American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research

Russian Outlook

Fall 2005

Liberty above All:

Vladimir Ryzhkov and the Republican Party of Russia

By Leon Aron

Since its disastrous showing in the 2003 Duma elections, Russia's badly splintered and quarrelling democratic opposition has been trying to find ways to forge a common platform that would unite and energize its sizeable but apathetic and disillusioned constituency. The stakes are very high. The liberal (that is, in Russian political parlance, right-of-center, pro-market, pro-reform, and pro-Western) forces view the Putin Kremlin's turn to recentralization of national politics and the economy as a dead-end street, leading to creeping authoritarianism, rampant corruption, political crises, economic slowdown, and even disintegration. In this perspective, forging a united opposition strong enough to contest the Kremlin's control over the Duma in 2007 and the presidency in 2008 acquires particular urgency.

The Spirit of the Late 1980s

One of the more credible attempts to create such a political force was the national conference of the Republican Party of Russia (RPR) on July 2 in Moscow.

Founded in 1990, RPR is one of Russia's oldest liberal parties. Having failed repeatedly to gain a foothold in the Duma, it was largely forgotten. This year, however, the party was back in the headlines, as it overhauled its rules, adopted a new platform, and acquired new leadership.

That morning in the Rusotel Hotel on the outskirts of Moscow, where the Warsaw Highway crosses the Ring Road, it was also obvious that the renewal had gone far beyond a change of structure, management, or program planks. Rejuvenation, even exuberance, were in evidence everywhere: in the hall where the registration took place and in the cozy auditorium where three hundred delegates from fifty-eight of eighty-nine Russian provinces clapped, cheered, and booed, overflowing with the kind of energy and optimism I have not seen among the democrats since the late 1980s.

Most reminiscent of the revolution, however, was the critical abandon of the speeches that attacked the Kremlin and were webcast in real time to the party's website. Like the party program (platform) and the *Appeal to the Citizens of Russia*, distributed beforehand, the speeches were remarkable both for the scope and the no-holds-barred mercilessness of their condemnation.

Yes, the program stated, Russia has had a period of remarkable expansion since 1999, with both GDP and incomes increasing by a third and the number of people in poverty reduced by half. But the growth has largely been due to high oil prices. Outside the commodity sector, the rate of expansion has been modest and is falling behind that of China, India, and Brazil.[1]

The society is getting less and less of the "oil-soaked" economic pie. According to the RPR program, Russia is eighty-second in the world in per-capita GDP, and one-fifth of the country's population still lives in poverty. Corruption is among the most pervasive in the world. The

---

Leon Aron (laron@aei.org) is a resident scholar and the director of Russian studies at AEI. A shorter version of this essay was published in the September 26, 2005, issue of *The Weekly Standard*.

Soviet-era systems of education, health, housing, and utilities are threadbare, starved for funds and failing at the time when the demographic crisis from low birth rates and high male mortality is threatening Russia's very survival as a great nation. At the same time, the bloated and ineffective conscript armed forces and just-as-useless and completely crooked police are incapable of protecting the society against terrorism despite billions of rubles in additional funding.[2]

The concentrated ferocity of the criticism aside, virtually all the elements of this jeremiad, in one form or another, had been the staples of the Russian opposition and often the mainstream press for at least two years. It is the Republicans' explanation for these and many other ills, spelled out in section one of the platform, that stands out. Titled the "The Quagmire of Authoritarianism," this section ascribed "all the systemic failures of Russia in recent years" to the Kremlin's seeking a "monopoly of power."[3]

At the heart of the Republican Party's quarrel with the Putin government is the latter's undermining the fledgling democratic institutions and practices forged by the democratic revolution of the 1990s. Starting with the party's motto—"With People to a Free and Dignified Life!"—*svobodny* (free) and *svoboda*, meaning both "freedom" and "liberty" in Russian, are by far the most frequently used words in the Republican Party's documents. The program's title was *Free Individual, Honest Government, and Dignified Life*, and the conference's *Appeal to the Citizens of Russia* started with these words: "Citizens of Russia! We are guided by the conviction that as a strong, unified, and peaceful state, which competes successfully with other states, Russia can be preserved and developed only in freedom—political, economic, intellectual, and spiritual freedom!"[4]

