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**TITLE: PRESIDENTIAL POWER IN RUSSIA:
THE MAKING OF THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENCY**

AUTHOR: EUGENE HUSKEY, Stetson University

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1755 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

NCSEER NOTE

This report is an advance copy of Chapter 2 of a book manuscript currently in preparation, and is for discussion purposes only. It is being distributed by the Council at this time with the author's permission because of its timeliness. It traces the evolution of the presidency, and the forces and individuals who shaped it, from the preparation of the 1936 Constitution to the 1996 presidential election. Chapter 3, which addresses the structure and functions of the presidential apparatus, will follow shortly.

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CONTRACTOR:	Stetson University
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	Eugene Huskey
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper addresses two questions: why and how were institutional choices made in Soviet and post-Soviet politics, and what were the implications of these choices for the demise of the USSR and the formation of the Russian Federation.

For seven decades, the Soviet Union resisted importing Western institutional models, choosing instead to create a distinctive form of party-state rule. Gorbachev finally abandoned this institutional exceptionalism at the end of the 1980s. Frustrated by the political inertia within the ruling Communist Party, he sought an institutional base elsewhere, first as speaker in the country's newly invigorated parliament, and ultimately as the Soviet Union's indirectly elected president. Although the Soviet Union established a presidency, it did not create a presidential system in the American sense. Like the French semi-presidential model, the new Soviet system of government supported two executive leaders, a president and a prime minister.

If the most important institutional choice was the introduction of semi-presidentialism, there were numerous corollary decisions that gave Soviet--and later Russian--semi-presidentialism its particular shape. These defining choices, made primarily in 1990-1991 and then again at the end of 1993, related to four issues: the powers of the presidency vis-a-vis the legislature; the relations of president and prime minister; the method of electing the president; and the role of presidencies in center-periphery relations. The decision to retain the Congress of People's Deputies in the constitutional reforms of 1990 and 1991 contributed significantly to the weakness of the Gorbachev presidency and to the depth of executive-legislative tensions in the first two years of the Yeltsin administration. The Congress was not a normal semi-presidential legislature, which could be dissolved by the president, but rather a constituent assembly of sorts with claims to institutional supremacy.

Gorbachev's fateful concessions to the defenders of the Congress were paralleled by his willingness to extend the semi-presidential model from Moscow to the republics. In the last half of 1990, in a "demonstration effect" encouraged by Moscow, the 15 Soviet republics hurried to adopt for themselves the institutional arrangements crafted and introduced in the center. Few understood at the time the dangers this concession posed to the integrity of the Union. Newly-established republican presidencies quickly became important symbols of the nascent political communities' authority, and contributed mightily to the demise of the USSR.

The Soviet institutional inheritance created a structure of political incentives that bred and deepened conflict in Russia's transition from communist rule. After the violent resolution of Russia's constitutional impasse in the fall of 1993, Boris Yeltsin sought to introduce new institutional arrangements that would eliminate the possibility of a new political stalemate. Formally, the constitution of 1993 gave the president broad powers, akin to those wielded by strong presidents in

Latin America's "delegative democracies." But there were numerous impediments to this form of rule in Russia. Despite the obvious institutional advantages enjoyed by Yeltsin, political decisions resulted from a complex interplay of forces, among which were the vigor and skill of presidential leadership, the pressures of organized economic interests, and shifting divisions in the parliament, Government, and even the presidential apparatus itself. In short, neither the state nor society complied readily with the commands of the president, thus forcing Yeltsin into frequent concessions and other political maneuvers to maintain his authority. The latest of these was the appointment of General Lebed as secretary of the Security Council in the runup to the second round of the presidential election.

[Eugene Huskey, Presidential Power in Russia--manuscript in preparation. Draft for discussion only.]

CHAPTER TWO THE MAKING OF THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENCY

Presidencies--like parties--are relative newcomers to politics. Once introduced in the American Constitution of 1789, however, this executive post spread rapidly to other continents. With the collapse of monarchies and empires during the last two hundred years, the presidency has emerged as the industry standard for republican heads of state, whatever the particular powers of their office. By the last quarter of the twentieth century, two-thirds of the world's 200 states had presidencies. One of the exceptions was the Soviet Union.

If Russia's monarchical tradition ensured the absence of a presidency in the pre-revolutionary era, the Communists' aversion to Western imports prevented its adoption throughout most of the twentieth century. Especially in the first two decades after the October Revolution of 1917, Bolshevik authorities explicitly rejected both the political inheritance of the old regime and the institutional models of the West. Traditional ministries became commissariats, and the legislature--a mere "talking shop," in Lenin's phrase--gave way to soviet parliamentarism, where executive and legislative functions would ultimately be fused in a single institution.¹ Just as the new communist order promised to overcome the tensions between city and country and mental and manual labor, so a soviet parliament was supposed to transcend the traditional distinctions between executive and legislative authority. Political practice, of course, proved otherwise. By the mid-1920s, a chief executive had emerged in the Soviet Union. However, it was not a president or prime minister but the general secretary of the Communist Party, a novelty in political history.

The insistence on institutional exceptionalism began to fade, however, in the latter half of the 1930s, when Stalin launched a broad-based retreat from the utopian ideals of the revolution. During the framing of the 1936 Constitution, the idea of a Soviet presidency was broached for the first time. The proposal envisioned the direct election of the USSR's formal head of state, who was chair of the national parliament, the Supreme Soviet. Stalin quickly dismissed the idea as "undesirable," no doubt recognizing that a state leader with a direct national mandate, even one gained through controlled elections, would be a formidable rival for the general secretary.²

Calls for a Soviet presidency resurfaced in the early 1960s, again in connection with the drafting of a new constitution. This time the proposal came from aides close to Khrushchev, among them Fedor Burlatskii, who argued that the general secretary should combine his party post with the state office of president. But already doubling as prime minister, the highest ranking state official of the day, General Secretary Khrushchev saw little need to create a competing executive office at the apex of the Soviet state.³

During the two decades that separated the ouster of Khrushchev from the death of Konstantin Chernenko, the idea of a Soviet presidency remained alive among a small circle of advisors in the Communist Party, whose understanding of Western political systems far exceeded that of their bosses. Shortly after Mikhail Gorbachev succeeded Chernenko in March 1985, he received a memorandum from two of his closest advisors, Vadim Medvedev and Georgii Shakhnazarov, who set out the establishment of a presidency as one option in a package of political reforms.⁴ In the summer of 1988, in discussions preceding the pathbreaking XIX Communist Party Conference, Fedor Burlatskii--now a Gorbachev confidant--revived his proposal to create the office of president in the USSR. The Conference itself laid the groundwork for a national presidency by calling for a single, directly elected governor to supersede the separate posts of party and state leader in each region. Then in early 1989, several opponents of Communist rule, including the human rights activist, Andrei Sakharov, proposed the introduction of a presidency as a way of limiting the power of the Communist Party.⁵

Through at least October 1989, however, Gorbachev resisted attempts to establish a Soviet presidency. He remained committed to refining, rather than overturning, institutional arrangements in Moscow, aware that, in Soviet conditions, the creation of a presidency would be viewed by many as the first step toward a personal dictatorship.⁶ Yet in March 1990, Gorbachev convinced the Congress of People's Deputies Soviet to amend the constitution and install him as the country's first president. What led to this dramatic turnaround?

