distributing city budget funds among thirteen commercial banks, among other violations. This violated the Russian budget code's stipulation that regional governments must deposit budget funds with the central bank. In addition, Dmitrii Burenin, the city audit chamber head, claimed that the St. Petersburg administration borrowed five billion rubles in 2000 from one of the banks, BaltOneksimBank, and paid twenty million rubles in interest. Financial machinations with BaltOneksimBank could have had serious repercussions for everyone in Smolny, right up to the governor. The chairman of BaltOneksimBank, Yurii Rydnik, has a more than dubious reputation, including alleged ties to the famous Tambov organized crime

group. Yakovlev himself is believed by many to be the Tambovtsy's *krisha*. Thus, the Kremlin seemed to be following up on the September warning by MVD chief Boris Gryzlov, a former Petersburg resident who ran Putin's 2000 presidential campaign in the city and heads the pro-Putin ER party, in which he condemned the city administration's failure to rein in organized crime and made special reference to the Tambov group.

Clearly, the Kremlin was threatening a criminal case to keep Yakovlev from running for a third term or handing the baton to an ally. Moreover, what better way for the Petersburg factions in the Kremlin to claim the mantle of crime and corruption fighters against the Family during the election campaigns than by uncovering such machinations?

The 2002 Petersburg Legislative Assembly Elections

The December SPLA election became the pivotal battle in the Kremlin's war to remove Yakovlev from office without having to resort to the use of the law enforcement organs or federal intervention. The first priority was to prevent Yakovlev from running for a third term. Despite his shortcomings—a lack of charisma, a reputation for corruption, and even criminal ties—and the city's numerous problems of general disrepair, bad roads, and poor garbage collection, the governor's share of the vote in opinion polls remained relatively high. In late 2002, pro-Yakovlev pollsters showed the governor winning approximately half the vote. However, the Kremlin's campaign of corruption and criminal investigations against Yakovlev appeared to be having its intended effect. One study showed relatively high (higher than any other prospective candidate), but steadily declining, agreement with the governor among respondents: from 43.1 percent agreeing closely or somewhat closely with the governor's views in November 2001 to only 32.2 percent in May 2002.¹⁵ The well-respected VTsIOM polling agency also found declining monthly ratings for Yakovlev, ranging from a high of 64 percent (October 2001) to a low of 34 percent (June 2002) between October 2001 and October 2002.¹⁶ Still, Kremlin defeat of the governor in a fair race could not be assured, and Putin could not risk a fiasco like the Matvienko one in 2000.

To block Yakovlev from a run for a third term, the Kremlin needed to accomplish two tasks. First, it needed a constitutional-legal framework that denied a third term to governors and, specifically, to the governor of the northern capital. Second, it had to prevent any changes or amendments to that constitutional-legal order once it established the term limit. In a late 2001 Russian Constitutional Court ruling, the Court held that the constitutional limit on third terms applied to those regional governors and republic presidents elected to their first terms before a certain date unless stipulated otherwise in the regional or republic law or constitution. The St. Petersburg charter explicitly limits governors to two terms. However, a group of pro-Yakovlev deputies in the Petersburg city assembly filed a suit in court citing a technicality that would allow Yakovlev to run for a third term. The plaintiff argued that since the Petersburg charter had been adopted dur-

ing Yakovlev's second term, his four-year term beginning in 2000 was actually his first term. St. Petersburg's charter court did not agree, ruling in October 2002 that the charter's two-term limit should be applied from Yakovlev's first term in 1996–2000.¹⁷

After the ruling, Yakovlev hoped he might cajole the city assembly to return to the issue of amending the charter before the SPLA elections, stating so and attempting to extort such a step by refusing to sign a city budget with the so-called change packages that afforded assemblymen portions of 2 percent of the budget to spend as they wished.¹⁸ However, the SPLA elections, rescheduled for December 2002, were now imminent, and so deputies put off a vote on amending the charter until after the elections. In an October 2002 meeting with Yakovlev, Putin refused to compromise, noting the term-limit issue was the SPLA's prerogative.¹⁹ In a later interview, Yakovlev would claim that his possible appointment to Moscow had been discussed at this time, apparently at this meeting.²⁰ However, his desire to hold a second SPLA vote on amending the charter, as well as a repeat effort in January 2003, suggested he did not abandon hopes for a third term until later. Putin and Yakovlev apparently tried but failed to reach a compromise on Yakovlev's resignation from Smolny at this time. The court ruling and Yakovlev's persistence in seeking an SPLA vote to amend the charter to allow him a third term made the SPLA elections fateful for the Putin-Yakovlev power struggle, especially if the Kremlin hoped to remove Yakovlev from office without resorting to law enforcement measures.

Unfortunately for Yakovlev, he was opposed not only by powerful Petersburgers now in the Moscow Kremlin but also by a growing portion of the city's elite. As early as September 2001, many among the Petersburg elite were prepared and hopeful for the formation broad opposition front composed of almost all of the city's parties. Some claimed that an anti-Yakovlev coalition consisting of right, center, and left, including Communists, was possible, if not likely, in the next assembly election. The leaders of St. Petersburg's Yabloko Party, including the leader of the SPLA Yabloko faction, Mikhail Amosov, and then chairman of the political council of the Yabloko organization in the city, Dmitrii Lenkov, acknowledged the possibility of such a broad-based coalition.²¹ On this score, the October 14, 2002, election for the State Duma deputy's mandate in the 209 district previously held by Audit Chamber Chairman Sergei Stepashin was an unfortunate political harbinger for Yakovlev. The joint support for the centrist pro-Kremlin Unity Party's candidate, Yurii Solonin, dean of St. Petersburg State University's philosophy department, from not only Otechestvo but also from the SPS, Yabloko, and the local organization VP, strengthened the prospects for a broad-based, anti-Yakovlev coalition in the 2002 city legislative elections.

Although the broad coalition of all Petersburg parties was not attained, there was considerable coordination among opposition parties, and none of Petersburg's top political parties allied with pro-Yakovlev candidates in the election. The four leading rightist and centrist parties noted above—SPS, Yabloko, ER (formerly Edinstvo before incorporating Otechestvo-Vsya Rossiya), and VP—

formed a loose anti-Yakovlev alliance, facing a list of candidates supported by the governor. First, Yabloko and the Union of Rightist Forces formed the coalition “SPS + Yabloko” to run candidates jointly. One week before the vote, SPS + Yabloko came to an agreement with the two pro-Kremlin centrist parties, ER and VP, on jointly backing single candidates in thirty-three of the fifty districts.²² The KPRF remained fairly neutral and quiet in the campaign.²³ Only three of its members were elected to the assembly, none of which were nominated by the party.²⁴ Thus, the election’s structure of strategic action was largely divided into two camps, defined according to their position on one issue: supporting or opposing Governor Yakovlev and an amendment to the city charter that would allow him to run for a third term. The anti-Yakovlev and regional essence of the alliance was underscored when Yabloko’s national leader, Grigory Yavlinsky, an outspoken opponent of the Kremlin, held a press conference at the RosBalt news agency, controlled by the wife of Northwest FO presidential envoy Cherkesov, to announce that “[I]t is impossible to permit the Governor of Petersburg a third term.”²⁵

The Northwest FO brought considerable administrative resources into the campaign against Smolny. On the eve of the election it established public centers where citizens could bring complaints, requests, and appeals. These Dialog centers were clearly an effort to mobilize voters in favor of Kremlin candidates. Indeed, the centers were accompanied by the creation of a Dialog faction in the SPLA. On November 20, little more than two weeks before the election, a list of candidates favored by Northwest FO Presidential Envoy Viktor Cherkesov was published.²⁶ “Cherkesov’s list” backed twenty-five candidates. He backed seventeen incumbents, and twelve (70 percent) were victorious, including the four winning candidates nominated by the ER, a slightly higher success rate than for incumbents in the overall election (twenty-six of fifty or fifty-two).²⁷ However, the limits of the list’s influence were apparent in the failure of any of the eight nonincumbents it backed to win a seat.²⁸ In line with the Kremlin’s participation (most directly through the ER) in the anti-Yakovlev election coalition, twelve of the twenty-five Cherkesov list candidates were on the thirty-three-candidate, four-party list, suggesting a balance of power favoring the rightists (SPS and Yabloko) over the centrists (ER and VP) in the city coalition.²⁹

The elections superseded all others in the open application of administrative resources and negative public relations. There were numerous claims and counter-claims by both camps regarding violations of the law and citizens’ right to vote.³⁰ Two cases, involving both the pro- and anti-Yakovlev forces, were indicative of this conflict. First, a unit of some six hundred Emergency Situations Ministry troops attempting to vote (in all likelihood en masse in favor of a *Ediniya Rossiya* candidate, as the Russian Emergency Situations Minister Sergei Shoigu is a top leader of the pro-Kremlin party) was prevented from doing so (in all likelihood by pro-Yakovlev local officials) on the technicality that the deputy commander, rather than the commander, had signed the unit’s list of servicemen registered to vote.³¹ Second, pro- and anti-Yakovlev incumbents were afforded the “collective corrections” to the city budget, which allowed the incumbent deputies to spend 2 percent of the

budget on their own preferred expenditures.³² This is frequently used as an election resource, as funds are diverted to projects to assist residents in a deputy's district on the eve of the vote.

Smolny seemed to focus its more limited administrative resources against the rightist bloc, avoiding a direct conflict with the centrist parties closest to the Kremlin. It prevented the SPS + Yabloko bloc from holding several pickets and attempted to set the SPS headquarters afire.³³ The Kremlin used its administrative resources against pro-Yakovlev candidate and suspected crime boss Denis Volchek. Less than two weeks before the vote, prosecutors charged him with fraud.³⁴ The Kremlin also may have been behind the only case in which the results in a district were nullified. A Petersburg court ordered a reelection in the forty-first electoral district because of alleged violations of election campaign law by the pro-Yakovlev candidate, BaltOnEksImBank Chairman Yurii Rydnyk, who won 48 percent of the vote. His victory over Dmitrii Burenin, the St. Petersburg Accounting Chamber chairman and Yakovlev opponent, who was on the Cherkesov list,³⁵ and Vyacheslav Makarov, Military Space Academy director, both of whom received 15 percent of the vote, was declared invalid, scuttling not only Rydnyk's entrance into the assembly, but an apparent attempt by Smolny to put forward his candidacy as assembly chairman. Given Rydnyk's alleged mafia ties, sufficient force might have been brought to bear to overcome Kremlin resources geared to prevent a pro-Yakovlev figure from winning the assembly chairmanship.