The appeal, the program, and the speeches at the conference tied Russia's fate directly to the preservation (or abandonment) of democratic values, to the country's staying on "the path of freedom" it started on almost twenty years ago[5]—or veering off. It was a difficult road, the documents stated, and many mistakes have been made. Yet so long as Russia "moved toward freedom," there was a chance of creating a just society and dignified existence. "Today Russia is being forced off the path of freedom and thus deprived of its future! That is why we declare our principled non-acceptance of the present political regime and its social and economic policies."[6]

With its "fear and non-freedom, authoritarianism can result only in backwardness and poverty." The regime's apparent determination to create a "police-bureaucratic state" is driving Russia deeper and deeper into "shabbiness and injustice." That is why the struggle against such a state and for "freedom and democracy" is the "key condition of Russia's success."[7]

The muzzling of Russian television and the increasing pressure on the print media, the restrictions on demonstrations and referendums, and the abolition of the elections of the heads of the regional administrations (governors) have all resulted in the sharp weakening of "democratic control" over the government. The unelected bureaucrats are again in charge of the state. The state's attempts to regain control or ownership of some the most lucrative sectors of the economy threaten economic liberty and will lead to the diminution of investment and the tapering of economic growth. Protection of private property rights remains flimsy, while blackmail and extortion of private businesses by the increasingly uncontrollable bureaucrats are on the rise.[8]

From society's servant, the state again has become its master. A new unified democratic opposition party is needed to reverse the trend—a party that would "conduct a daily struggle for political and civil liberties of the citizens of Russia, [and] for a modern, competitive, market economy."[9] The first of the five "priority tasks" listed in the program is "the struggle for the democratization of Russia" and the return to "democratic control" over the state.[10]

Vladimir Ryzhkov: "Gorbachev's Child"

It would be hard to think of a more fitting leader for the reconstituted Russian Republicans than Vladimir Ryzhkov, a member of the party's political council. (To minimize the struggle for the top command and dampen the battle of the egos that has plagued the Russian democrats and badly damaged the movement, RPR dispensed with chairmen and presidents.)

Unlike the Moscow- or St. Petersburg-born or based liberal elite (but like Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin before him), Ryzhkov is a quintessential Russian provincial—a native of the Altaiskiy Krai, a province in southeastern Siberia that is located 1,860 miles east of Moscow and covers about 65,000 square miles (an area slightly larger than England). A graduate of the department of history of the Altai State University, he taught there and received his Ph.D. in 2000. Ryzhkov is married to a fellow history student, who became a lawyer. They have an eleven-year old daughter.

At thirty-nine, Ryzhkov is a bona fide member of a new generation of Russian politicians who came of political age in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He calls himself "Gorbachev's child."[11] Nineteen years old and a university student when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985, Ryzhkov quickly became a leader of the pro-democracy movement in the Altai. When after the failed hard-line coup in August 1991 Boris Yeltsin appointed new "heads of regional administrations" (governors), the governor of the Altai picked Ryzhkov, who was twenty-five, as his first deputy. Two years later, in 1993, Ryzhkov was elected to the first post-Soviet Duma from Altai's capital, Barnaul (population of 600,000), and was reelected in 1995, 1999, and 2003 by large margins. In 1997 the deputies elected him first deputy speaker of the Duma.

As his sole government award thus far, Ryzhkov proudly lists Yeltsin's Order No. 358 of July 1996 thanking Ryzhkov for his contribution to Yeltsin's victory over the Communist Gennady Zyuganov in that year's presidential election.

A handsome, trim man in wire-rimmed glasses, Ryzhkov likes what we might call extreme tourism. Last summer, with a few friends he trekked on horseback 150 miles north through Altai's virgin taiga to a local glacier, fording the rivers and subsisting on fish caught under ice and cooked over campfire. *The Journal of the Russian Geographic Society* published Ryzhkov's travel diary, which won the society's prize for the best travelogue.[12] (Ryzhkov reprised the journey this past March, when the temperatures reached minus forty degrees Fahrenheit.)