Put simply, Gorbachev recognized that existing instruments of rule limited his ability to address the country's mounting crises. Following a Politburo meeting in February 1988, at which Nina Andreeva's conservative manifesto was discussed, Gorbachev had confided to one of his aides: "Now I finally realize with whom I'm dealing. With these people one won't make perestroika."⁷ Disillusioned with the Communist Party as a vehicle of reform, the General Secretary had begun shifting power to state institutions at the end of 1988. Constitutional amendments introduced at that time led to the country's first competitive elections in March 1989 and the transformation of the moribund Soviet parliament into a lively, two-tiered legislature, comprised of a Congress of People's Deputies and a smaller Supreme Soviet--the "working parliament," which was elected by the Congress.⁸

With the opening session of the new Congress of People's Deputies in May 1989, the General Secretary transferred his primary base of operations to the legislature, where he assumed the post of chair. At this point, as Georgii Shakhnazarov observed, Gorbachev began to spend more time in the Kremlin [parliamentary and Government headquarters] than on Old Square [party headquarters].⁹ But the parliament proved little more cooperative, and vastly more time-consuming, than the party. In his new post, Gorbachev had to formulate policy, manage a growing parliamentary bureaucracy, and direct floor debate, all the while maintaining his Communist Party office. It was an unworkable amalgam. Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov estimated that parliamentary duties occupied a third of his

ministers' time.¹⁰ Parliament also began to insist on direct involvement in the implementation of policy, that is, it sought to revive the original idea of soviet parliamentarism.¹¹ Moreover, an essential component of efficient parliamentarism in any country, a loyal and stable legislative majority, was missing. It was often unclear which faction presented the greater liability to Gorbachev: the conservative Communist majority, procedurally sycophantic but hostile to substantive change, or the vocal and independent-minded minority, which continually criticized the pace and depth of reforms.¹²

Frustrated in his role as speaker, Gorbachev authorized the design of a new political architecture barely six months into the life of the parliament. In his words, "we are initiating new things in the economy and in politics. But without an executive mechanism we cannot achieve these initiatives. If there is no balance, we'll remain at the initial stage of meetings....I think the main source of this acceleration is a strong executive mechanism."¹³ Gorbachev understood, then, that the Soviet Union required a strong executive counterweight to a resurgent parliament and to an obstructionist party apparatus. The goal was to create for the leader a more dignified and powerful constitutional office distinct from the legislature, and in so doing to disarm the democratic opposition, which itself had proposed the establishment of a presidency in the spring of 1989.¹⁴ But Gorbachev had little knowledge of, or interest in, the intricacies of institutional design. Responsibility for framing the Soviet presidency fell, therefore, to a small team of advisors who prepared the working drafts on the new institution.

The first phase in the creation of a presidency, which lasted throughout much of December 1989 and January 1990, was not a mere technical exercise but a deeply political struggle among Gorbachev's aides and associates over the future structure of power in the Soviet Union. Not all agreed even with the idea of a presidency. Anatolii Lukianov, a protege of Gorbachev since their law school days, sought to defend his own creation, the Congress of People's Deputies, against an institution--the presidency--that he regarded as alien to the collegial traditions of Russia and the Soviet Union.¹⁵

Once the necessary political and legal documents had been prepared by his advisors, Gorbachev sought the Politburo's approval for the establishment of the presidency on 19 January 1990. During this "stormy" Politburo session, only Yegor Ligachev, the party's second secretary, dared to oppose the plan for a presidency. Ligachev argued vigorously that a Soviet presidency would undermine the already declining role of the Communist Party and its Politburo.¹⁶ Habits of loyalty died hard, however, and the force of logic wielded by Ligachev was no match for the personal authority of the general secretary. Party rule was falling victim to party discipline.

With the approval of the Politburo, the proposal for the creation of a Soviet presidency moved into its first public forum, the Supreme Soviet, which adopted a resolution in support of the institution on 7 February. In the two weeks that followed, the shape of the Soviet presidency was

debated and refined in a series of meetings that brought together Gorbachev, his aides and associates, and the most active members of the Supreme Soviet, including Anatolii Sobchak, Sergei Stankevich, and Andrei Sakharov.¹⁷ Bearing the concessions needed to gain the support of the parliament and the leaders of the country's fifteen republics, the "Law on Instituting the Post of President" was adopted overwhelmingly by the Congress of People's Deputies on March 6, 1995. Ten days later, against only token opposition, the Congress elected Mikhail Gorbachev the first president of the Soviet Union.¹⁸ He took the oath of office on 28 May 1990.

In little more than three months, amid deliberations that were often hurried and haphazard, the Soviet political elite had altered fundamentally the country's institutional arrangements. To understand what was at stake in this exercise, one only needs to review the institutional choices made by those in power. The first, and most momentous, decision was to select a semi-presidential model of government. Semi-presidentialism represented a compromise between an American-style presidency, favored by several of Gorbachev's closest advisors, and soviet parliamentarism, defended by Anatolii Lukianov. Modelled on French institutional arrangements, it retained both a prime minister and a president.¹⁹

Semi-presidentialism had numerous advantages for Gorbachev personally and for a regime in transition from one-party rule.²⁰ Like parliamentarism, semi-presidentialism separates the posts of head of state (president) and head of government (prime minister). But unlike parliamentarism, where the head of state is a mere figurehead, semi-presidentialism grants the president broad powers. With its dual executive, semi-presidentialism elevated the Soviet president above the unpleasant business of managing a vast and inefficient bureaucracy, which was left to the prime minister. In semi-presidentialism, the prime minister, and not the president, becomes the whipping boy for popular discontent. Removed from daily politics, the president could aspire to the majesty of an "enlightened monarch."²¹ A Soviet presidency seemed to promise a new source of legitimacy for a regime with a failing ideology and institutions.

Semi-presidentialism was also the least disruptive alternative to the existing institutional order. A parliament and a Government, headed by a prime minister, were already in place. The new arrangements required only the addition of a small presidential bureaucracy. With the decline of Communist rule, the presidency was a logical successor to the party's Central Committee apparatus. Indeed, at the end of the Soviet era, according to Georgii Shakhnazarov, the presidency "gradually began to take over the Central Committee apparatus."²² A less charitable observer, Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, called the apparatuses of the presidency and the Central Committee "siamese twins."²³

If officials outside of Gorbachev's immediate entourage had little direct influence on the selection of semi-presidentialism as the model of government, many were involved in the institutional choices that gave Soviet semi-presidentialism its distinctive shape. There were defining choices to be

made in four areas: the powers of the presidency vis-a-vis the legislature; the relations of president and prime minister; the method of electing the president; and the role of presidencies in center-periphery relations. The debate over executive-legislative relations centered on the future of the Congress of People's Deputies. The Congress functioned in some respects like a constituent assembly, which assumes state sovereignty temporarily in order to lay the constitutional foundations of a new political order. But in the Soviet Union, this outsized institution--both in terms of its membership and authority--possessed a permanent mandate. It was at once an arbiter of constitutional issues, an electoral college for the Supreme Soviet, and the highest legislative assembly, whose laws could not be challenged.

Sharing the political stage with the Congress of People's Deputies would limit severely the authority of a Soviet president. But Gorbachev refused to heed the advice of aides who sought to restrict the powers of the Congress, or to abolish the institution altogether. In most semi-presidential systems, for example, the president has the power to dissolve the parliament. The deputies' fear of dissolution can, at crucial moments, afford the executive important leverage over a recalcitrant parliament. But in Soviet semi-presidentialism, the fate of the Supreme Soviet was in the hands of the Congress. The president could only propose to the Congress that it dissolve the Supreme Soviet, a policy that Gorbachev believed would discourage the rise of an authoritarian executive.²⁴ The legislation on the presidency also kept in place the potentially powerful chairmanship of the Congress, a post assumed by the champion of soviet parliamentarism, Anatolii Lukianov. By retaining a Congress of People's Deputies with its full array of powers, Gorbachev and the Soviet elite created an institutional regime that invited executive-legislative stalemate in the USSR and, through inheritance, in post-Soviet Russia.