The Kremlin's full-court press and the four-party alliance opposing Yakovlev left Smolny with few effective available strategies. One option was to depress voter turnout, which would require a repeat vote three months later, giving Yakovlev time for an unlikely change in fortunes. Indeed, the general atmosphere in the city before the election was not one that could be characterized as electric or electoral. Official notices and reminders to vote were virtually nonexistent, such that many Petersburg residents were unaware that a campaign was under way. In the end, a low voter turnout of 28 percent citywide exceeded the 20 percent minimum for the elections to be validated.³⁶ If it had not been for a series of appearances on the eve of the elections by pro-Kremlin centrists, such as Cherkesov, *Volya Peterburga* founder and Federation Council chair Mironov, Yabloko leaders Yavlinsky and Amosov, and others, Yakovlev's apparent strategy of "low profiling" the campaign might have succeeded. This is, in part, another negative effect of the "managed democracy" being fostered by officials of whatever camp: peak levels of voter apathy.

This problem is aggravated by the nomenklatura grassroots-less character of Russian political parties, especially the pro-Kremlin ones and the consequent lack of party activity in regional elections. In the 2002 Petersburg Legislative Assembly election, of forty-nine deputies elected, twenty-nine were self-nominated, and the overwhelming majority of these were independent candidates. The lack of party voting, in fact, put the Kremlin's goals at risk. Only fourteen of the thirty-three candidates on the anti-Yakovlev four-party alliance's list managed to win.³⁷ Of these victorious candidates, eight were from the federal-backed Cherkesov

list.³⁸ If the anti-Yakovlev fourteen and all four communist-oriented deputies could be counted on to vote against changing the charter, then Smolny would be only two votes short of the thirty-three votes needed to amend the constitution to allow Yakovlev to run for a third term.³⁹ In short, the overall post-election picture seemed one of some uncertainty, a picture caused, in part, by the Kremlin's choice in favor of stealth authoritarian politics.

The ultimate outcome, however, depended largely on which camp could bring more administrative resources to bear to co-opt the independent deputies. Kremlin resources outweighed that of Smolny or any regional administration. The first test of the correlation of forces in the new assembly came with the election of its speaker. The Kremlin's goal was well

on its way to being accomplished when Yurii Tyul'panov, who as a candidate for the assembly was included on the Cherkesov list, was elected assembly chairman with the backing of the FO and Kremlin.⁴⁰ He replaced Sergei Tarasov, who had been reelected to the assembly easily, despite Kremlin opposition, and

“The first half of 2003 brought the usual game of ‘cadre chess,’ moving new pro-Putin cadres into key posts in St. Petersburg and the Northwest FO to surround Yakovlev with unfriendly forces.”

once more was opposed by the Kremlin in his bid for reelection as assembly chairman because he had been close to Yakovlev. Anti-Yakovlev deputies—including a top SPS leader, Yurii Gladkov—took over the assembly's deputy chairmanships as well. Cherkesov and Tyul'panov also managed to lure numerous deputies from the pro-Yakovlev deputies' bloc “United City.” The final test of whether the assembly elections were a victory for anti-Yakovlev forces came with the SPLA's crucial final vote on whether to amend the city charter to permit a third gubernatorial term. In a February 2003 vote, forty of the assembly's fifty deputies voted against amending the charter. Kremlin administrative resources had cobbled together an overwhelming majority, less than half of which was won at the polls.

Yakovlev's Removal

With the vote against amending the charter, Smolny and the Kremlin began behind-the-scenes bargaining over whether Yakovlev would resign from office before the end of his term and thus before the 2003–04 federal election campaigns set to begin in fall 2003. The bargaining was accompanied by the use of various administrative levers to corner and pressure Yakovlev to leave Smolny peacefully. The first half of 2003 brought the usual game of “cadre chess,” moving new pro-Putin cadres into key posts in St. Petersburg and the Northwest FO to surround Yakovlev with unfriendly forces and apply administrative pressure in the form of federally inspired, but locally implemented, investigations into crime and corruption at Smolny. These pressures signaled to the governor that

if he would not accept an exchange of his office in Smolny for a warm office in Moscow, he could be removed by other means, specifically on charges of graft and other abuses of office.

Cadre Chess

Weeks after the December victory of pro-Putin forces in the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly elections and the vote against amending the city charter to allow Yakovlev to run for a third term, Russian Deputy Premier Valentina Matvienko, who had been tried temporarily as a candidate against Yakovlev in the 2000 Petersburg gubernatorial election, was appointed as the Northwest FO presidential envoy. Matvienko replaced Cherkesov, who went to Moscow to head the new state committee on drug trafficking in Moscow. The appointment had been rumored for some time and signaled the Kremlin's intention to nominate Matvienko as its candidate for Petersburg governor.

Under Matvienko, the FO set about replacing a series of St. Petersburg officials, whose appointments came under the legal purview of federal authorities. In March, Nikolai Vinnichenko replaced pro-Yakovlev city prosecutor Ivan Sydoruk. Reportedly, Matvienko's office was involved in replacing St. Petersburg Election Committee Chairman Aleksandr Garusov in May. In the official version, new prosecutor Vinnichenko, rather than federal authorities, took responsibility for the change, claiming that Garusov was replaced because he lacked a doctorate in law or other advanced degree as required by the federal election code. According to Garusov, in a June 10 Fontanka.ru interview, one of Matvienko's deputies, Yevgenii Makarov, asked him to resign, acknowledging that the FO's "request" was due to his being "pro-governor."⁴¹ On June 5, criminal charges were filed against Garusov for allegedly exceeding the limits of his authority.⁴² On June 26, Aleksandr Gnetov, a former employee of the Northwest customs district, was appointed head of the city election commission. In June, the head of the FSB's Petersburg office was removed.⁴³ In May, Putin strengthened his hold over the Northwest FO by appointing a protégé of pro-Putin ER chairman and MVD chief Gryzlov, MVD Administrative Affairs head Andrei Novikov, to run the ministry's office in the FO.⁴⁴

From Moscow, more local media were saddled. In May, the St. Petersburg affiliate of NTV, owned by the media holding company of the state-owned gas monopoly GazProm, removed news editor Andrei Radin from the air for two weeks because he was reporting too little on Matvienko and too much on Deputy Governor Anna Markova, Matvienko's chief rival. Days later the Kremlin seized control of RTK "Peterburg" television, jointly owned by the Petersburg government and Leningrad oblast'. Igor Ignatiev, former deputy head of the St. Petersburg branch of state-owned RTR television, was put in charge of the station. At the same time, the station closed three political and analytical programs, forcing their hosts to leave the channel in protest. The takeover was facilitated by the purchase of a 23.3 percent block of RTK "Peterburg" shares by the bank Evrofinans. Evrofinans was founded by Russia's Central Bank and is owned by

a Moscow-based, or pro-Kremlin Petersburg-based, oligarch. As emphasized by Igor Ignatev, because of its state origins and oligarch-affiliation, the bank has “state influence.”⁴⁵ Evrofinans would contribute funds to the Kremlin’s candidate in the St. Petersburg gubernatorial campaign, the new Northwest FO presidential envoy and long-time Putin ally, Valentina Matvienko.⁴⁶

Administrative Pressures

On the background of ongoing criminal investigations of four of Yakovlev’s deputies, other investigations engineered from Moscow were deployed to urge Yakovlev to leave Smolny. Federal Accounting Chamber and Petersburg Accounting Chamber audits of the Petersburg administration’s expenditures of federal funds, which had been contributed to the city for its May 2003 three-hundredth anniversary celebrations, found alleged misuses of funds. One investigation found that 2.7 billion rubles had been diverted to sow grass and light city streets in elite communities rather than pave roads and sidewalks. As the celebrations began to wind down, Matvienko and Federal Audit Chamber head Sergei Stepashin, a Petersburg native who was once considered a potential Kremlin candidate in the Petersburg gubernatorial elections, warned that after the celebrations, the use of expenditures and the quality of the work done with those funds would be carefully inspected and “the most serious and objective conclusions made regarding federal ministries and departments and regarding the city administration.”⁴⁷ A month later, Stepashin publicly demanded an explanation from Yakovlev regarding this misuse of funds days before the governor’s June 16 resignation.⁴⁸

In early April, Petersburg Monitoring and Accounting Chamber head Dmitrii Burenin announced that 1.6 billion rubles of the city’s 2002 budget funds had been spent illegally and 800 million rubles were misspent.⁴⁹ On April 3, Yakovlev seemed to finally give up, declaring he would not attempt to run for a third term.⁵⁰ On April 16, Russian MVD chief Boris Gryzlov kept up the pressure in a meeting with Matvienko. The meeting highlighted MVD investigations into the misuse of funds as a result of which, the two officials reported, seventeen criminal cases had begun in the city concerning the theft of 176 million rubles. Gryzlov reported also that in recent months (since new leadership had taken over the city’s internal affairs administration from Yakovlev appointees), crime had declined by 28 percent.⁵¹

Toward the end, the pressure campaign was accompanied by a continuous flow of rumors and press reports as to exactly where and when Yakovlev would go.⁵² The precise nature of the information indicates that the reports were the result of leaks originating from high-ranked officials to reduce further Yakovlev’s authority in the city and remove any element of surprise once the announcement came.⁵³ On May 20, pro-Kremlin Legislative Assembly Chairman Tyul’panov criticized Yakovlev’s performance as governor and publicly stated that it was possible that the governor, “as an intelligent politician,” would resign immediately following the Petersburg three-hundredth anniversary festivities.⁵⁴

As pressure mounted, there seemed to be some thoughts from Smolny of

mounting a resistance. Vice Governor Anna Markova, head of the city's administrative committee, charged federal authorities with violations of the law and democracy for trying to force Yakovlev out of office. On April 23, Markova decried the legislative assembly decision that moved the date of the gubernatorial election up to December as "a violation of the law" and "a manifestation of disrespect toward the populace and the governor," who "had provided an example of respect for the law by his public statement rejecting to run for a third term."⁵⁵ Made possible by an earlier city charter court ruling, the December election date made it exceedingly more difficult for pro-Yakovlev forces to rally around a candidate to oppose the Kremlin. After Yakovlev's resignation, the assembly moved the election up to September 21. On June 5, Markova announced she would run for governor, noting that "all the principles of democracy—in which Petersburg was always proud—will be negated by the upcoming elections."⁵⁶ She also noted what would turn out to be the main themes of the election campaign—Matvienko's advantaged position and the use of administrative resources in her favor. She stated that "the election is already being designated for September and the campaign of one candidate has been going on already for two months" and that "strong pressure is being exerted on people (I have in mind the resignation of Garusov, who is lying in hospital)."⁵⁷ On the same day, Petersburg Legislative Assembly Vice Chairman and leader of the SPS in the city Yurii Gladkov claimed that Yakovlev would attempt to call a referendum in the city on changes to the city charter, which would require pushing back the gubernatorial elections to their original March 2004 schedule.⁵⁸ On the same day, Yakovlev also reiterated with more specificity that he would not run and implied mid-June as a likely time for his resignation.⁵⁹ The threats of resistance may have been the Yakovlevites' way of extracting a better deal in exchange for the governor's departure. On June 16, an announcement was made that Yakovlev had been appointed Russian deputy premier supposedly "in charge" of the housing sector.⁶⁰ Putin's stealth authoritarianism had produced the *fait accompli* of Yakovlev's removal from office before the onset of the federal election cycle. Putin's new authoritarianism would fulfill another *fait accompli* in the gubernatorial elections, underscoring just how antithetical they are to democracy.