Ryzhkov's self-confessed "dream" is to "ensure the success of Russia's second attempt to become free."[13] In his keynote speech at the conference, Ryzhkov compared today's Russia to a Russian folktale giant (*bogatyr'*), who is bound hand and foot—bound, that is, by the corrupt and incompetent bureaucracy. "Our task," Ryzhkov said, "is to free the giant, give him a chance to breathe deeply and freely and allow him to march toward liberty and progress!"[14]

In Ryzhkov's view, the country is being led into a "historic dead-end" by authoritarianism, state capitalism, corrupt bureaucracy, and an oil-based economy. We were promised a "firm vertical of power," Ryzhkov said, but what we have today is a "wobbling nail of the president's popularity rating, on which the entire state is hanging helplessly."[15] The higher the regime climbs on the authoritarian scale, the more it distances itself from the people and the country; the more it fears free debate and free election, the deafer and blinder it becomes and the less capable it grows of solving the big and urgent problems the country is facing.[16]

The dignified life in Russia, Ryzhkov declared at the conference, was impossible without an honest government. In turn, the honest government can be ensured "only by democratic principles and the free individual."[17] The last line of his conference speech was: "Long live great democratic Russia!"[18]

A venue Ryzhkov chose for an interview with me was very much in character as well. Instead of a stuffy Duma office with a Cerberus of a secretary blocking the entrance to the boss's office, we met for breakfast in a slick chrome-and-glass Zen Café (a Moscow Starbucks-like chain), where Ryzhkov stops every morning before going to the Duma. Closed to cars and filled with bookstores and restaurants, the cobblestone street not far from the Red Square was indistinguishable that fine July morning from a quiet side road in Paris, Rome, or Berlin. I found Ryzhkov drinking a double espresso and reading the morning newspapers.

In private he was just as confident in Russia's ability to become fully and permanently democratic—and just as contemptuous of those whom he saw as blocking the path to freedom. Of the lies that the regime spreads in the West, Ryzhkov told me, one of the most pernicious is that the Russian people are somehow different from others and not ready for democracy. In this new "party line," Putin in fact appears more liberal than the majority of the Russians and thus the guarantor of stability. The only alternative to Putin is "browns," or fascist-nationalists. "Nonsense!" Ryzhkov said. "Our people are normal, no different from any other. They want to live in a normal country with liberty, democracy, and prosperity."

In Putin's proto-authoritarian centralization, Ryzhkov continued, the curtailment of freedom of speech, the harassment of civic organizations, and the erosion of local self-government are not only anti-constitutional—they are dangerous as well. Instead of "stability," Putin's policies have brought tension, destabilization, and record corruption. Nor did the much touted "vertical of power" help protect the country from terrorism and civil and ethnic strife. According to Ryzhkov, more people have died in the Northern Caucasus (Chechnya, Ingushetia, Karachaevo-Cherkessiya, and Northern Ossetia) under Putin than in the 1990s. The largest and most populous of "autonomous republics" of the North Caucasus, Dagestan (population 2,179,000) is virtually ungovernable today.

A Different Democratic Party

As a party-builder, Ryzhkov seems to have learned from the mistakes of the first generation of post-Soviet democrats. He wants his party built from the bottom up, with maximum autonomy for local chapters—instead of a Moscow-centric and top-heavy structure that would regulate local political alliances or campaign tactics and mirror the rivalry and incessant bickering of Moscow-based leaders, demoralizing and paralyzing pro-democracy and pro-reform voters and causing electoral losses.

The enormous promise of Ryzhkov's design is in taking into account Russia's huge economic, political, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Just like a unitary recentralized state, which Putin is attempting to recreate, a centralized, unitary party can only exist in today's Russia as a shaky and artificial government creation, kept alive by what the Russians call "administrative resources." Such is the case of the pro-government United Russia, which dominates the Duma. (The only other exception is the Communists, who, with their uniquely disciplined but actuarially challenged supporters, proudly carry on the almost century-old Leninist tradition of "democratic centralism.")

By contrast, the Republican Party's resolution, adopted at the conference, calls for maximum flexibility and the broadest possible electoral alliances with other democrats; it also allows the admission of everyone wishing to join, including the current members of other democratic parties.