Perhaps the greatest danger posed by semi-presidentialism in any country is a divided executive.²⁵ Although the president enjoys a fixed term of office, the prime minister serves at the pleasure of the parliament. The potential arises, therefore, for the parliament to insist on a prime minister with political views unlike those of the president. When this occurs, the president and prime minister are forced to "cohabit," to use the French term, an awkward arrangement that leads inevitably to tensions over the distribution of power between the two executive leaders. Although working papers prepared for Gorbachev and his staff alerted them to the problems of cohabitation under French semi-presidentialism,²⁶ the Soviet leader appears to have given little thought to the politics of a dual executive, apparently assuming that he would retain indefinitely the support of the parliament, and hence the prime minister.

On the question of intra-executive relations generally, Gorbachev seemed content with legislative provisions that assured his right to propose the appointment and resignation of the prime minister to the parliament, to consult with the prime minister on the appointment of members of the Government, and to annul Government directives. From discussions with deputies in the weeks

before the creation of the presidency, it is clear that Gorbachev expected the prime minister to function much as he had throughout the Soviet era, that is to oversee the economy and, in Gorbachev's own words, to stay out of "politics."²⁷ This view failed to recognize, however, that the invigoration of parliament had raised the profile, and the potential power, of the prime minister. Moreover, it betrayed a naive belief that economic management, and public administration generally, could be reduced to a technical task.

The lack of precision and coherence in the new institutional arrangements reflected, in part, the political constraints within which Gorbachev and his aides operated. Redesigning institutions on the march naturally prompted resistance from those forces in the party, the parliament, and the republics that felt threatened by a strong presidency. Constitutional ambiguity and compromise helped to allay these fears. But the Soviet Union's new and confusing political system was also a product of Gorbachev's leadership style.²⁸ For Gorbachev, governing was less about carefully-crafted organizations and rules than creating solutions through negotiation. He saw the president operating above the fray of daily politics and administration in a realm that transcended the traditional branches of government. He remarked to deputies in the weeks before becoming president that he would be a mediator between executive and legislature.²⁹ Traditional lines of authority meant little to him. Rather than disciplining the prime minister and his Government directly, Gorbachev proposed to do so through the Congress. His was the approach of an international statesman and not a chief executive officer.

On some institutional questions, of course, Gorbachev had clear preferences. One of these was electoral rules. Few subjects excited more intense debate, both within Gorbachev's entourage and among the country's elite, than the method of electing the Soviet president. The choice was between some form of direct election by the population³⁰ and indirect election by the Congress of People's Deputies. Each option presented obvious risks and rewards to Gorbachev. Indirect election assured Gorbachev's ascent to the presidency and a rapid, peaceful transition to the new institutional regime. But it also deprived the president of a popular mandate, and in so doing promised to solidify the authority of the Congress of People's Deputies, which would serve as electoral college for both parliament and president. Unwilling to risk personal defeat or the strains that a competitive election campaign would place on the nation, Gorbachev insisted that the Congress select the first Soviet president, with subsequent presidential elections to be decided by direct popular vote.³¹ The Congress agreed.

Virtually every political decision made in the last two years of Soviet rule was viewed through the prism of deteriorating relations between the center and the 15 republics. The creation of a Soviet presidency was no exception. As pressures mounted in 1989 and 1990 for greater cultural, linguistic, and political autonomy, the authority of central party institutions declined, especially in the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. By shifting his political base to a state presidency,

Gorbachev distanced himself from an increasingly discredited central party apparatus. Moreover, as president, rather than the leader of a collegial Politburo, he acquired greater freedom of maneuver in his dealings with republican leaders. He appeared to believe that his diplomatic skills, used with such success in the international arena, offered the best hope for resolving the growing conflict between the center and periphery in Soviet politics. But in case the politics of negotiation failed, the law on the presidency gave Gorbachev the authority to introduce a state of emergency or direct presidential rule in the republics "in the interests of safeguarding the security of citizens of the USSR."³²

To overcome the objections of some republican leaders to the establishment of a presidency, Gorbachev agreed to grant them membership in a new body, the Federation Council, which would review policies on inter-ethnic and inter-republican relations. But the more fateful concession was the extension of the semi-presidential model to republican governments. In the last half of 1990, in a "demonstration effect" encouraged by Moscow, the 15 Soviet republics hurried to adopt the institutional arrangements crafted and introduced in the center.³³ Few understood at the time the dangers this concession posed to the integrity of the Union.³⁴ Newly-established republican presidencies quickly became important symbols of nascent political communities, especially in cases where the local leader was willing to challenge the center. And just as in the center, presidents in many republics began to decouple themselves from the Communist Party, which had served to integrate the diverse peoples and territories of the Soviet Union. If before 1990, republican leaders--the Communist Party first secretaries--made their careers by proving their loyalty to Moscow, after the introduction of semi-presidentialism they ensured their political future by appealing to republican interests. Unlike the Communist Party of old, the fledgling Soviet presidency had neither the administrative nor ideological authority to impose its will on the republics. There was no longer a vertical command structure capable of ensuring the discipline of local leaders.³⁵

The introduction of direct elections for republican presidents in 1991 further undermined Moscow's authority. If the center still retained some ability to influence the actions of republican deputies, who had voted for presidents in the indirect elections of 1990, it carried little weight with ordinary voters. Indeed, in many republics the successful candidates for president ran against the center. The most dramatic example of this was in the Ukraine, where a week before the election of 9 December 1991, the republican leader and presidential candidate, Viktor Kravchuk, encouraged his Slavic neighbors, Russia and Belarus', to sign an agreement--the Belovezhkii accords--that declared their independence from the Soviet Union.

To understand the collapse of the USSR, then, one must not stop at the traditional contextual explanations, such as a lagging economy, a crisis of identity and belief, and a more demanding population.³⁶ The institutional choices made at the end of the Soviet era recast the structure of incentives in ways that rewarded those favoring disintegration. Although there was much in Russian and Soviet history--and in the demands of the moment--to recommend semi-presidentialism, there

were other options, including the maintenance of traditional party rule, that would have produced very different political outcomes, especially over the short term. It was the will of a small group of men to create a presidency constrained by a mammoth Congress and then to introduce presidencies in the republics, decisions that had momentous consequences for the Soviet Union and the world. Established in part to save the Union, the presidency contributed mightily to the USSR's demise.