The Gubernatorial "Election"

With the September 21 gubernatorial election barely two months away, federal, federal district, and city authorities in Moscow and St. Petersburg began consolidating their position and that of soft authoritarian rule in the city, giving pro-Matvienko forces full control of all administrative resources for the campaign. The Kremlin did not opt for the much-rumored, more blatant approach of appointing Matvienko acting governor and then establishing her direct control over city administrative resources to ensure her election. Instead, in line with Putin authoritarianism's stealth methodology, the Kremlin accepted a very small degree of risk by limiting Matvienko's direct administrative base to the FO and, in fact, symbolically attenuating her ties to it to give the election some appearance of propriety.

Administrative Resources

The pro-Kremlin force began by appointing Legislative Assembly Deputy and ER member Yurii Beglov as acting governor. He was soon appointed head of the ER's Petersburg organization. After Markova's June 5 declaration of her candidacy for the governor's office, she did not appear in public view for almost a month. During this period the city administrative committee she headed was abolished by the city charter court on the basis of an appeal from pro-Putin assembly deputies. This deprived her even of the limited administrative resources available through this office. Then the Kremlin set about ensuring that no serious rivals put forward their candidacies.

Shaping the Field of Candidates

Administrative resources deployed from the now Kremlin-controlled Smolny, the FO, and Moscow were used to minimize the field of candidates who might drain support from Matvienko. Both the considerably pro-Kremlin SPS and the opposition KPRF refused to field candidates to oppose Matvienko. Zyuganov gave a plausible explanation by claiming that the KPRF decision was prompted by a desire to save funds for the upcoming federal elections.⁶¹ The SPS seems to have gone through a rather different calculus. For example, there were reports in July that Petersburg SPS leaders Grigorii Tomchin and Andrei Likhachev (St. Petersburg EES chief) were considering a run for governor.⁶² However, neither chose to run. Duma Vice Chairman and one of SPS's top leaders, Irina Khakamada, also regarded as a potential candidate, seemed to squelch their plans when she announced her support for Matvienko.

The important administrative resources of *kompromat* and control of the administrative organs were deployed to convince SPS not to put forward a candidate. Speaking on Ekho Moskvy radio on July 14, Russian President Vladimir Putin's economic adviser, Andrei Illarionov, accused Unified Energy Systems (EES), headed by SPS leader Anatolii Chubais, of "stealing" 750 million dollars from the state in the long-forgotten 2001 "Czech debt deal."⁶³ The revival of this scandal appears to have been intended to threaten Chubais so the Union of Rightist Forces (SPS) would not put forward its own candidate for St. Petersburg governor. If it had, that candidate would have been able to shave several percentage points off Kremlin candidate Matvienko's vote. In late August, SPS leader Boris Nemtsov officially announced that the SPS would support Matvienko in the elections and noted that she was "the clear leader" in the race.⁶⁴ At the same time, Chubais announced his plans to run on the SPS party list for the State Duma in December elections, perhaps to garner deputy's immunity from prosecution, much as Boris Berezovskii once did. On the eve of the vote, Chubais did his duty, giving an interview to the St. Petersburg newspaper *Nevskoe vremya*, in which he praised Matvienko and announced his support for her in the election.⁶⁵ The local SPS newspaper printed and widely distributed a front-page summary of a press conference held by two of its top Petersburg leaders, SPS Petersburg branch leader and State Duma Deputy

Grigorii Tomchin and Chairman of the Political Council Sergei Yermeev, who explained the SPS decision to back Matvienko, referring to her strong program, Moscow contacts, and origins from outside the Yakovlev camp.⁶⁶

Besides Matvienko and Markova, no other serious candidates, either in the city or from Moscow, entered the race. The head of the Yabloko Party's faction in the Petersburg Legislative Assembly, Mikhail Amosov, was the only candidate put forward by a federal or regional party, but he had never performed particularly well in Petersburg public opinion polls, and his position within the party had suffered in the year prior to the election, when he lost the party chairmanship. Several well-known and respected Petersburgers who held political offices in Moscow and were repeatedly rated among the most popular of candidates over the year prior to the campaign in pre-election polls—Federal Accounting Chamber chairman Sergei Stepashin and Russian State Duma Deputy Oksana Dmitrieva—decided not to run. The field was dominated by Matvienko, Markova, and several lesser candidates, including former Russian State Property Minister and Aeroflot Director Sergei Belyaev and Petersburg Legislative Assembly Deputy Konstantin Sukhenko. The latter would be undermined when he was expelled from the ER for going against the Kremlin's will in opposing its candidate, and both Belyaev and Sukhenko would be subject to a series of administrative resource measures that weakened their campaigns.

The Administrative Organs as Administrative Resource

During the summer, the city bodies that enforce and monitor compliance with election and other law and constitute the foundations of incumbent "administrative resources" in Russia's regional elections—the City Election Commission (or GorIsполKom), the MVD, the FSB, and the Press Ministry—were placed under Moscow's control.⁶⁷ These bodies then were placed under the control of Vinnichenko, the new city prosecutor, through an operational group he headed for "monitoring" the election campaign. This group consisted of the heads of these agencies. The Russian Press Ministry's Northwest Federal District office (still officially headed by candidate Matvienko) reportedly placed a representative in the Petersburg prosecutor's office to monitor all press materials published about the campaign. The prosecutor was to convene the group weekly and report any campaign violations within twenty-four hours. The prosecutor accepted complaints of the GorIsполKom regarding violations during the collection of nomination signatures for various candidates and threatened those who committed the violations (not the candidates necessarily) with Article 142 of the criminal code (falsification of documents). Boris Salmaksov, St. Petersburg deputy prosecutor for monitoring investigations, subsequently was reported to have submitted his resignation, but denied any conflicts with Vinnichenko, who denied there was any resignation.⁶⁸

The GUVd was deployed on orders from Northwest FO Deputy Presidential Envoy Mikhail Motsak to seize the entire edition of Markova's campaign newspaper *A Deed of Honor* on the shaky pretext of using someone's personal

photograph in the edition. Moreover, the GUV D seized the paper without a court order.⁶⁹ One of the more outrageous uses of administrative resources came four days before the election with the arrest of an alleged member of a Chechen organized crime group in the city, who was charged with ties to the rebels in Chechnya. It was immediately and broadly publicized by Matvienko media that the mobile telephone was said to belong to a Markova campaign staffer in charge of liaisons with the Belyaev campaign.⁷⁰ Markova's acknowledgement that her staff worker did use the mobile telephone's number but had no relationship with the Chechen was spun on federally controlled media to cast her in the worst light.⁷¹

Administrative bodies can be deployed negatively, that is, they can refuse to deploy against officially backed candidates. Matvienko began her campaign well before the August 20 legal starting date for campaigning. Her campaign posters were plastered all over the city, and local media trumpeted her activities as Northwest FO polpred, though she was officially on leave from the office to comply with federal election law. Yet no action was taken by the election commission, prosecutors, or the MVD. Still, for the pro-Matvienko forces the MVD's efforts were apparently not enough. The pro-Matvienko weekly *Peterburgskii chas pik*, regretting Matvienko's failure to secure victory in the first round, criticized the police for having being "out-manuevered by Matvienko's opponents carrying out acts of 'black PR.'"⁷²

Administrative resources are not limited to those rooted in governmental bodies. State-owned or state majority-owned enterprises, which are still substantial in Russia, can provide fora and premises for meetings with the public to state-backed candidates and deny them to opponents. The leaders of state and state-connected enterprises, universities, and the like organize and control most premises and public meeting places, and so they can control their tenor and political affect. Candidate Sukhenko seemed to have been singled out by authorities for retaliation for opposing the will of the ER. According to some reports, his campaign's efforts to hold public promotions and meetings were refused permission more than those of any other candidate.⁷³ Matvienko was singled out but in a much different way, as the city's elite institutions and organizations were mobilized from above to rally to Matvienko's cause. Only she was allowed to speak at a meeting opening up the academic year at St. Petersburg State University.⁷⁴ The rector of SPSU, Olga Verbitskaya, was an open Matvienko supporter featured in the campaign's official newspaper, singing the Matvienko's praises.⁷⁵ Financial resources, the sources of which are unknown, were amply applied to turn out university students at various Matvienko functions. Thus, some reported to the author that they were offered and/or given two hundred rubles each to attend a pro-Matvienko meeting and applaud for the candidate. Others said they were given thirteen hundred rubles, from which they could keep three hundred rubles, if they took the remaining one thousand rubles and deposited them into Matvienko's campaign fund. Pensioners also said they were telephoned and promised money to attend Matvienko meetings. Similarly, managers of some state-owned companies reported "requests" from Matvienko's headquarters that middle managers sign pledges to gather specified numbers of employees to participate in meetings with the candidate.⁷⁶

The President as an Illegal Administrative Resource

The Kremlin went beyond the usual covert form of using administrative resources and openly violated Russian law by putting forward the highest state officials to voice their support for Matvienko. These included Boris Gryzlov, MVD chief and co-chair of the pro-Kremlin ER Party, Yevgenii Primakov, Kremlin-allied State Duma deputy, and Vladimir Yakovlev, deputy premier for housing policy and former Petersburg mayor. The coup de grâce in this parade of officials backing Matvienko came in a September 2 meeting with Matvienko at the Kremlin, which was broadcast on Russia's top two evening news programs. President Putin openly supported Matvienko in a meeting staged as one part of the candidate's official duties as Northwest FO presidential envoy (from which, however, she had temporarily stepped down for the campaign's duration), saying: "I sincerely wish you victory in the election." He also announced another form of support for the incoming governor: five billion rubles and one hundred million dollars in foreign credits for construction projects in Petersburg.⁷⁷

Such public declarations of support by high state officials clearly violate the September 27, 2002 Russian law "On the Basic Guarantees of the Electoral Rights and the Right to Participation in a Referendum of the Citizens of the Russian Federation" amended on December 24, 2002. The amended Article 48.8 reads: "(P)ersons occupying state office of category 'A' or elected municipal office are prohibited from conducting election campaign activity on channels of television and radio broadcasters or in mass print media, with the exception of cases when the official is registered as a candidate for deputy or (other) elected office."⁷⁸ The president's demarche caused a flood of protest from the other candidates. Timofeev called on Putin to resign.⁷⁹ Amosov called the action a violation of the law and a spectacle, warning that "Petersburg should be allowed to make its decision itself."⁸⁰ His party, Yabloko, posed the question of appealing to the prosecutor's office.⁸¹ The ER and SPS remained silent. Markova said the president's actions were "criminal."⁸² She and Sukhenko filed suit asking the St. Petersburg Municipal Court to nullify Matvienko's registration as a candidate.