I suggested to Ryzhkov that he appeared to be building a party of the American, rather than European, kind: loosely organized, diverse, with self-ruling local chapters, and coming together—with much ideological wrangling and the gnashing of teeth—only for national parliamentary and presidential votes. This is a very novel concept in Russian party-building, with its Bolshevik tradition of rigid uniformity and unconditional subjugation to the "center," copied by Lenin from the German Social-Democrats, whose iron discipline he so much admired. Yes, Ryzhkov replied, this was a different model—and precisely the sort of party he has in mind.

Tall Obstacles

Will Ryzhkov succeed in making the Republican Party into the kernel of a growing national democratic movement that would ensure a democratic presence in the new Duma in 2007 and at least a reasonable chance for the presidency in 2008?

The obstacles are very tall. Implementing Putin's September 2004 "suggestion" less than two weeks after the Republican conference, the Duma passed a law eliminating "single-mandate" (simple majority) electoral districts from which half of the Duma deputies had been elected until now. Instead, all the candidates must be elected by party lists. Yet the guidelines adopted in November of last year require parties to jump through such narrow and multiple hoops to ensure registration that they are almost entirely at the mercy of the local bureaucrats and the Kremlin-subservient Central Electoral Commission.

Thus, to qualify for the national ballot a political entity must have 50,000 registered members (as compared to 10,000 before), with 500 members in each of Russia's eighty-nine regions (with 100 before). This, in a country where until now fewer than 1 percent of the registered voters belonged to any party! The existing parties must re-register in compliance with the new laws by January 1, 2006, which means that the Republicans have to more than triple their current membership from 15,000 to 50,000 in five months.

The common practice of electoral blocs, which united two or more parties, has been outlawed, and the threshold for a party's entry into the Duma has been raised from 5 percent to 7 percent. Russian observers and media are now barred from witnessing the counting of the votes, while the representatives of international monitoring organizations will be admitted only by individual invitations.

The democrats' failure to enter the Duma following the December 2003 election was only in a small measure due to government manipulation. Both in public and in private they have long ago admitted that the defeat was due largely to their inability to end internecine battles, to forge common platforms and joint electoral lists, and to inspire their constituency.

In the 2003 election, almost 9 million pro-democracy voters who had voted for the liberal parties throughout 1990s stayed at home[19]—around 9 percent of the eligible electorate and at least 18 percent of the actual voters. Still, in a speech at the July 2 conference, a representative of Grigory Yavlinsky's Yabloko Party reprised his party's notorious obstreperousness, refusing to forge a common front with other democrats unless they publicly admit their past "mistakes" and join Yabloko. (At the time, Yaboloko's rating was 3 percent.)

Thus far, the continuing squabbles dampen the hope of the democrats to unite into one party and behind one presidential candidate. Last July, combined support for the democratic parties barely reached 6 to 7 percent, including 2 percent for the revived Republicans.[20] (Still unknown to most Russians, last summer Ryzhkov was the choice of only 4 percent of the respondents in a nationwide poll who were asked for whom they would vote if the presidential election were held that week.[21])

The Dilemma of the 1990s

In the end, however, the Russian democrats' key problem is not that of supply but of demand: if the politically active segments of society want democratic breakthroughs, the parties and leaders will appear in short order, as they did in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan in the past twelve months—or as the disgraced Yeltsin, drummed out of the Politburo a year and a half before, did in 1989. The main questions, then, are: where is Russia today in the revolution-reaction cycle, and in what direction do the major vectors of political and social dynamics point?

The search for the answers takes us to two fundamental and sustaining attributes of a democracy. First, the majority of the people should be able to tolerate the perennial antagonisms and uncertainties inherent in free political contests and free market competition: unnerving, annoying, seemingly corrosive and subversive, but in the end non-fatal and necessary for progress. Second, the people must have trust in their own ability to contain and manage these free-for-alls through self-rule.

Occasionally strained even in mature democracies, the strength of both features is daily tested in younger and poorer countries, which are more vulnerable to what might be called democratic fatigue. The weariness of raucous and often unscrupulous political fights and vagaries of new and rough capitalism breed and feed the mirage of achieving stability and wealth by restricting or even suspending political divisions and democratic procedures on the one hand, and by reducing the creative chaos of capitalism through state controls or even ownership.