The Gorbachev Presidency

The history of the Soviet presidency was brief and crisis-ridden. After only a few months in the office, Gorbachev realized that the presidency--like his former post of Congress chairman--lacked the powers needed to govern in an era of transition. He turned again, therefore, to the Congress to revise the institutional rules, this time receiving the right as president to introduce laws on economic reform, subject only to a vaguely-defined legislative oversight. This shift of legislative authority came in the fall of 1990, at a time when the prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, believed that the country had become ungovernable. The economic half-measures of the late 1980s had broken the old system without creating a new one. In these conditions, Ryzhkov later lamented, it was impossible even to form a budget.³⁷ To overcome this financial impasse, Gorbachev considered using his newly-granted powers to introduce one of several competing economic reform packages--such as the 500 days program of economists Grigorii Yavlinskii and Konstantin Shatalin. But to the chagrin of many, especially the radical reformers, Gorbachev refused to commit himself and the country to a clear vision of the economic future. Shortly after this shift of powers from the legislature to the president, Gorbachev realigned executive politics in a bid to strengthen the presidency further. When replacing Ryzhkov with Valentin Pavlov, the finance minister, in December 1990, he made the new prime minister head of a presidential Cabinet of Ministers, which succeeded the Council of Ministers, or Government, a mainstay of Russian institutional life since 1861. To the uninitiated, this measure may seem little more than a change in nomenclature. But the intention was to reduce the autonomy and visibility of the prime minister, as well as his apparatus, thereby shifting Soviet politics in the direction of American-style presidentialism.³⁸ There is no evidence, however, that the formal attachment of the Cabinet of Ministers to the presidency reduced the size of the Government or facilitated presidential control of the prime minister or the social and economic ministers who labored under him. On the contrary, Prime Minister Pavlov proved to be one of the least loyal members of the Soviet executive in 1991. After failing in an attempt to convince the Congress to expand the powers of the prime minister's office in June, he joined the conspiracy in August that sought to oust Gorbachev from the presidency and restore the traditional rules of Soviet politics.

The tensions between president and prime minister sprang from a division of executive labor inherent in semi-presidentialism and in Soviet institutional traditions. In both the French model and earlier Soviet experience, the prime minister assumed direct responsibility for social and economic

policy while the president, or general secretary before him, played the leading role in matters of national security. This pattern rewarded Gorbachev's passion for foreign affairs and his aversion to budgets. Under these institutional arrangements Gorbachev was free to reach strategic compromises, whether with foreign dignitaries or with the miners and other groups within the USSR. It then fell to the prime minister to make good on the often exaggerated promises of a president or general secretary.³⁹

In important respects, then, the Soviet president functioned much as the general secretary had in the old institutional regime. The widely-held view that "the party rules but does not govern" never accurately captured the separation of executive responsibilities that had characterized the Soviet political system. On a wide range of issues, from defense and foreign affairs to the media and agriculture, the general secretary and the Communist Party--not the prime minister and the Government--governed directly. Although formally members of the Government, the heads of such institutions as the KGB, the defense ministry, and the foreign ministry rarely, if ever, attended its meetings. They answered directly, and exclusively, to the general secretary and the party.⁴⁰ In this sense, the introduction of semi-presidentialism merely transferred to the president the executive functions of the general secretary. That the prime minister's relations with the president never matched those with the general secretary reflected the decline of a shared ideology among the ruling elite, the contentiousness of the policies of perestroika, and the abandonment of collegial forums like the Politburo, where the prime minister had been able to remain abreast of developments throughout the executive even if he did not always influence them.

Consolidating the power of the presidency required the building of an apparatus as well as redefining relations with the prime minister and parliament. At first, a number of Gorbachev's aides in the general secretary's office doubled as presidential advisors. Valerii Boldin, for example, was at once chief of staff to Gorbachev as general secretary and as president, maintaining offices in the Kremlin and Old Square. But Gorbachev gradually created a separate presidential staff in the Kremlin, having removed the prime minister and his apparatus from the governing fortress under the pretext of office renovation.⁴¹

The institutional presidency under Gorbachev was, at best, a work in progress. Although he received carefully prepared plans from aides for the organization of the Soviet presidency, Gorbachev preferred to improvise--creating, merging, renaming, or abolishing offices as the mood and the political moment dictated. Initially, he viewed the Presidential Council, selected to represent diverse voices in the bureaucracy and society, as a substitute for the Politburo. But he quickly tired of the frankness of its members and allowed it to pass into oblivion after three or four sessions.⁴² The presidency also contained a Security Council and a Federation Council, though they too met infrequently and had little influence on the shaping of presidential policy.

If there was a clearly discernible pattern in the development of a Soviet presidential bureaucracy, it was the extensive borrowing of personnel and methods of operation from the apparatus of the Communist Party Central Committee. That Gorbachev recruited most of his presidential staff from among loyal and respected party workers should come as little surprise. While the Central Committee apparatus hired plenty of party hacks, who began quietly "migrating" to the presidency,⁴³ it also employed some of the brightest and most politically astute personnel available in the Soviet Union. What was less predictable was Gorbachev's willingness to replicate party practices in the presidency. In some cases, this represented little more than a continuation of longstanding political rituals. As one aide observed, the meetings of the Presidential Council were eerily similar to those of the Politburo: Gorbachev in the same seat, in the same room, with many of the same people, and with the same refreshments served at familiar intervals.⁴⁴ But more important was Gorbachev's decision to establish a large presidential bureaucracy that would oversee, and in many instances duplicate, the prime minister's apparatus.

Unlike in France, where the president maintains a staff of only a few dozen personal advisors, in the Soviet Union the president insisted on a fully-developed executive management team of his own. Just as the party had departments that shadowed and supervised Government ministries, so the Soviet presidency began to create its own offices with responsibility for overseeing each major policy area. By August 1991, a growing presidential bureaucracy of 400 persons operated alongside a Government apparatus of some 2000 persons.⁴⁵ Instead of reforming existing institutions, and governing through them, he was creating parallel bodies designed to check the behavior of an ill-disciplined bureaucracy.

The development of the presidential apparatus, however, was glacially slow and largely rudderless, owing to the press of events and Gorbachev's inattention to administrative detail. His foreign policy advisor, A.S. Cherniaev, complained that Gorbachev spent more time preparing his inaugural speech than attending to the demands of the institutional transition.⁴⁶ Rather than building institutions, Gorbachev was increasingly dedicated to hammering out agreements with other members of the ruling elite, most notably the leaders of republics. By the end of 1990, he was less concerned with perfecting state institutions than with salvaging the state itself. The goal was to lead a process of negotiations between elites that would produce pacts capable of sustaining a viable center in Soviet politics. Such extra-constitutional agreements might then give rise to new formal rules and institutional arrangements. It was an approach common to regimes making the transition from authoritarian rule.⁴⁷

The most important negotiations surrounded the struggle between center and republics, which dominated politics in the twilight of Soviet rule. The logical forum for such discussions was the Federation Council, a presidential institution that brought together the leaders of the Union and the republics. But the desire for secrecy, informality, and a politically neutral site, away from

Gorbachev's Kremlin, led to the convening of a series of meetings outside of formal institutional structures and outside of the capital, at Novo-Ogarevo, a government retreat on the outskirts of Moscow. Here, in the spring and summer of 1991, the presidents of the Union and the republics crafted agreements that promised to grant broad political and economic autonomy to the republics. Operating from a position of increasing weakness, Gorbachev reluctantly--and often angrily--acceded to republican demands, which would have been resisted a year earlier, before the unsuccessful use of troops in Lithuania (January 1991) and the direct election of Boris Yeltsin as the president of the Russian republic (June 1991).

The Novo-Ogarevo meetings produced a draft Union Treaty and several informal side agreements, among which was Gorbachev's commitment to replace the unpopular prime minister, Valentin Pavlov.⁴⁸ It was a pact that promised to revolutionize center-periphery relations and to revise yet again Soviet institutional arrangements. But on 19 August 1991, the day before the scheduled signing of the Union Treaty, leading members of the Communist Party and Soviet Government staged a coup designed to scuttle the Novo-Ogarevo agreements and to restore the old regime. Several of the coup plotters would later claim that Gorbachev backed away at the last minute from preparations for the introduction of emergency rule, leaving them to twist in the wind. Gorbachev had indeed been actively considering emergency rule as an alternative to a "pacted" settlement with republican leaders. But whatever the extent of Gorbachev's involvement in the putsch and its preparations, the failure of the coup on its third day benefitted the republics--and most prominently, the defender of the Russian White House, President Yeltsin--at the expense of the Union and Gorbachev. After three days of house arrest on the island of Foros, Gorbachev returned to a different country, where central leaders had lost the support of broad sectors of the bureaucracy and society.