On September 11, however, Petersburg GorIsполKom official Dmitrii Krasnyanskii said the meeting and statement by Putin did not violate the law. The only question, according to Krasnyanskii, was "in how this was broadcast on televised mass media."⁸³ On the next day, the court ruled that this did not amount to a violation of law because Putin's meeting with Matvienko was a "working meeting" between the president and a person who had information needed to prepare the federal budget. Markova said she and Sukhenko would appeal the decision to the Supreme Court.⁸⁴ The position of the city court and election commission held little water, if any, since both Putin and Matvienko could not have been unaware that they were being filmed for broadcast. It may be no coincidence that on the eve of GorIsполKom's announcement and court decision, Russian presidential administration head Aleksandr Voloshin met with GorIsполKom.⁸⁵ Within days of the decision that the president's demarche was not a violation, posters appeared around the city showing Matvienko with Putin. This ad was also challenged as a

violation of election law, but it also was ruled to be within the law. The same tactic was used in Chechnya to support the Kremlin's candidate there, acting Chechen administration head Akhmad-hadji Kadyrov, in a campaign also marked by the blatant use of "administrative resources" to tilt the playing field in the favor of the Kremlin's candidate.⁸⁶

The Kremlin persisted in using administrative resources and other advantages to associate Matvienko with the president. On September 3, the Kremlin announced that a planning commission for Matvienko's policies for Petersburg would work jointly with an economic working group ordered by Putin to be created under the auspices of the presidential administration.⁸⁷ Five days before the election and two days after the court ruled that Putin's overt statement of support for Matvienko was not a violation of laws prohibiting such statements from state officials, the Kremlin engaged in another effort to openly support its candidate for governor. Matvienko met publicly with MVD chief Boris Gryzlov, again demonstrating the Kremlin's willingness to openly flaunt election laws: MVD Chief Boris Gryzlov. He is one of three co-chairs of the pro-Kremlin ER party. The simultaneous possession of state and party posts is an overt violation of Russian law. At the meeting, Gryzlov offered thinly veiled support for Matvienko's candidacy, claiming that it would be a mistake for anyone to suspect Matvienko of a lack of nerve and that he knew from working with her in the Russian government that this was certainly not the case.⁸⁸ The effect of the display of support by the Kremlin, in particular by the president, produced results. As Petersburg SPS Chairman Grigorii Tomchin put it, the party's decision to support Matvienko was imperative because "together with her the President of Russia will also become the governor of Petersburg."⁸⁹

Administrative resources can be applied more subtly, almost imperceptibly at times. Despite the MVD's talk about Petersburg's criminalization while the Kremlin was pressuring Yakovlev to leave Smolny, Moscow changed its tune shortly after his departure as the gubernatorial election campaign neared. The Northwest FO prosecutor general's office announced the declining growth of the city's crime rate, despite a greater number of criminal assassinations resulting from a "new re-distribution of property and spheres of influence of criminal groupings," which was attributed by many to the regime change in the city after Yakovlev's removal and the approaching election. He also reminded voters that the investigation into Yakovlev's former deputy, Viktor Krotov, was continuing.⁹⁰

The omnipresent message that the Kremlin supports a particular candidate and is investing various material resources into a campaign prompted members of the post-Soviet *nomenklatura* to manipulate events in favor of the authorities' chosen candidate. With the leaders of state and state-connected enterprises, universities, and the like organizing and controlling most public meetings, the hall can be swayed easily to go along once they see which way the wind is blowing. Matvienko was the only candidate invited and allowed to speak to a large forum of teachers, doctors, and housing service and trade union officials. When Amosov attempted to attend and speak at one such forum, whether he should be given the floor was put to a vote; this was not done in Matvienko's case. Only ten atten-

dees raised their hands to support Amosov's right to speak. In early September at a huge concert held in Petersburg's Ice Palace, performer after performer praised Matvienko to the exclusion of all other candidates.⁹¹

Media Hegemony as an Administrative Resource

The Matvienko campaign was also able to muzzle the media not through censorship per se but by the Kremlin-influenced near monopoly over the media. All of the city's print and electronic media backed Matvienko or remained neutral in the campaign. The Matvienko campaign's vast resources, however, allowed it to place ads in neutral media organs.⁹² The influential and pro-Kremlin/Matvienko Petersburg dailies *Peterburgskii chas pik* and *Nevskoe vremya* ran Matvienko campaign ads, even on the front-page, during the two weeks between the September 21 first round vote and the October 5 second round run-off vote.⁹³ Printed directly above, below, or alongside the ads were articles in favor of points being made by the Matvienko campaign or against those being made by one of her opponents. For example, the October 1 edition challenged the Belaev campaign's slogan that gubernatorial work was "men's work" in an article placed directly above a Matvienko campaign ad.⁹⁴ Although the ads were ostensibly paid by Matvienko's campaign fund, this is hard to verify and unlikely to be checked because the law enforcement organizations were all loyal to her. As noted above, *Nevskoe vremya* itself had been taken over by Kremlin-tied forces in the Northwest FO a year earlier. Financed by PromStroiBank and headed by Putin ally Vladimir Kogan, *Nevskoe vremya's* chief editor Alla Manilova would be Matvienko's first appointment after assuming the governorship, taking over the Petersburg administration's press committee.⁹⁵ Throughout the campaign, the daily ran campaign ads for Matvienko disguised as articles and reports. One blatant example was a front-page piece highlighting Russian six-time Olympic ski champion Lyubov Yegorova's support for Matvienko.⁹⁶ The St. Petersburg government's daily *Sankt-Petersburgskie vedomosti* more subtly inserted cryptic calls to vote for Matvienko in articles posing as objective opinion and analysis. For example, between the first and second rounds, it ran an article that called for a "new leader" and a "leader of federal stature . . . determined to put an end to the practice on the part of the city government of protecting business on the basis of political or clan preferences."⁹⁷ This could only be determined as a call to vote for Matvienko.

In addition to these maneuvers, the Matvienko campaign seems to have been in the practice of conducting stage-managed press conferences that had all the appearance of a freewheeling give-and-take between Matvienko and journalists. According to one report, lists of questions were prepared for journalists, at least some of whom were co-opted by the campaign to ensure that the prepared questions were asked.⁹⁸

Social PR

Finally, Matvienko's campaign used what might be called "social PR," building on the experience of the "Dialog" centers created by the Northwest FO during the Legislative Assembly elections. An organization, *Narodnyio kontrol'* (People's

Monitoring) or NK, suddenly emerged. The morning after the end of the election's second round, it disappeared. Its origins and backers were kept a secret. The similarity with the Dialog centers—appearing during an election campaign, requiring considerable funding that all candidates but Matvienko lacked, posing as a social organization that promoted reform and societal interests, and disappearing after the campaign—suggests that it was created by Matvienko's backers. Among other things, it posed as a fighter against bureaucracy and as the people's monitor of the election campaign. It established a good working relationship with liberal candidates Pyotr Shchelish and Yabloko Party candidate Mikhail Amosov. The NK's main purpose was to back Matvienko's program and candidacy. It announced that in response to its request for gubernatorial candidates to present their campaign programs to the foundation, within a week it had received Matvienko's program first, followed by Shchelish's draft program "Social Contract," and materials for Amosov's program. It had received nothing from Anna Markova's campaign. An August 15 NK statement gave its strongest support to Matvienko: "Having studied the programs, the council of the organization NK made the decision to support the candidacy of Valentina Matvienko."⁹⁹

In Matvienko's campaign newspaper, *Valentina Matvienko: polnomochnyi predstavitel' naroda* (VM), the campaign denied its administrative resources in a tendentious polemic:

Yes, Putin supports (Matvienko). Does he not have the right to this? Is not it logical that the president wants to see in the provinces . . . people from his team, those who he is used to trusting and who can do something. Administrative resources? If what is understood by this is years of administrative and management experience and good contacts, then the resources are enormous. Can a person who does not have this really contend for such a position?¹⁰⁰

In fact, contenders opposing Kremlin candidates also have access to and routinely make use of typically more limited administrative resources and other less than democratic election practices.

The Opposition and Administrative Resources

The preponderance of administrative resources and media control at the disposal of the Matvienko campaign does not mean that her chief rival, Anna Markova, was totally lacking in such resources. As a long-time vice governor under a two-term governor, Markova could count on considerable support among Yakovlev appointees at the regional and city district level. There appears to be some veracity to the argument that pro-Markova forces worked to limit the turnout, perhaps in the hope that it could be held to under 20 percent, which would nullify the results, or at least to reduce turnout to such a level that it undermined Matvienko's mandate as victor. The pro-Matvienko weekly *Peterburgskii chas pik* decried the low turnout of the first round and charged that "the 'against all' campaign was aimed at one candidate—V. Matvienko" and was supported by "serious money" and "entire collectives of specially hired people and volunteers," publishing "high

circulation propaganda newspapers.”¹⁰¹ Some of St. Petersburg’s most prominent sociologists held a press conference after the first round and charged that the work of city and district electoral commissions in advertising the election was “insufficient,” and “strong administrative resource was activated to reduce voter turnout.”¹⁰² Thus, pro-Matvienko mass media began to criticize pro-Markova forces for “betting on the retardation” of the public, highlight the election commissions’ lackadaisical efforts in getting out the vote and actively promoting a stronger turnout for the second round.¹⁰³ Ultimately, Markova’s administrative resources fell far short of those available to Matvienko. However, the main point here is that the employment of federal and regional administrative resources by the Kremlin’s favorite was supplemented by her main opponent’s use of regional (and, some say, even federal) resources, compounding the problems of managed electoral “democracy.”