After seven decades of totalitarianism, Russia has been tried especially hard on both scores. The Soviet state had owned everything and controlled everyone. It also daily bore down on and largely extirpated civil society with its local networks, where the habit of personal responsibility for one's neighborhood or professional or religious association is forged and becomes preparatory school for democratic participation on a national level. The result was a moral void. When the Soviet state collapsed, the social and economic breakdown and dislocation, which accompany every great revolution, were especially vivid, painful, and devastating in the political and economic systems sustained solely by external, state-devised, and state-enforced systems of sanctions and rewards.

Thus, contrary to many finger-wagging critics of post-communist Russia, the real alternatives before the Russians in the 1990s were never a "good," "clean," liberal democracy and capitalism (which, these same critics alleged, the Russians did not know how to build or deliberately spurned) on the one hand, and their vulgar and corrupt versions, including Marx's "primitive capitalism," on the other. Rather, given the Soviet legacy of universal devastation and degeneration, the choice in the first post-Soviet decade was between the latter—attendant as it was with an upsurge in inequality and the "state capture" by a dozen super-rich "oligarchs," who often deployed their media empires to destroy both their economic competitors and unyielding politicians—or a return to greater state control of economy and politics.

Recalling Thomas Hobbes's classic "state of nature," the choice was between many beasts roaming the wilderness—often trampling smaller animals underfoot but concerned mostly with maiming one another and thus leaving space for other critters to develop and take wing—and one giant, all-powerful beast: the king of the jungle, the state, the Kremlin, who imposes a semblance of order by scaring off other large predators—at the risk of gradually destroying most of the rest of the flora and fauna.

Throughout the 1990s the Russians stoically opted for economic and political liberty, no matter how unattractively incarnated: most notably in the April 1993 referendum, which supported the continuation of the free market reforms and, even more graphically, in the 1996 presidential contest between Boris Yeltsin and Gennady Zyuganov.

Giving One Beast a Chance?

Yet when the threat of the communist restoration receded, and following the trauma of the 1998 financial crisis and ruble devaluation, both the Russians' tolerance for conflict in politics and economy and their faith in self-rule and democratic liberties as a quick road to prosperity appeared to have been badly damaged. (As Isaiah Berlin wrote a long time ago: "Liberty is liberty, not equality or fairness or justice or culture or human happiness or quiet conscience."[22])

People were tired and ready to give the one beast a chance. As in every classic restoration, from Charles II on down, the longing for physical safety, political stability, and economic upturn seemed to have temporarily overshadowed other societal goals and aspirations. With his "managed democracy," Vladimir Putin was seen by millions as the man who could deliver the goods.

In 1994 and 1999 one of Russia's most authoritative independent pollsters, Yuri Levada, asked people whether there was more benefit or harm from multiparty elections, freedom of the press, and rapprochement with the West. In all three areas, the dynamics were remarkably similar: the support for all three arrangements was the highest in 1994—and plunged across-the-board in 1999. That year was the apparent nadir of democratic sentiments. It was then that the virtually unknown and recently appointed Prime Minister Vladimir Putin became so quickly and widely popular.[23]

Renewed Support for Democracy

Of late, however, the preference for largely illusory stability at the expense of real economic and political liberty appears to be receding. It was as if, having succumbed to the temptation of seemingly simple and quick quasi-authoritarian solutions to their country's still enormous problems, the Russian society may have been inoculated against such infatuations in the future.

For instance, asked this past July whether "Russia needs democracy," three times as many said "yes" than "no": 66 percent vs. 21 percent. (As usual, the differences among age groups were enormous: in the eighteen to twenty-four years old group, 80 percent responded positively and 13 percent negatively; among those fifty-five years and older the corresponding numbers were 52 percent and 30 percent, respectively.)[24]

While the electorate is still very apathetic (almost half of Russians said last June that they support no party), the "democrats" were the choice of 14 percent of the respondents—second only to communists (17 percent), and ahead not only of the nationalist "patriots" (4 percent), but also of the Kremlin-directed "party of power," United Russia (12 percent).[25]

The Russians also have been showing renewed appreciation of *specific* political and economic liberties—or, rather, the opposition to their curtailment. Thus, presented with the list of hypothetical authoritarian political and economic arrangements, a national sample's support for them never reached even one-third of those surveyed. For instance, only 27 percent agreed that mass media, political parties, and civic organizations "must be organized in the interests of security and unity of the country," and 19 percent approved the appointment by the president of all federal and regional leaders.