In the wake of the coup, Gorbachev fought desperately--some would say pathetically--to shore up the authority of the center. But efforts to revive the Novo-Ogarevo process inspired little interest among republican leaders, many of whom were vigorously encouraging the defection of central ministerial personnel to republican governments. During the fall of 1991, while this extra-constitutional transfer of governing authority continued unabated, Yeltsin and other republican presidents remained publicly committed to retaining a Soviet state in some form. They even envisioned a role for Gorbachev as the president of a new, if less powerful, Union. However, at a secret meeting on 9 December 1991 at Belovozhskaya Pushcha, near Minsk, Belarus', the leaders of the three Slavic republics put an end to the USSR, and to Gorbachev's presidency, by seceding from the Soviet Union and joining together in a loose confederation, known as the Commonwealth of Independent States. Most of the other republics quickly followed suit, though some, like the Baltic republics, declared their complete independence. By the end of December 1991, there was no longer a Soviet Union to govern.

*The Presidency in the First Russian Republic*⁴⁹

The primary heir of the Soviet political and military inheritance was the Russian Federation, a republic that covered three-quarters of the territory of the USSR and contained 140 of its 250 million people. When Gorbachev relinquished control of the ultimate symbol of state sovereignty, the nuclear black box, on 25 December 1991, it was the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, who assumed command of the vast majority of the Soviet Union's strategic rocket forces and other military assets. Russia also took control of the Soviet Union's embassies abroad, the bulk of the Communist Party's extensive real estate and financial holdings, and the imposing state buildings in Moscow, such as the Kremlin. In a final indignity for the Soviet president, Yeltsin moved into Gorbachev's Kremlin office before the latter had a chance to remove his belongings.

The history of the Russian presidency does not begin, however, with the transfer of the remains of Soviet central authority from Gorbachev to Yeltsin. The presidency of the Russian Federation, born in the spring of 1990, was a political offshoot of the Soviet presidency. While similar in most respects to its progenitor, the Russian system had two distinguishing features: a vice-president and different electoral rules. In the first, indirect elections for the Russian presidency, held in May 1990, the republican parliament required three rounds of voting before choosing Boris Yeltsin by the slimmest of margins. But indirect elections quickly gave way to direct, popular elections for the presidency.⁵⁰ In June 1991, riding a rising popular tide of anti-communism, Yeltsin won direct election for president in a landslide, capturing over 60 percent of the vote in a six-man field.

For Yeltsin, the timing of the Russian presidential election was fortuitous. Coming only two months before the August coup, it provided him with a mantle of popular legitimacy that discouraged the coup plotters from using force to subdue him and the defenders of the White House. The coup plotters' sensitivity to public opinion was readily apparent in lame attempts to cloak their actions in constitutional garb. As the coup unravelled, it was not only Yeltsin's actions but his more recent, and direct, popular mandate that allowed him to eclipse Gorbachev as the country's most powerful leader. In subsequent battles with the Russian parliament, Yeltsin again benefitted from electoral timing. Elected more than a year after the parliament, Yeltsin could claim a mandate that was fresher and less tainted by the oddities of Soviet-era electoral practices.

The Russian president emerged from the August coup with enormous popularity but with little governing authority and only a skeletal staff. By the first months of 1992, the story was reversed. As economic, law enforcement, and ultimately military power shifted from the Union to the republics, Yeltsin acquired the instruments of rule from the dying Soviet state. If before the August coup Yeltsin's power lay primarily in his status as leader of the Russian nation, it now rested on a firmer institutional base. An independent Russian state was in the making.

Much like Gorbachev before him, Yeltsin received from parliament in November 1991 extraordinary lawmaking authority in order to introduce rapid economic reform. Moreover, in an

attempt to prevent the centrifugal forces unleashed at the center from pulling apart the Russian Federation itself, he began to appoint personal commissars--and in most instances the governors themselves--in the country's 89 regions. Finally, Yeltsin expanded dramatically his own institutional resources. The small staff of personal advisors working for the president at the time of the August coup grew quickly into a substantial presidential apparatus.

But as Yeltsin was expanding his powers as leader of state, he was losing the support of the nation. Growing popular disillusionment with the Russian president centered not on the accumulation of power itself but on how that power was being used, especially in economic affairs. In October 1991, Gennadii Burbulis, Yeltsin's closest policy advisor, had solicited economic reform proposals from the country's leading economists. The winner of this competition was a team of young economists led by Egor Gaidar, who proposed a rapid, and painful, transition to a market economy, akin to the shock therapy applied with success in Poland. In December 1991, Yeltsin invested Gaidar--the new deputy prime minister--with the responsibility for introducing economic reform. Burbulis became "the de facto head of the Council of Ministers" and served as an intermediary between Gaidar and the president.⁵¹ Formally, however, Yeltsin assumed the post of head of Government himself, aware that Gaidar's controversial policies and Burbulis' limited political skills would fail to generate parliamentary support.⁵²

The tasks facing Yeltsin and his Government at the beginning of 1992 were monumental. In the words of Ernest Gellner, few countries have sought simultaneously to dismantle an Empire, to operate an economic miracle, to transform a moral and economic climate, to turn a gulag state into a nightwatchman, to settle old national border and other disputes, and to revive a culture.⁵³

On this ambitious agenda, it was the economic reforms of Yegor Gaidar that proved most unsettling to the population and parliament. Although the financial policies of the late Gorbachev era, taken together with the economic dislocations caused by the splintering of a single Soviet "economic space," contributed mightily to the twin crises of inflation and output in 1992, Gaidar's decisions to lift government subsidies and rapidly privatize commerce served as lightning rods for national discontent. At times, Gaidar's own political tactics complicated his policy initiatives. By continually referring to itself as a kamikaze Government, Gaidar and his associates limited their authority and longevity in office. As Anders Aslund observed, "officials and state enterprise managers treated the Gaidar team as a temporary phenomenon and consequently refused to adjust."⁵⁴

The April 1992 session of the Congress of People's Deputies marked the first watershed in post-Soviet politics in Russia. It was here that Yeltsin lost a stable ruling majority in parliament. Studies of voting behavior in the Russian parliament reveal that the deputy corps was divided at the beginning of 1992 into three roughly equal contingents: committed reformists, committed communists, and a

swing bloc without firm ideological loyalties.⁵⁵ It was this "centrist" group that altered the balance of power irrevocably in April 1992 by abandoning Yeltsin and joining the opposition.