Moreover, the Markova campaign endeavored to compensate for its shortage of administrative resources relative to the Matvienko campaign by engaging in dirty campaign tricks or “black PR.” Markova’s campaign set up a Web site, www.zaks.ru, where a series of clearly false reports appeared designed to outrage the electorate and turn it against Matvienko. On September 20, the day before the first round vote, www.zaks.ru reported that two hundred thousand military servicemen were supposedly on their way to St. Petersburg to take part in military exercises whereupon they would be given the right to vote in the election.¹⁰⁴

The Results of the Gubernatorial Campaign

For all the administrative resources applied in Matvienko’s support, she failed to win in the first round, garnering only 49 percent of the vote. Her arch-nemesis in the campaign, Markova, took 16 percent. Belyaev finished a surprising third with 8 percent. Yabloko’s Amosov finished a disappointing fourth with 7 percent, and Sukhenko finished fifth with 5 percent. The city’s election commission chairman, chosen by the Kremlin, immediately put the imprimatur of legitimacy on the election the day after the vote, announcing there were no important violations of the law in the voting.¹⁰⁵ The Kremlin’s also chosen acting governor Aleksandr Beglov declared the elections were fair, without use of administrative resources, and “even very democratic.”¹⁰⁶ The first round produced a shamefully low turnout of 29 percent and an equally shamefully high vote “against all” of 11 percent. St. Petersburg’s minimum turnout limit of 20 percent is the lowest in all Russia, and the 29 percent is the lowest turnout for a gubernatorial election campaign in Russia’s post-Soviet history. Previous first round gubernatorial races in Petersburg yielded turnouts of 60 percent (1996) and 47 percent (2000). The 11 percent “against all” is one of the highest such votes in a post-Soviet Russian gubernatorial election.

Russian specialist on the regions and the federation, Nikolai Petrov, has argued that the Kremlin “slipped up” in failing to secure Matvienko a first round victory, not despite but because of its broad application of administrative resources. According to the argument, the “onslaught” of administrative resources was “counter-productive,” leading to the low voter turnout and the high “against all”

vote. Low voter turnout and high “against all” vote are assumed to be against the Kremlin’s interests.¹⁰⁷ In fact, this is a continuation of the tendency in Russia’s revolution from above since the takeover of power by Yeltsin in 1991 to demobilize society and allow the new Russian nomenklatura to control the political process. There is no need to so blatantly manage the process such that the Kremlin’s candidates win in the first round, especially in a city with a strong democratic reputation. A low-profile, stealth-managed “democracy” is just as effective, or even moreso, especially with regard to dampening international criticism of the turn to soft authoritarianism. Moreover, it appears that Petersburg forces opposed to Matvienko may have been behind an effort to reduce turnout to below 20 percent of registered voters and thus scuttle the elections.

In any event, Matvienko’s failure to win in the first round was only a slight blow to Putin’s prestige and caused modest damage in the long run. The greatest obstacles to a first round victory seem to have been the split inside the Kremlin, which produced Belyaev’s surprising performance and the inability of the Kremlin to get out the vote. Matvienko’s position in the city was certainly weakened, as well. As Likhachev noted, securing victory in the second round would require “additional agreements, negotiations, consultations, and compromises” of the victorious candidate.¹⁰⁸ However, it also allowed for co-opting more elements in Russian society, broadening the consensus supporting stealth authoritarian rule.

Similarly, the outcome of the gubernatorial election’s second round was never in doubt, but several aspects of the campaign’s finale are notable. First of all, none of the failed candidates threw their votes behind the oppositionist Markova. Yabloko, whose Amosov finished a disappointing fourth in the first round, backed Matvienko (after some hesitation), despite Yabloko’s oppositionist stance vis-à-vis the Kremlin. Konstantin Sukhenko declared his neutrality.¹⁰⁹ On September 26, thirty-six of the forty-nine deputies in the Petersburg Legislative Assembly approved a declaration to voters asking them to vote for Matvienko.¹¹⁰ With the elite more united than ever behind Matvienko and her further consolidation over the city’s administrative resources, the second round produced results consistent with the first: an easy victory for Matvienko (63 percent to Markova’s 23), low turnout (28 percent), and a high “against all” vote (11 percent). With Matvienko’s victory, the methodology of establishing stealth authoritarian rule had been verified in Russia’s second largest, and perhaps most democratic city, just in time for the December 2003 State Duma and March 2004 presidential elections.

Conclusion: Stealth Authoritarianism, Democracy, and the State

On October 5, “Candidate No. 1,” as Matvienko was referred to by all mass media by the end of the gubernatorial election campaign, arrived at School No. 154 to cast her vote in the second round. Speaking to the press about the campaign, she said: “Nothing has ever come to me easy in life. I have never received anything on a silver platter.”¹¹¹ In fact, nothing could be further from the truth regarding her election as governor of St. Petersburg. Her victory was the capstone of a long-

awaited and long-planned takeover in Putin's native city by forces loyal to the president. The takeover was achieved not by way of a democratic electoral victory, but by virtue of the Kremlin's hegemonic power within Russia's political system and its resulting near monopoly on administrative resources. These bureaucratic and financial resources took advantage of legal arrangements and loopholes, as well as the illegal use of state police, judicial, and oversight powers, to tilt the playing field against former Governor Yakovlev and his allies before and during the December 2002 elections to St. Petersburg's Legislative Assembly and the September–October gubernatorial election campaign. The Yakovlev administration was threatened into submission by police investigations of corruption, accusations of ties to criminal organizations, and the like. The issue here is not the lack of veracity of the charges made or implied against Yakovlev's administration but the selective use of police forces against opposing regional administrations. Similar investigations and charges could be made against a series of Russian regions and republics. Indeed, they sometimes are, but only against those administrations that oppose the Kremlin and its allies. Once the desired political outcome is achieved, those under investigation or threat of investigation are exonerated or co-opted into the pro-Kremlin order. Some cases against Yakovlev's deputy governors in St. Petersburg have been dropped or stalled, and Yakovlev himself was "promoted" to Russian deputy premier in charge of the housing sector. More recently, he was named to the board of the state-owned railroad company.

The use of administrative resources and media hegemony by state incumbents under stealth authoritarianism, especially as applied during elections, has several negative consequences beyond their obviously negative and negating impact on elections and democracy. First, in Russian conditions of a weak civil society short on resources, such "administrative elections" stultify the willingness of society to participate in and openly support free and fair elections. The use of administrative resources and near-monopoly control of the mass media creates an oppressive atmosphere of stultification where citizens feel less free, and, thus, are less likely to exercise democratic rights. When viewers of a Petersburg television program were polled on the air as to whether they regarded the then upcoming gubernatorial elections as fair, only 2 of 305 respondents answered in the affirmative.¹¹² Given this expectation, citizens saw no purpose in voting, producing the all-time low turnout and all-time high "against all" vote. Moreover, the elite cooperated much as the public acquiesced in privileging Matvienko over other candidates at a series of meetings.

Second, a favored candidate's use of administrative resources and media hegemony produces a level of desperation on the part of other candidates that encourages them to turn to so-called "dirty technologies" and even criminal ones. Eleven criminal investigations involving vote buying and slander were opened regarding violations of election law during the campaign.¹¹³ These violations further turned off potential voters and damaged the integrity of the electoral process. This resulted in publishing false issues of the Matvienko campaign newspaper and other campaign tricks used by candidates to oppose Matvienko. One of the more pathetic-

ic efforts occurred during one of two head-to-head television debates between Matvienko and her chief rival, Anna Markova, held between the first and second rounds of the election and broadcast on the local channel “Peterburg.” According to Sergei Shelin, the host of the debate, Markova who, was trailing badly in all the polls, appeared to come to the first debate spoiling for a fight, refusing even to agree to the debate format.¹¹⁴ During the second debate, Markova resorted to throwing a piece of chewing gum on the desk of the host, saying that for Matvienko “it would be better to chew gum rather than speak.” Markova’s campaign apparently was also behind the appearance of a newspaper titled *Petersburgskaya liniya*, which referred to the other major contenders Matvienko and Amosov as “Moskvienko” and “Mimosov,” which played on the words “Moscow” and “miss,” respectively, to imply the locus of Matvienko’s patrons and the failure of Amosov’s campaign.¹¹⁵ There is no evidence that such methods strengthened Markova’s campaign. It is more likely that they damaged it and further alienated already apathetic and disenchanting voters from the process of electoral participation. The rise in voter alienation was expressed in the high “against all” vote in both the first and second rounds.

Third, the growth in voter apathy and alienation gives the appearance, but not the reality, of authority and legitimacy. The inevitable outcome of most elections in Putin’s Russia limits and undermines the authority and legitimacy of Putin’s new stealth authoritarian regime. Matvienko, for example, entered Smolny with a very limited mandate. In the first round, she received 14 percent of the vote among eligible voters. In the second, she received 18 percent (63 percent of the 28 percent turnout). The growing level of alienation is indicated by the high “against all” vote. As noted above, the 11 percent “against all” votes in the St. Petersburg gubernatorial election’s first and second rounds are post-Soviet Russian records, although this outcome is not a phenomenon limited to St. Petersburg.¹¹⁶

The Kremlin and its political technicians might want to ponder whether more open elections might provide them with easier victories and greater mandates. In the case of St. Petersburg’s gubernatorial election, Matvienko fell short of a first round victory by some 15,000 votes, a mere fraction of the 118,000 that voted “against all” and an infinitesimal fraction of the 700,000 registered voters who decided to stay away from the polls in both rounds. Put another way, with a much smaller margin of victory a candidate can win a much larger mandate given a larger turnout. A more competitive campaign with Putin using his enormous popularity to campaign in favor of a preferred candidate such as Matvienko (which would require changes to the law on voters’ rights) would produce more robust elections and a likely victory for the Kremlin. In short, limited turnouts and high votes “against all” are limiting Kremlin candidates’ mandate to rule. Ultimately, as the methodology of stealth authoritarianism is applied on the national level in the December 2003 State Duma elections and the March 2004 presidential election, watered-down mandates will undermine the legitimacy of Russia’s emerging stealth authoritarian regime.

Fourth, the establishment of a soft authoritarian regime that attempts to subordinate all regional leaderships to the Kremlin’s whims has real dangers. It is

likely to spark a backlash from a part of the regional elite and masses. Anti-center and regional patriotic themes were cornerstones of Markova's gubernatorial campaign. Her campaign brochure invoked the ostensibly independent "Petersburg spirit" and called on voters to cast their ballots against the Muscovite candidate with the slogan: "Petersburg: show (your) character!" It warned Petersburg that while it remained divided between pro-Sobchak/Putin and pro-Yakovlev forces, "Moscow adopted capitalist methods of management and methodologically bought up Petersburg stocks, and having bought them up posed the question point blank: 'Who's the boss here?'"¹⁷ In a section entitled "Merger with Moscow: The Price of the Question," Markova warned that "Moscow does not and will never share power voluntarily."¹⁸ In St. Petersburg's case, the dangers of regional backlash against the center are limited. There are no national, linguistic, religious, or cultural autonomy issues at stake.