That the Kremlin should "control the work" of legislatures, courts, and mass media was agreeable to 16 percent of the respondents; giving the armed forces and state security organizations "a privileged position in the society," by 12 percent. The state control of enterprises was supported by less than one-third (29 percent). Finally, even as Vladimir Putin still enjoys an approval rate of around 70 percent, only 33 percent of Russians agreed that all state power must be concentrated in the president's hands, and only 29 percent thought that there should be no eight-year restriction on consecutive office holding.[26]

Similarly, the 2003 results of Levada's longitudinal study of attitudes toward freedom of the press, multiparty elections, and rapprochement with the West demonstrated a renewed allegiance to all three attributes, with their support approaching or exceeding the 1994 values. (Incidentally, Russians have not wavered in the support for the freedom of entrepreneurship: it climbed up consistently from 1994 to 2003, reaching a 63 percent, with only 19 percent against.)[27]

The Kremlin's Short-Term Vulnerabilities: Economy, Chechnya, and Federalism

In addition to the evolution in the "strategic," long-term, core attitudes toward democracy, the liberal opposition is likely to profit from the Kremlin's serious vulnerabilities in the economy, Chechnya, and federalism and regional autonomy. Thus, last summer the government's economic policy was found "unsatisfactory" by three-quarters of the respondents.[28] At the same time, two-thirds of the surveyed Russians were unhappy with "what is going on in the country,"[29] and a 44 percent plurality felt that Russia was going on in the wrong direction.[30]

Contrary to official claims, most Russians link terrorist attacks not to "international jihad" and the actions of unnamed "hostile forces," but to the Chechen resistance, their local allies, and the "mistaken" policies of Russian authorities.[31] Whereas the Kremlin rejects all and any negotiations with Chechnya, two-thirds of the Russians support peace talks.[32] Moreover, in direct contradiction to the government's claims of the successful pacification of the rebellious province, over half of those surveyed would either be "happy" about the separation of Chechnya from Russia, accept such development with equanimity, or, while against the separation in principle, would be resigned to it.[33] Less than a quarter of the respondents were prepared to continue the present policy of keeping Chechnya in Russia by all means, including military.[34]

The disjuncture between the public and the authorities is even greater as regards the liquidation of the nascent Russian federalism in favor of the Soviet-style recentralization. From the very beginning, almost two-thirds of Russians rejected the notion that the governors should be appointed rather than elected.[35] At first stunned by the Kremlin's assault on their prerogatives, the regional elites are becoming increasingly open about their dissatisfaction with the recentralization, and Russian political experts suggest that liberals have a good chance of capitalizing on regional disenchantment with the Kremlin.[36]

Freedom over "Stability"?

In late July, a leading national newspaper, *Izvestia*, carried the results of yet another poll: for the first time in recent years, the share of those in favor of "cardinal" economic and political reforms equaled those who "longed for stability" (both stood at around 44 percent).[37] Particularly intriguing was the fact that of all demographic groups in the survey, the advocacy of change was proportionately the largest (53 percent) among those who "made it": the post-Soviet middle class with per-capita family monthly incomes of over 5,000 rubles (about $178). The headline of this article was "Back to the 1990s. People Are Tired of Stability and Demand Change."

Only time will tell whether this conclusion is warranted or an instance of wishful thinking on the part of a liberal newspaper. Rooted in the "democratic fatigue" and in the dizzying novelty, insecurity, and economic dislocations of the last decade, the Putin restoration has deep roots. After six years of robust economic growth, the president's popularity is far from exhausted. Yet both the political and economic regimes that the Kremlin has created may be approaching the limits of their net utility and begin to generate political instability and economic slowdown, with elite and popular discontent also fueled by the curtailment of local self-rule and terrorism stemming from the continuing secessionist conflict in Chechnya.