The reasons for the parliamentary realignment lay partly in the changing agenda of Russian politics. Many deputies who supported Yeltsin over issues of statehood at the end of 1991 were unprepared to embrace the president's program of radical economic reform in 1992, especially given its destabilizing and stratifying effects on Russian society. But far more than policy disagreements were at stake in the widening gap between executive and legislative institutions in Russia. Politics was at bottom a matter of who governed, or, to put it in the less delicate language of early Soviet history, of who would devour whom [*kto kogo?*].⁵⁶

Just as the last two years of Soviet rule had witnessed a struggle for power between levels of government--the so-called war of laws between the Union and the republics--the first two years of the post-Soviet era saw a struggle between branches of government. In each case, the adversaries seemed to be driven by a manichean instinct, a will to complete power, that would not be satisfied until it crushed its opposition. Underlying the institutional conflict were personal rivalries of brutal intensity. Commenting on the struggle for power in the late Soviet era, Gennadii Yanaev, the colorless Soviet vice-president and co-conspirator in the August 1991 coup, observed that "[t]he animal hatred between Gorbachev and Yeltsin, this was the subjective factor that played an evil trick on the nation, this is what eventually led to the disintegration of the country."⁵⁷ New nemeses for Yeltsin appeared almost immediately after the breakup of the Union in Alexander Rutskoi, the vice-president, and Ruslan Khasbulatov, the speaker of parliament, both of whom owed their political careers to the Russian president.⁵⁸

Faced with an increasingly hostile parliament, Yeltsin made important concessions to the traditional forces in Russian politics during the last half of 1992. He scaled back Gaidar's radical economic program and reoriented his personnel policy. Brash young intellectuals--a group Rutskoi called "the boys in pink shorts"--were no longer in favor with the president. In their stead Yeltsin began to promote an older generation of Soviet-era officials, who were supposed to replace reformist zeal with administrative competence, and in so doing, to enhance the Government's support in parliament and the nation. "I was forced," Yeltsin remarked, "to bring in some energetic plant directors."⁵⁹

Making substantive concessions was easier for the president, however, than yielding decisionmaking authority to the legislature. In November 1992, the president was due to hand back responsibility for economic legislation to parliament, which had granted Yeltsin extraordinary powers in this sector for one year. As a means of retaining his prerogatives in the economy, Yeltsin insisted on the postponement of the December 1992 session of the Congress of the People's Deputies. The parliamentary leadership refused, plunging Russia into its first constitutional crisis of the post-

Soviet era. In Ruslan Khasbulatov's estimation, this conflict between president and parliament "threatened the very existence of the state...."⁶⁰

With no constitutional means available to resolve the stalemate, Russia's leaders again sought a negotiated settlement of the crisis. Discussions between Yeltsin and Khasbulatov occurred in mid-December under the chairmanship of the head of the Constitutional Court, Valerii Zorkin. Each side made major concessions. The speaker consented to the holding of a referendum in April 1993 that would allow the nation to decide whether the presidency or parliament should be the dominant institution. For his part, Yeltsin agreed to select a new prime minister from among the three candidates who enjoyed the broadest support in the Congress. Following the Congress's straw poll and meetings with party leaders and regional governors, Yeltsin agreed to replace his unpopular acting prime minister, Gaidar, with a new prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin.⁶¹ Chernomyrdin was a cautious manager with familiar and reassuring credentials for many conservative and centrist deputies--a technical education and three decades of experience in the Soviet natural gas industry.⁶²

The four months separating the December accord from the April referendum was a period of guerilla warfare in Russian politics, to borrow John Lowenhardt's apt phrase.⁶³ In mid-February, Yeltsin advanced a supplemental pact that would have committed both sides to respect a new demarcation of political authority and to refrain from actions that would "upset the balance of power."⁶⁴ However, parliament was in no mood for further compromise with the president. At an emergency session on 10 March, the Congress of People's Deputies reneged temporarily on its commitment to a referendum and called for constitutional amendments, adopted provisionally in December 1992, to come into effect immediately. These amendments would have weakened considerably the powers of the president. In response to this move by the Congress, Yeltsin issued a decree on 20 March that invested the president with extraordinary governing authority.⁶⁵

This hastily-prepared and controversial decree was a clear miscalculation on Yeltsin's part. Besides the predictably harsh reaction of Khasbulatov and Zorkin, there was vigorous dissent within the executive itself. Firmly opposed to the decree were Yurii Skokov, the chair of the president's Security Council, and Alexander Rutskoi, the vice-president.⁶⁶ Rutskoi's refusal to sign off on the decree brought to a head the long-simmering feud between the president and vice-president. Rutskoi was now firmly in the camp of the parliamentary opposition, which viewed Yeltsin as a usurper.⁶⁷ When Sergei Filatov, the head of the executive office of the president, greeted Rutskoi, the vice-president responded: "I won't shake your hand, you scum." According to Rutskoi, the following day Filatov reduced the vice-presidential staff to six persons.⁶⁸

Although the president removed the most contentious provisions from the decree before its publication, the stage was set for a decisive showdown between legislative and executive authority. Yeltsin believed that there was no longer a middle ground: the choice was now between a figurehead president or a newly-constituted, and much weakened, parliament.⁶⁹ And the president had no

intention of allowing his office to be transformed from an efficient to a dignified institution by a parliament, which, like assemblies everywhere, was "beset by sloth and scandal."⁷⁰

When the on-again, off-again referendum on presidential and parliamentary authority finally took place on 25 April 1993, the voters gave Yeltsin the edge. Emboldened by what he interpreted as a renewed popular mandate--"essentially...a second presidential election two years after the first"⁷¹-- Yeltsin advanced a draft constitution that was designed to reduce considerably the powers of parliament. To use the language of Adam Przeworski, the Russian president was attempting to adopt a new set of rules that would "fortify transitory political advantage."⁷² But facing broad-based resistance to this draft, Yeltsin tried another tack, summoning a constitutional convention as a means of forcing through a draft constitution favorable to the presidency. The constitutional convention, however, faced enormous obstacles, including its size and diversity (700 delegates drawn from the country's major regions and political forces) and the range and intensity of contested issues. Executive-legislative relations exercised passions less, for example, than the division of authority between Moscow and the regions. And besides drafting a constitution, the convention was responsible for proposing a method for its enactment, since the existing constitution was silent on this question.⁷³

While representatives of president and parliament fought for advantage in the constitutional debates,⁷⁴ each side was using its existing institutional resources to strengthen its hold on the fledgling Russian state. The parliamentary arsenal included several executive-style agencies, most notably the Central Bank and the Procuracy. The parliamentary leadership used the Procuracy, which investigated and prosecuted criminal cases, to harass and undermine the authority of executive officials close to the president. Among those subjected to politically-inspired criminal investigations were Mikhail Poltoranin, the head of the committee on information, and Vladimir Shumeiko, a deputy prime minister and close confidant of Yeltsin.⁷⁵ For its part, the Central Bank pursued an easy money policy, which undercut attempts by the executive, and especially its Ministry of Finance, to battle skyrocketing inflation.

Had parliament's encroachment on executive authority been limited to its use of agencies like the Procuracy and Central Bank, Yeltsin may have grudgingly tolerated the legislature's forays into what the president regarded as his domain. But the designs of parliament's leaders were more ambitious. They sought to restore the original concept of soviet parliamentarism, which called for executive and legislative functions to be combined in a single body. This strategy brought the parliament into direct competition with the presidency and Government for the loyalty of the ministries and regions, the building blocks of Russian state power. To enlist the ministries and regions as its allies, the parliament sought to outbid the presidency with promises of more generous financing and greater autonomy. According to the justice minister, Nikolai Fedorov, such tactics were part of the parliament's efforts "to create a parallel center of executive power."⁷⁶

The ultimate weapon in the arsenal of the parliament was impeachment of the president, first used--without success--at the end of March 1993. As conflict between legislature and executive deepened through 1993, and the anti-presidential bloc approached the two-thirds majority needed to impeach, Yeltsin's constitutional removal from office seemed a distinct possibility. According to the head of Yeltsin's executive office, Sergei Filatov, the president and his advisors were convinced that the parliamentary leadership would seek impeachment during the November-December parliamentary session.⁷⁷ For the president, the resolution to this conundrum was to dissolve the parliament on 21 September and hold new legislative elections and a constitutional referendum in mid-December. It was a bold, dangerous, and unconstitutional move.