The extension of this policy to national autonomies such as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan is fraught with grave dangers for the Russian state's stability. Thus far, the Kremlin has chosen to co-opt the leaderships and much of the elite of the national autonomies to avoid confrontation. This also holds risk, however. It creates the appearance of favored status for non-Russian ethno-national elites, which may provoke a Russian nationalist backlash against national minorities. Moreover, the lack of legitimacy that managed electoral "democracy" produces bodes poorly for the future of Russian democracy, managed or otherwise, and over the long term threatens the state, with its potentially explosive mix of diverse ethnic and religious groups.

Russian democracy at present is slowly being strangled in its cradle. Along with it, the days of the Russian state's meta-stability are numbered. As the Soviet case showed, regime changes threaten the stability of states. Thus, the destabilization of Russia's weak multinational state will not follow far behind the death of its democracy.

NOTES

1. Borislav Mikhailichenko, "Peterburg Prezidenta," *Nevskoe vremya*, September 19, 2003, <http://www.nevskoevremya.spb.ru/cgi-bin/pl/nv.pl?art=157668686>.

2. Brian Whitmore, "The One That Got Away," *RFERL Russian Political Weekly* 3, no. 36 (September 10, 2003).

3. Mikhail Amosov (head of the Yabloko party faction in the St. Petersburg legislative assembly), interview with the author, September 2001.

4. See the memorandum by Mikhail Amosov, "Silnye regiony—sil'naya Rossiya" s prilozhennym proektom Federal'nogo Zakona 'O garantiyakh byudzhetykh prav sub'ektov Rossiiskoi Federatsii' in the author's archive. Data for 2000 from "Komitet ekonomiki i promyshlennoi politiki Cankt-Peterburg soobschaet," *Peterburgskii analitik*, <http://www.spbstat.comprice.ru:8101/n10/analitic/komitet.html>.

5. Amosov charged that the budget code is written in such a way that funds designated for a region can be sequestered or cut, recalculated at the end of the fiscal year, or redesignated for different goals up to 10 percent of the region's designated transfers by decision of the Finance Ministry. In 1999, St. Petersburg State Duma Deputy Sergei Popov won a court case against the Finance Ministry for such practices, but the city never received the funds that the court had ruled were illegally diverted from St. Petersburg. Amosov,

“Silnye regiony—sil’naya Rossiya,” 3–4.

6. That regime would require quarterly reporting on fulfillment of transfers, such that a quarter of the funds would be transferred to the regional budgets every quarter. Federal obligations to regional budgets could be reduced only in accordance with the regime of reduction of expenditures established in the budget code, and any redirection of funds intended for regional budgets to a purpose other than that stipulated in the federal budget could be undertaken only with the permission of the executive body of the federation subject. Any failure of the federal authorities to fund fully items designated for a regional budget would have to be compensated for. Amosov, “Silnye regiony—sil’naya Rossiya,” 5.

7. Besik Pipiya, “Vladimir Zubrin: Na podkhode—krupnye dela,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta—Regiony* 11, no. 5 (March 27, 2001): 3.

8. *Regions.ru*, October 3, 2001, <http://www.regions.ru/>.

9. Yakovlev and St. Petersburg’s elite were even less concerned about the second wave of Putin’s federal reforms intended to tackle official asymmetry established by the bilateral federal-regional treaties and agreements signed by Moscow and some forty-six federation subjects between 1994 and 1999. St. Petersburg’s own agreement with the center brought it few, if any, concrete benefits. Petersburg’s politicians concurred with the generally held consensus that the bilateral treaties had served their purpose by preserving the unity of the federation in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and that they should be modified, if not abrogated.

10. “Pervoe ‘yubileinoe’ delo peredano v sud,” *Leningradskaya Pravda*, August 28, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda>.

11. There are also some who believe Putin himself was responsible for helping the Tambov group gain control of the St. Petersburg seaport.

12. See Gordon M. Hahn, “Putin’s ‘Federal Revolution’: Administrative Versus Judicial Methods of Federal Reform,” *East European Constitutional Review* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 60–67.

13. *Vash tainyi sovetnik* 22 (June 2001): 1, 5.

14. *Virtual’nyi Peterburg*, July 12, 2001. <http://www.vp.ru/>.

15. O.V. Popova, *Politicheskaya identifikatsiya v usloviakh transformatsii obshchestva* (St. Petersburg: St.Petersburg State University, 2002): 205, 209.

16. “Moskva: Peterburgskaya tematika v federal’nyh SMI. Glavnoe. Obzor za 4–10 noyabrya 2002,” *NEWSpb.ru*, November 12, 2002. <http://www.newspb.volgainform.ru/allnews/67069>.

17. Although no evidence that the Petersburg court came under pressure from the Kremlin exists, the trend in Russia since Putin’s judicial and federative reforms has been for judicial dependence on regional governors to be replaced by dependence on the Kremlin. On the other hand, the Petersburg charter court has been one of the more independent courts, and the facts of the case seemed to dictate a ruling against the third term. However, the atmosphere surrounding the struggle between Smolny and the Kremlin had to have influenced the court.

18. Oleg Sviridov, “Vybory: Predvybornaya PR,” *Petersburgskaya Chas Pik* 42, <http://www.chaspik.spb.ru>.

19. “Cankt-Peterburg: Reshenie voprosa po tret’emu sroku gubernatora Peterburga yavlyaetsya prerogativoi mestnykh vlastei,” *NEWSpb.ru*, October 11, 2002, 12:59, <http://www.newspb.volgainform.ru/allnews/60082>.

20. Alexandr Yakovlev, interviewed by Valerii Butaev in *Komsomol’skaya pravda*, October 22, 2003, 21.

21. Mikhail Amosov and Dmitrii Lenkov, interviews with the author, September 2001.

22. “Sankt-Peterburg: ‘SPS plus Yabloka’, ‘Edinaya Rossiya’, ‘Volya Peterburga’ dogovorilis’ o sovместnoi podderzhke kandidatov po 33 izbiratel’nyim okrugam,” *Regnum.ru*, December 2, 2002, 16:11, <http://www.regnum.ru/allnews/71703.html>; and “Sankt-Peterburg: Glavnaya osobennost’ etoi vybornoi kampanii—ob’edinenie ‘Yabloka’ i SPS, schitaet glava ‘Lenenergo’ Andrei Likhachev,” *Regions.ru*, December 8, 2002,

<http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle.news/id/935620.html>. The St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly elections were not held, nor were they required to be held in accordance with the new federal election law demanding that regional legislatures be formed on the basis of a mixed electoral system with half of the representatives elected on the basis of proportional party list voting and half on the basis of elections in single-mandate districts on a majority basis.

23. Although opposed Governor Yakovlev and initially announced its willingness to cooperate with certain forces that were, if not supportive of Yakovlev then certainly were not irreconcilably opposed to him, including Oksana Dmitrieva, the pro-small business Duma deputy from Petersburg, KPRF did not cooperate with any of the major rightist or centrist parties. "Sankt-Peterburg: Na vyborakh v ZakS kommunisty gotovy blokirovat'sya so storonnikami Yakovleva protiv 'Edinoi Rossii'," *NEWSpb.ru*, October 16, 2002, 14:58, <http://www.news.spb.volgainform.ru/allnews/68694.html>.

24. Two were self-nominated candidates: Oleg Koryakin, leader of the St. Petersburg branch of the KPRF in the eighteenth district, and Stanislav Zhitkov in the nineteenth. Another pro-communist candidate, Yurii Savelev, opposed both Smolny and the pro-Kremlin forces and was nominated by the election bloc "Science, Industry, and Education."

25. "Sankt-Peterburg: Grigorii Yavlinskii: 'Tret'ego sroka gubernatora Peterburga dopustit' nel'zya," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 19, 2002, 18:09, <http://www.news.spb.volgainform.ru/allnews/68694.html>.

26. "Sankt-Peterburg: 'Spisok Cherkesova' na vyborakh v Zakonodatel'noe Sobranie Peterburga," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 20, 2002, 14:46, <http://www.news.spb.volgainform.ru/allnews/68955.html>.

27. Compare data in "Sankt-Peterburg: Po itogam vyborov kak minimum 26 iz 50 deistvuyushchikh deputatov sokhranyat svoi mandaty," *Regions.ru*, December 9, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle/news/id/935974.html>; "Sankt-Peterburg: Predvaritel'nye itogi vyborov," *Regions.ru*, December 9, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle/news/id/936000.html>; and "Sankt-Peterburg: 'Spisok Cherkesova' na vyborakh v Zakonodatel'noe Sobranie Peterburga."

28. Among nonincumbents, the list backed the anti-Yakovlev Petersburg Accounting Chamber Chairman Dmitrii Burenin, who helped Federal Accounting Chamber Chairman Sergei Stepashin uncover Smolny's misuse of funds intended for the May 2003 three-hundredth anniversary celebrations and various construction projects. The list also supported Viktor Yegorshin, who lost to incumbent and pro-Yakovlev Legislative Assembly Chairman Tarasov in the ninth city district. Finally, in line with the creation of the anti-Yakovlev alliance Cherkesov's list, it supported the SPS + Yabloko candidates, including incumbent assemblymen Mikhail Brodskii and Yuri Gladkov. See data in "Sankt-Peterburg: Predvaritel'nye itogi vyborov," and "Sankt-Peterburg: 'Spisok Cherkesova' na vyborakh v Zakonodatel'noe Sobranie Peterburga."

29. "Sankt-Peterburg: 'SPS plus Yabloka', 'Edinaya Rossiya', 'Volya Peterburga' dogovorilis' o sovместnoi podderzhke kandidatov po 33 izbiratel'nym okrugam," *Regnum.ru*, December 2, 2002, 16:11, <http://www.regnum.ru/allnews/71703.html>; and "Sankt-Peterburg: 'Spisok Cherkesova' na vyborakh v Zakonodatel'noe Sobranie Peterburga."