In the meantime, Vladimir Ryzhkov and the Republican Party of Russia stand by, waiting to give the people a constructive liberal democratic alternative.

Notes

1. Republican Party of Russia (RPR), *Svobodny chelovek, chestnaya vlast', dostoynaya zhizn'. Programma Respublikanskoy partii Rossii* [Free individual, honest government, dignified life. The program of the Republican Party of Russia] July 2, 2005, 3–4, available at http://rprf.ru/about/doc/prog/.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 6–7.

4. Republican Party of Russia, *Obrashchenie k grazhdanam Rossia Respublikanskoy partii Rossia* [Appeal to the citizens of Russia by the Republican Party of Russia] July 2, 2005, 1, available at http://rprf.ru/about/doc/prog/.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 2.

8. RPR, *Svobodny chelovek*, 5, 6, and 27; RPR, *Obrashchenie k grazhdanam*, 1.

9. Republican Party of Russia, "Novaya demokarticheskaya partiya: 6 shagov k edinstvu i pobede" [A new democratic party: 6 steps toward unity and victory] resolution adopted at the Conference of the Republican Party of Russia, July 2, 2005.

10. RPR, *Svobodny chelovek*, 14.

11. Sergei Tkachuk, "Vladimir Ryzhkov: 'Ya ochen' temperamentnyi chelovek" [Vladimir Ryzhkov: "I am a very temperamental man"] *Novye Izvestiya*, May 20, 2005, available at http://www.newizv.ru/news/2005-05-20/24614/.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Vladmir Ryzhkov, "Svobodny chelovek, chestnaya vlast', dostoynaya zhizn" [Free individual, honest government, dignified life] speech at the Republican Party conference, July 2, 2005, 4.

15. Ibid., 2.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., 4.

18. Ibid.

19. Alexei Sitnikov, "Giving Voters More than Meetings," *Moscow Times*, May 12, 2005, available at http://www.moscowtimes.ru/stories/2005/05/12/005.html.

20. Levada Center, "Sotsial'no-politicheskaya situatsiya v Rossii v iune 2005 goda" [Social and political situation in Russia in June 2005] July 4, 2005, available through www.levada.ru (accessed on July 28, 2005).

21. Ibid.

22. Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," *Four Essays on Liberty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 125.

23. Yuri Levada, "Dvadsat' let spustya: perestroika v obshchestvennom mnenii if v obshchestvennoy zhizni" [Twenty years later: perestroika in public opinion and in the life of society] *Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya* no. 2 (March–April 2005): 11.

24. Levada Center, "Sotsial'no-politicheskaya."

25. Levada Center, "Simpatii politicheskim silam" [Support for political movements] July 7, 2005, available through www.levada.ru (accessed on July 28, 2005).

26. Levada Center, "Sotsial'no-politicheskaya."

27. Levada Center, "Dvadsat' let spustya," 11.

28. Gazeta, "Rossia blagopoluchna na 3%" [Russia is 3 percent well] August 3, 2005, available through www.gazeta.ru (accessed on August 5, 2005).

29. Public Opinion Foundation, "Rossiya: napravlenie razvitiya" [Russia: the direction of development] national poll, July 9–10, 2005, available through www.fom.ru. In the same survey, 29 percent of the polled thought that the country was moving in the right direction.

30. Gazeta, "Rossia blagopoluchna na 3%."

31. Levada Center, "Mirovoe soobshchestvo protiv terrorizma" [The world community against terrorism] July 20, 2005, available through www.levada.ru (accessed on July 28, 2005).

32. Levada Center, "Sotsial'no-politicheskaya."

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Leon Aron, "Putin's Risks," *Russian Outlook*, Winter 2005, 4, available at www.aei.org/publication21807.

36. See, for example, Andrey Il'nitskiy, "Napravo s levoy nogi . . ." [To the right, beginning with the left foot . . .] *Izvestia*, August, 4, 2005, available through www.izvestia.ru (accessed on August 3, 2005).

37. *Izvestia*, "Nazad v 1990'e. Rossiyane ustali ot stabili'nosty i trebuyut peremen" [Back to the 1990s. People are tired of stability and demand change] July 27, 2005, available through www.izvestiya.ru (accessed on August 3, 2005).