The transition from the First to the Second Russian Republic did not follow the presidential script. Rather than accede to the president's demands, a rump of the parliament barricaded itself in the White House, the 20-story legislative complex on the banks of the Moscow River that had served as the symbol of resistance to the communist regime in the August 1991 coup. The legislators remaining in the building then voted to impeach Yeltsin and to install Alexander Rutskoi as the new president.

During the next fortnight, the standoff escalated toward civil war, as each side sought to present itself as the sole bearer of political legitimacy in the country. While delegates from the presidency and parliament talked with representatives of the Russian Orthodox patriarch in a well-publicized attempt to defuse the constitutional crisis, both sides were preparing for a violent conflict. As a former general with extensive contacts in the armed forces, Alexander Rutskoi mobilized disgruntled army and security personnel to the side of parliament. By the beginning of October, the White House contained an impressive cache of arms as well as an odd assortment of soldiers of political fortune.⁷⁸

On the morning of 3 October, forces loyal to Rutskoi and the parliament launched an attack on the Moscow mayor's office, next door to the White House. Another contingent laid siege to the headquarters of Russian television in the northern part of the capital. At this point, the loyalty of regular army troops to Yeltsin was in doubt. To tip the balance in its favor, each side had summoned the general population onto the streets of the capital. But the catalyst that rallied the wavering troops behind Yeltsin was not street demonstrations, or the fervent personal pleas of the president, but bullets from the White House that felled members of the special forces standing near the barricades. This attack on the nation's military moved the wavering troops behind the president. Just before dawn on 4 October, tank crews loyal to Yeltsin took up positions on a bridge facing the White House and fired shells into the upper floors of the legislative building, setting fire to the abandoned offices of the parliamentary leadership.

When the smoke cleared, Yeltsin appeared to have won a decisive victory over his opponents. The leaders of the parliamentary opposition were imprisoned, the members of the constitutional court--whose chairman backed the parliament--were sent on extended holiday, and the heads of

Russia's regions were put on notice that Yeltsin would meet challenges to presidential power with force. Governing unencumbered by formal institutional opposition in the last three months of 1993, Yeltsin backed away from his promise of early presidential elections, revised the structure of the new legislature and the rules for parliamentary elections, and issued a draft constitution designed to elevate the president to a virtually impregnable position in Russian politics. Yeltsin's vision of the Second Russian Republic accorded with what Guillermo O'Donnell has called "delegative democracy," which rests

on the premiss that whoever wins election to the presidency is thereby entitled to govern as he or she sees fit, constrained only by the hard facts of existing power relations and by a constitutionally limited term in office.⁷⁹

The Presidency in the Second Russian Republic

Yeltsin's extra-constitutional dissolution of parliament enabled him to advance two ballot initiatives for December 12, 1993, both designed to enhance the sources of presidential authority. The first, elections to a new parliament, was expected to produce a workable legislative majority for the president. Pollsters close to the presidency believed that the mood of the country, together with the electoral rules that the president himself had dictated, would permit the party of reform, Russia's Choice, to form the core, if not an outright majority, in the successor parliament.⁸⁰

On December 12, voters also cast ballots for a new constitution. Last-minute changes to this document dramatically strengthened presidential power at the expense of the parliament.⁸¹ Gone was the Congress of People's Deputies, the most formidable constraint on presidential authority in the First Russian Republic. In its place was a more traditional, bicameral legislature, known as the Federal Assembly. According to the new constitution, if the president lacked a legislative majority in the lower chamber, the Duma, he could turn for support to the upper house, the Federation Council, many of whose members were regional executive officials serving at the pleasure of Yeltsin. With a bicameral legislature, the parliament no longer spoke with a single voice. And even if both chambers were hostile to the executive, the constitution granted the president broad reserve powers that he could use to rule around the parliament.

Under the new constitution, which passed by a slim and still disputed majority, the formal structure of Russian government remained semi-presidential. A directly elected president shared executive responsibility with a prime minister, who needed the support, or more accurately the forbearance, of the parliament. But the rules governing the generation and accountability of the Government reduced to a minimum the parliament's ability to limit executive authority. According to the prime minister's chief of staff, the Government exercised executive power "independently [*samostoiatel'no*], subordinate to the President but not to the parliament, with whom it works in

parallel."⁸² Individual ministers were not subject to confirmation, recall, or sanction by the legislature, though they or their emissaries did appear occasionally at parliamentary question time.⁸³

Although parliament retained the formal right to reject a president's appointee to the office of prime minister, or to express no confidence in a sitting Government, it could do so only under the most unappealing conditions. According to Article 111.4 of the constitution, a president could insist on his candidate for prime minister through three successive rejections by the Duma, after which the president installed an interim prime minister, dissolved the parliament, and called new elections within four months. Moreover, Article 117.3 granted the president the option of ignoring the Duma's first vote of no confidence in the Government. In the event a second no confidence motion passed within three months, the president could opt to dissolve the Duma rather than sacrifice his prime minister. Given the uncertainties of Russian politics, and the dim job prospects for most unemployed politicians, few deputies would readily sacrifice their mandate to stand for re-election.

The new institutional arrangements placed the president as well as the prime minister beyond the reach of all but the most united parliaments. To impeach the president, the State Duma first had to bring charges of high treason or other grave crimes against the president. These charges had to be supported by two-thirds of the deputies on the basis of a written opinion of a special Duma commission. As Vladimir Lysenko has noted, the president's power to dissolve the lower chamber--and keep in place the more malleable upper house, the Federation Council--"forestalls any attempt by the State Duma to raise first the question of impeaching the president."⁸⁴ Should the Duma bring charges, the Supreme Court had to issue a finding that the elements of a crime were present, and the Constitutional Court had to confirm that the Duma had respected the appropriate procedures in the bringing of the charges. It then fell to the Federation Council to convict the president by a two-thirds majority vote, taken no later than three months after the Duma's. In the event impeachment proceedings reached this final stage, the members of the Federation Council, many dependent on the president for their executive posts, would be most unlikely to remove the president.

Given the broad powers and protections afforded the president, it is tempting to conclude that Yeltsin ruled without effective opposition in the last half of his term, that is, from January 1994 through August 1996. Indeed, the constitution of the Second Russian Republic held that the president stood above all three branches--Government, parliament, and courts. Like the Communist Party in the old regime, the president was to "determine the basic objectives of the internal and foreign policy of the state" and "ensure the coordinated functioning and interaction of the institutions of state."⁸⁵ But these super-presidential arrangements did not in themselves assure the implementation of the president's will in the daily affairs of state. Despite the obvious institutional advantages enjoyed by Yeltsin, political decisions resulted from a complex interplay of forces, among which were the vigor and skill of presidential leadership, the pressures of organized economic interests, and

shifting divisions in the parliament, Government, and even the presidential apparatus itself. In short, neither the state nor society complied readily with the commands of the president.⁸⁶

The limits of presidential authority became painfully evident to Yeltsin within weeks of the December 1993 parliamentary elections, which returned a Duma with an anti-presidential majority. On 23 February 1994, the Duma voted to amnesty officials serving prison time for the August 1991 coup attempt as well as persons in jail awaiting trial for resisting the dissolution of parliament in the fall of 1993.⁸⁷ This measure represented more than a defeat on a matter of policy; it marked the rehabilitation and political revival of Yeltsin's personal enemies.