30. See, for example, Mikhail Korenevskii, "Vybory v Peterburge: 'Administrativnaya agresiya' mozhет sorvat' vybory" and "Yevgeniya Dyleva, "Vybory v Peterburge: Protiv fabriki 'gryaznykh' polittekhologii," *Peterburgskii Chas pik* 47, November 2002, <http://www.chaspik.spb.ru>; "Sankt-Peterburg: Pitserskie pravye obvinili gubernatora v ispol'zovanii 'chernogo PR'," *Regions.ru*, November 27, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru>; "Sankt-Peterburg: Bez vmeshchatel'stva General'nogo prokurora Rossii v situatsiyu s vyborami oboitis' ne udastsya," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 27, 2002, 14:11, <http://www.news.spb.volgainform.ru/allnews/70597.html>; and the remarks of Yabloko leader Mikhail Amosov in "V Sankt-Peterburge proshlu naglye vybory, schitaet lider peterburgskogo 'Yabloka'," *Regions.ru*, December 8, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle.news/id/935617.html>.

31. "Sankt-Peterburg: Polk MChs ne-smog prinyat' uchastie v golosovanii v 18 izbiratel'nmokruge," *Regions.ru*, December 8, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle.news/id/935628.html>.

32. "Sankt-Peterburg: Gubernator Vladimir Yakovlev podpisal prinyati s mnogochislennymi harusheiyami zakon o byudzhete," *Regions.ru*, November 20, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle.news/id/917501.html>.

33. "Sankt-Peterburg: Razognan agitatsionnyi piket bloka SPS + 'Yabloko'," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 22, 2002, 13:12, <http://www.newspb.volgainform.ru/allnews/69585.html>; and "Sankt-Peterburg: Ofis SPS pitalis podzheg," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 22, 2002, 14:42, <http://www.newspb.volgainform.ru/allnews/69640.html>. For more Smolny shenanigans against SPS + Yabloko, see "Sankt-Peterburg: Sotrudnik militsii obvinil kandidata v deputaty v narushenii zakonodatel'stva," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 22, 2002, 17:03, <http://www.newspb.volgainform.ru/allnews/69702.html>.

34. "Sankt-Peterburg: Kandidatu v deputaty peterburgskogo Zakonodatel'nogo sobraniya Denisu Volcheku ofitsial'no predyavleno obvinenie," *Regions.ru*, November 25, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle.news/id/923706.html>.

35. "Sankt-Peterburg: 'Spisok Cherkesova' na vyborah v Zakonodatel'noe Sobranie Peterburga."

36. The turnout in many districts barely exceeded the 20 percent barrier. In the twenty-ninth district, it reached only 20.23 percent. "Sankt-Peterburg: Po itogam vyborov kak minimum 26 iz 50 deistvuyushchikh deputatov sokhranyat svoi mandaty," and "Sankt-Peterburg: Vo vseh okrugakh vybory v Zakonodatel'noe sobranie priznany sostyashimisya," *Regions.ru*, December 8, 2002, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle/news/id/935616.html>.

37. Compare "Sankt-Peterburg: 'SPS plyus Yabloka', 'Edinaya Rossiya', 'Volya Peterburga' dogovorilis' o sovместnoi podderzhke kandidatov po 33 izbiratel'nykh okrugam," *Regnum.ru*, December 2, 2002, 16:11, <http://www.regnum.ru/allnews/71703.html> and "Sankt-Peterburg: Predvaritel'nye itogi vyborov."

38. Compare "Sankt-Peterburg: 'Spisok Cherkesova' na vyborah v Zakonodatel'noe Sobranie Peterburga" and "Sankt-Peterburg: 'SPS plyus Yabloka', 'Edinaya Rossiya', 'Volya Peterburga' dogovorilis' o sovместnoi podderzhke kandidatov po 33 izbiratel'nykh okrugam," *Regnum.ru*, December 2, 2002, 16:11, <http://www.regnum.ru/allnews/71703.html>; and "Sankt-Peterburg: Predvaritel'nye itogi vyborov."

39. Normally thirty-four were needed, but the forty-first district seat was left open because the results were nullified and a new vote was ordered by a court.

40. "Sankt-Peterburg: Glavnymi kandidatami 'spiska Cherkesova' na post spikera ZakCa stanut Vadim Tyul'panov i Konstantin Serov," *NEWSpb.ru*, November 17, 2002, 17:11, <http://www.newspb.volgainform.ru/allnews/68075.html>.

41. Sergei Kovalev, "Making Life Easier for Matvienko," *RFERL Russian Political Weekly* 3, no. 35 (September 3, 2003).

42. Maksim Zakharov, "V otnoshenii byvshego predsedatelya GorIzbirKom vzbuzhdeno ugovolnoe delo," *Fontanka.ru*, June 6, 2003, <http://www.fontanka.ru/>.

43. "Silovik iz Peterburga," *Leningradskaya pravda*, June 10, 2003. <http://www.lenpravda.ru>, reprinted from *Komsomolskaya Pravda v Sankt-Peterburge*, June 10, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda.ru/readingreg1.phtml?id=8805/29/2003>.

44. "Sankt-Peterburg: Gryzlov predstavil GU MVD po SZFO novogo nachal'nika," *NEWSpb.ru*, May 10, 2003, 22:56, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/114266/html>. Novikov, like Gryzlov, was a Petersburg, having been educated in the MVD's Leningrad Militia and served in a district UVD in the city. In 2001, after Gryzlov's appointment to head the MVD, Novikov took over its administrative affairs administration. Posts in administrations of affairs in Russia are almost always given to close allies of the department that the administration serves.

45. Svetlana Andreeva, "O tvorchestve, o sponsorakh, o slave," *Vash tainyi sovetnik* 18 (September 2003): 7.

46. On campaign contributions see “Boi na beregakh Nevy,” *Leningradskaya Pravda*, September 3, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda.ru/>.

47. “V Pitere zhдут pazbora yubileinykh poletov,” *Leningradskaya pravda*, May 29, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda.ru/readingreg1.phtml?id=8805/29/2003>.

48. Vladimir Kovalev, “Stepashin Gives Way on Road Funding,” *The St. Petersburg Times*, October 21, 2003, 3.

49. “Sankt-Peterburg: V Komitet finansov ne postupalo predstavlenii iz gorodskoi Schetnoi palaty o nezakonno izraskhodovannykh sredstvakh,” *Regions. ru*, April 14, 2003, 06:55, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle/news/id/1067602.html>.

50. Yan Travinskii, “Tretii srok ostaetsya bez gubernatora,” *Smena*, April 4, 2003, <http://www.smena.ru/>.

51. “Sankt-Peterburg: Po faktam khishchenii sredstv, vydelennykh na yubilee goroda, vobuzhdeno 17 ugolovnykh del,” *Regions. ru*, April 16, 2003, 18:19, <http://www.regions.ru/newsarticle/news/id/1071340.html>.

52. For a summary of just some of the reported rumors see “Petersburg gotovitsya k smene politicheskikh elit: kadry Yakovleva i Cherkosovaukhodyat: Peterburgskaya tematika v federal’nykh SMI: Obzor za 10–20 aprelya 2003,” *NEWSpb.ru*, April 26, 2003, 22:07, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/110900/html>; Yan Travinskii, “V gorodskoe pravitel’stvo navodyat bol’shie mosty,” *Smena*, April 19, 2003, <http://www.smena.ru/>; and “Yakovlev mozhet nazvat’ svoim preemnikom Matvienko i vozglavit’ MVD: Peterburg v federal’nykh SMI: Obzor za 21–30 aprelya 2003,” *NEWSpb.ru*, May 8, 2003, 22:28, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/114151/html>.

53. See, for example, “Yakovlev sobiraet veshchi,” *Leningradskaya pravda*, 6 June 2003, www.lenpravda.ru/; and Boris Kosarev, “Na 3000-letii SOBR izbil UBOP: Peterburgskie slukhi za 2-5 iyunya 2003,” *NEWSpb.ru*, 5 June 2003, 11:09, www.newspb.ru/.

54. “Sankt-Peterburg: Gubernatoru prochat otstavku,” *Regions.ru*, May 20, 2003, 16:55, <http://www.regions.ru/article/news/id/1110626/html>.

55. “Sankt-Peterburg: A. Markova: ‘Nalitsa narushenie zakona, sushchestvuet Ustav goroda,’” *NEWSpb.ru*, April 23, 2003, 14:36, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/109818/html>.

56. Andrei Milkin, “Kriticheskii den’ Anny Markovoi,” *Nevskoe vremya*, June 6, 2003, 1.

57. “Nastoyashchaya polkovnitsa,” *Leningradskaya Pravda*, June 5, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda.ru/>.

58. “Sankt-Peterburg: Yurii Gladkov: ‘Gubernator V. Yakovlev nameren sobrat’ referendum o vnesenii izmenenii v ustav Sankt-Peterburga,’” *NEWSpb.ru*, June 5, 2003, 09:53, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/122930/html>.

59. “Vladimir Yakovlev ne isklyuchil vozmozhnosti svoei otstavki,” *Fontanka.ru*, June 5, 2003, 10:38, <http://www.fonyanka.ru/>.

60. Reform of this sector actually has been handed over to a Yakovlev nemesis, St. Petersburger and chairman of the state electricity monopoly United Energy Systems (YeES) Anatolii Chubais.

61. “Partii vne politiki,” *Leningradskaya Pravda*, August 28, 2003, <http://www.lenprada.ru/>.

62. Irina Prishchenko, “Tomchin pochti kandidat,” *Smena*, July 21, 2003, <http://www.smena.spb.ru/>.

63. *RFERL Organized Crime and Terrorism Watch* 3, no. 31, September 4, 2003.

64. “Boris Nemtsov zayavil o podderzhke SPS Valentiny Matvienko na predstoyashchikh vyborakh,” *NEWSpb.ru*, August 25, 2003, 12:04, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/148794>.

65. “*Nevskoe vremya*, September 16, 2003. Cited in “Vybory gubernatora v Sankt-Peterburg: obzor agitatsii i SMI poslednei nedeli, 15–19 sentyabrya 2003,” *NEWSpb.ru*, September 22, 2003, 19:55, <http://www.newspb.ru/allnews/159279>.

66. L. Avrukh and I. Skakovskii, “Peterburgu nuzhny novye lyudi I novaya gorodskaya politika,” *Pravoe delo: Sankt-Peterburg*, October 2003, 1.

67. On September 2, city MVD Colonel Aleksandr Smirnov was appointed chief fed-

eral inspector for St. Petersburg, completing the pro-Putin camp's positioning of forces prior to the vote. "Naznachen glavnyi federal'nyi inspektor po Sankt-Peterburgu," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 2, 2002, 08:40, <http://www.regions.ru/allnews/151760>.

68. "Kasaetsya vsekhn," *Leningradskaya Pravda*, August 28, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda.ru/>.

69. "Tirazha predvybornoi gazety kandidata v gubernatory Sankt-Peterburga Anny Markovoi 'Delo chesti' opechatali na sklade b Kirishakh," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 2, 2003, 21:23, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/152200>.

70. "V Sankt-Peterburge zaderzhan chlen nezakonykh vooruzhennykh formirovaniy," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 17, 2003, 15:45, <http://www.newssp.ru/allnews/157610>.

71. "'Delo o nezakonykh vooruzhennykh formirovaniyakh' v Sankt-Peterburge: strane oproverzheniya Anny Markovoi," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 18, 2003, 20:41, <http://www.newssp.ru/allnews/158261>.

72. Valerii Ostrovskii, "Pogoda v dome," *Peterburgskii chas pik* 39 (September 24–30, 2003), 1.

73. "Kasaetsya vsekhn," *Leningradskaya Pravda*, August 28, 2003, <http://www.lenpravda.ru>. See also "Pikety Sukhenko narushayut konstitutsionnye prava i svobody peterburzhtsev," *NEWSpb.ru*, August 22, 2003, 09:00, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/148203>.

74. Boris Vishnevskii, "Osechka 'Avrory'," *Novaya gazeta v Sankt-Peterburge* 71 (September 25–28, 2003), 2–3.

75. Interview with Verbitskaya, in "Lyudmila Verbitskaya: 'Valentina Matvienko—ochen' tepley, neravnodushnyi chelovek'," *Valentina Matrvienko: polnomocnyi predstavitel' naroda*, September 3, 2003, 3.

76. Vladimir Kovalev, "Making Life Easier for Matvienko," *RFERL Russian Political Weekly* 3, no. 35, September 3, 2003.

77. "Putin podderzhivaet Matvienko na vyborakh gubernatora Peterburga i kritikuet deistvuyushchie gorodskie vlasti," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 2, 2003, 11:55, <http://www.newsrb.ru/allnews/151870>.

78. See "Dvizhenie 'za prav cheloveka' zhaluetsya v TsIK na deistviya prezidenta Valdimira Putina," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 3, 2003, 19:16, www.newsrb.ru/allnews/152701.

79. "Kandidat v gubernatory Peterburga Aleksei Timofeev: 'Prezident dolzhen podat' v otstavku,'" *NEWSpb.ru*, September 3, 2003, 16:23, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/152597>.

80. "Kandidat v gubernatory Peterburga Mikhail Amosov: 'Prezident razgovarival s Matvienko kak s uzhe izbrannym gubernatorom,'" *NEWSpb.ru*, September 3, 2003, 11:18, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/152340>.

81. "'Yabloko' rasmatrivaet vopros o zaprose v porkuraturu po itogam vstrechi Matvienko s Putinyem," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 3, 2003, 16:45, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/152614>.

82. "Kandidat na post glavy Peterburga Pyotr Shelishch ne soglasen s zayavleniem Anny Markovy," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 3, 2003, 12:43, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/152398>.

83. "Vstrecha s kandidatom na post glavy Peterburga Valintiny Matvienko ne nosila agitatsionnogo kharaktera, schitaet Krasnyanskii," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 11, 2003, 14:07, <http://www.newsrb.ru/allnews/155505/html>.

84. *RFERL Newsline* 7, no. 175 (September 15, 2003).

85. "Aleksandr Voloshin pribyl v Peterburg," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 10, 2003, 11:06, <http://www.nwesp.ru/allnews/154855>.

86. Similarly, Chechen presidential candidate and former Raion administrator Shamil Buraev filed a suit against Chechen administration head Akhmad-hadji Kadyrov, who was widely expected to win the October 5 presidential vote, for apparently violating Russian election law by broadcasting television footage of his meeting with President Putin to discuss compensation for Chechen families whose homes were destroyed in the war. Not surprisingly, the Chechen Supreme Court rejected the suit just days after the Petersburg

case, asserting that the broadcast was not unfair use of “administrative resources” in an election campaign. Andrei Riskin, “Iskom po-Kadyrovu,” *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, September 18, 2003, http://www.ng.ru/regions/2003-09-18/4_chechnia.html.

87. “Proektnyi komitet shtaba Valentiny Matvienko budet rabotat’ s rabochei gruppoi Prezidenta RF,” *NEWSpb.ru*, September 3, 2003, 18:02, <http://www.nwespb.ru/all-news/152671>.

88. He also noted that the MVD had impounded several typesetting enterprises for printing leaflets attacking Matvienko. “Valentina Matvienko i Boris Gryzlov obsudili voprosy podderzhki peterburgskoi militsii (Sankt-Peterburg),” *NEWSpb.ru*, September 16, 2003, 19:01, <http://www.newsspb.ru/allnews/157263>.

89. L. Avrukh and I. Skakovskii, “Peterburgu nuzhny novye lyudi I novaya gorodskaya politika,” *Pravoe delo: Sankt-Peterburg*, October 2003, 1. Indeed, there may have been more truth in this than Tomchin imagined, as rumors began to circulate in the city during the campaign between rounds that Putin might follow his second term as president with two terms in Smolny.

90. “General’nyi prokuror SZFO o kriminal’noi obstanovke v Peterburge i okruge,” *NEWSpb.ru*, August 15, 2003, 18:42, <http://www.newspb.ru/alnews/146136>.

91. Boris Vishnevskii, “Osechka ‘Avrory.’”

92. *Smena*, October 2, 2003, 6.

93. See the September 26 and 30 and October 1, 2003, editions of *Nevskoe vremya* as well as Yuliya Belomlinskaya, “Pesnya o Valentine,” *Peterburgskii chas pik* 40, (October 1–7, 2003), 3.

94. Andrei Milkin, “Zhenshchinam v politike mesto est’,” *Nevskoe vremya*, October 1, 2003, 1.

95. “Pervoe Naznachenie,” *Nevskoe vremya*, October 18, 2003, 1.

96. “Lyubov’ Yegorova: V Peterburge reshaetsya sud’ba strany,” *Nevskoe vremya*, September 25, 2003, 1.

97. Renat Grifulin, “Peterburg” vityaz’ na raspus’c,” *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, September 26, 2003, 2.

98. Vladimir Kovalev, “Journalists Let Officials Abuse Free Speech,” *The St. Petersburg Times*, September 26, 2003, 8.

99. “Zayavlenie peterburgskogo ‘Narodnogo kontrolya’,” *NEWSpb.ru*, August 15, 2003, 16:48, <http://www.newspb.ru/alnews/146072>.

100. Andrei Turganov, “Vremya pervykh,” *Valentina Matvienko: polnomocnyi predstavitel’ naroda*, September 3, 2003, 1.

101. Valerii Ostrovskii, “Pogoda v dome,” *Peterburgskii chas pik* 39 (September 24–30, 2003): 1; and Sergei Shelin, “Vtoroi tur: bor’ba za tekhn, kto ostalsya na obochine,” *Peterburgskii chas pik* 39 (September 24–30, 2003): 3.

102. “Yavku izbiratelei na vybory gubernatora Sankt-Peterburga ponizhali iskusstvenno—schitayut sotsiologi,” *Pravoe delo: Sankt-Peterburg*, October 2003, 2.

103. See Aleksei Nelidov, “Koshki-Myshki s elektoratom,” *Nevskoe vremya*, September 26, 2003, 3. For example, after the first round’s low voter turnout, the pro-Matvienko *Nevskoe vremya* ran an exposé on the lack of posters advertising the election or marking voting stations. “Nas ne zvali,” *Nevskoe vremya*, October 3, 2003, 1, 3. See also the letter published in “Priglasenie na vybory stoimost’yu 18 mln rublei,” *Nevskoe vremya*, September 26, 2003, 3. Also, *Nevskoe vremya* printed calls by the leaders of the city’s Orthodox, Muslim, and Jewish communities for voters to actively participate in the election’s second round. Aleksandr Volkov, “Vremya delat’ vybor,” *Nevskoe vremya*, October 1, 2003, 3.

104. Yevgenii Zubarev, “Vy slyshite: grokhochut chudaki?,” *Peterburgskii chas pik* 39 (September 24–30, 2003): 1.

105. “Okonchatel’nye rezul’taty golosovaniya na vyborakh gubernatora Sankt-Peterburga,” *NEWSpb.ru*, September 22, 2003, 19:59, <http://www.newsspb.ru/allnews/159280>.

106. “I.O. gubernatora Sankt-Peterburga Aleksandr Beglov: Esli by administrativnyi resurs byl, to vybory vyglyadely po-inomu,” *NEWSpb.ru*, September 22, 2003, 21:03,

<http://www.newsspb.ru/allnews/159305>.

107. Nikolai Petrov, "Kremlin Slip-Up an Omen for More Defeats," *The St. Petersburg Times*, September 26, 2003, 8.

108. "Vybory gubernatora v Sankt-Peterburge: obzor agitatsii i SMI poslednei nedeli, 15–19 sentyabrya 2003," *NEWSpb.ru*, September 22, 2003, 19:55, <http://www.newsspb.ru/allnews/159279>.

109. Interview with Sukhenko, in Natal'ya Gladysheva, "Banditov i slezhki ne bylo," *Delo* 37, (September 29, 2003), 2–3.

110. "Bol'shinstvo deputatov ZS opredelilis' s vyborami," *Nevskoe vremya*, September 27, 2003, 1.

111. Irina Prishedko, "Matvienko pokazalaelektoraty syna," *Smena*, October 6, 2003, 2.

112. Vishnevskii, "Osechka 'Avrory.'"

113. "Zubrin vozmushchyon klevetoi," *Smena*, October 6, 2003, 2.

114. Sergei Shelin, "No eto ee ne uteshilo," *Delo*, October 6, 2003, 6.

115. Veniamin Ladynin, "Ves ne vzyat. Zhdyom vtorogo podkhoda," *Pravoe delo: Sankt-Peterburg*, October 2003, 2.

116. In the neighboring Leningrad oblast's gubernatorial election held at the same time, the "against all" vote reached nearly 10 percent. The election was an exclusively intra-apparat affair with the former governor-apparatchik, Vadim Gustov, facing the incumbent governor-apparatchik, Valerii Serdyukov, and as in St. Petersburg, the outcome was never in doubt. *Izvestiya* referred to Leningrad "against all" protest vote as "a great surprise, if not a sensation." Sergei Nemirov, "Kandidat 'protiv vseh' nabirael ochki," *Izvestiya* (St. Petersburg), September 30, 2003, 9.

117. Markova's election campaign brochure—Mikhail Romadin, *Anna Markova* (St. Petersburg, 2003), 3.

118. Romadin, Anna Markova, 22. See also the excerpt from the brochure published as a campaign ad in the daily newspaper Sankt-Peterburgskie vedemosti, October 1, 2003, 3.