Stunned by what he considered to be a provocative and unconstitutional act, the president immediately ordered the procurator-general, A. Kazannik, to block the release of his adversaries. To the astonishment of Yeltsin, who had recently appointed Kazannik to his post--under the new constitution, the Procuracy was subordinate to the president rather than the parliament--the procurator-general acceded to the wishes of parliament and then resigned his office. It was clear that there was insufficient support in other law enforcement institutions, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), to reverse Kazannik's action. After several days of angry public statements and private discussions of his options with advisors, the president backed down.⁸⁸ In this episode, at least, Yeltsin exhibited an essential trait of a democratic politician, the willingness to accept defeat.⁸⁹

Despite this inauspicious beginning, relations between president and parliament were not especially confrontational during the truncated, two-year first term of the Federal Assembly (January 1994 - December 1995).⁹⁰ Several factors contributed to the more restrained political environment. First, the events of the fall alerted both sides to the costs of intransigence. The specter of a civil war seemed to push all parties away from the brink. In this sense, Russian was learning democracy. Second, the provisions of the 1993 Constitution imposed a higher threshold of parliamentary consensus before collective action became attractive. Unable to effectively challenge the president on most matters, the Duma adopted a posture as the "conscience of the nation."⁹¹

Furthermore, contrary to the expectations of many, the speaker of the Duma in 1994 and 1995, the Communist turned Agrarian Ivan Rybkin, studiously avoided public conflict with the presidency.⁹² Known in some circles as "Mister Social Accord,"⁹³ Rybkin proved at least as cooperative as Vladimir Shumeiko, the chair of the Federation Council, who had been a close protege of Yeltsin before his move from the presidency to parliament in December 1993. Because of a still fragmented party system and the remnants of apparatus dominance in the legislature, the parliamentary leaders were able to resolve many disputes with the executive through private negotiations.⁹⁴ Unlike their predecessor, Ruslan Khasbulatov, Rybkin and Shumeiko were steady and discrete, if not always agreeable, in their dealings with the president.

For his part, the president attempted to anticipate and defuse potential conflict with the parliament by creating several new agencies in the presidency whose primary task was liaison with

the legislature.⁹⁵ It was an effort to institutionalize what had been to that point a haphazard system of legislative relations between president and parliament. Rather than establish a presidential party or even a presidential coalition in parliament, the president introduced a kind of entente cordiale with virtually all forces in the legislature.⁹⁶ As part of this strategy, he sought to coopt the heads of the two chambers of parliament by appointing them in 1994 to several key presidential structures, including the Security Council and the Council on Cadres Policy [*Sovet po kadrovoi politike*].⁹⁷ The advantages of this strategy for the president became evident after the beginning of the Chechen war, in December 1994, when, as fellow members of the Security Council, the leaders of parliament became mired in the miasma of Chechnia along with the executive.

The president's ability to restrain the parliament also rested on the more mundane grounds of financial dependence. Because the presidency's administrator of affairs [*upravliaiushchii delami*] distributed goods such as housing, telephones, and vacation packages to legislative as well as executive personnel, Yeltsin was able to use "dacha politics" to influence individual deputies.⁹⁸ An indication of parliament's frustrations with these arrangements came at the beginning of 1996, when the new Duma speaker, Gennadii Seleznev, insisted that responsibility for the maintenance of parliament and its deputies should be transferred from the president's administrator of affairs to the finance ministry. When deputies and their staffs failed to receive their pay in January 1996, many had assumed that the delay reflected presidential displeasure with the new, more conservative parliament.⁹⁹

Electoral timing also restrained executive-legislative conflict. As new presidential elections approached, the opposition occasionally denied itself parliamentary victories in order to position itself for an assumption of executive power in the future. With the country in crisis and a presidential election scheduled for June 1996, the anti-Yeltsin majority in parliament preferred to remain in opposition during the presidential campaign. The strategy of the conservative parliamentary majority was to restrict Yeltsin's freedom of maneuver without assuming governing responsibility. Thus, when a vote of no confidence was held in October 1994, the result was what might be termed a "maximum losing coalition"--enough votes to distance the legislature from the executive and temporarily destabilize politics but not enough to force an early parliamentary election or to provoke a constitutional crisis.¹⁰⁰ For Yeltsin's opponents, there was nothing better than "a discredited Government hanging around the neck of the president."¹⁰¹

But in explaining the parliament's relative quiescence in the second half of Yeltsin's term, perhaps no single factor was more important than the president's repeated concessions to legislative sentiment on personnel matters. Although the president stood behind his prime minister, Victor Chernomyrdin, he was willing to sacrifice other prominent executive officials at critical junctures in order to placate a parliament that was hostile to zealous reformers. In the wake of the parliamentary elections of December 1993, Yeltsin removed from office several leading proponents of market

reform, including Boris Fedorov, the minister of finance, and Egor Gaidar, who had returned to the Government in the fall of 1993 to assume the post of first deputy prime minister. An even more far-reaching purge of the liberal wing of the executive came at the beginning of 1996, immediately following the December 1995 parliamentary elections. Among those removed from office were the long-serving--and long-suffering--foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, the head of the executive office of the president, Sergei Filatov, and the deputy prime minister and privatization tsar, Anatolii Chubais. With the ouster of Chubais, no vigorous advocate for radical economic reform remained in a leading Government post.

If parliamentary pressure did not bring down the Government, it did at least remake it. When compared to those ousted from office, the new appointees were generally older, more closely tied to traditional Soviet institutions, and more suspicious of reform, qualities that served to blunt--at least for a time--parliamentary criticism of the executive. Typical of the change of guard was the appointment of Evgenii Primakov, a veteran of the Soviet security services, to replace Foreign Minister Kozyrev, who had pursued a decidedly Westernizing line in Russian diplomacy. In abandoning his erstwhile allies, Yeltsin employed a time-honored tactic of chief executives: attempting to deflect criticism of their own leadership onto subordinates.

Yeltsin's willingness to accede to parliamentary and societal pressure for personnel changes was in part a logical, democratic response to growing evidence of a shift to the Right in Russian public opinion. As the presidential election approached, Yeltsin sought to distance himself from the increasingly unpopular democratic and internationalist positions that had defined the early years of his presidency. This move toward Russia's political center was made easier by the president's own uncertainties about the country's reformist course. What animated Yeltsin in politics was not a deeply-held commitment to democratic reform but an instinct for power and a fierce hatred of the communist order. Thus, to prevent a resurgence of the Communists--this time through democratic means--Yeltsin was prepared to alter the pace and direction of change.

There was more than an electoral calculus at work, however, in the president's concessions to parliament and society. Had Yeltsin presided over a united, loyal, and efficient executive, he could have governed with fewer accommodations. But that was not the case. Deep divisions within the Russian executive weakened the president's hand and allowed regional and parliamentary leaders to play one part of the executive against the other. Thus, although the Russian president enjoyed vast formal powers, he lacked an essential ingredient of modern government--executive discipline, or what the British call collective responsibility. In Russia, unlike in Western democracies, the ministries at times were not agents of president or prime minister but semi-independent fiefdoms that controlled vital national resources, from arms to energy supplies. Gaidar argued that "our ministries consider themselves first representatives of their own sphere of activity in the highest leadership of the country, and the interests of these spheres is very sharply divided."¹⁰² Yeltsin was never able to

impose discipline on this unwieldy coalition of ministers. The absence of loyal executive agencies prepared to implement the president's will forced Yeltsin into frequent concessions and other political maneuvers to maintain his authority.

Unable to discipline the Government and its ministries through the normal mechanisms of patronage, law, and convention, Yeltsin--like Gorbachev--resorted to a technique of executive leadership with a long Russian pedigree: institutional redundancy. Where tsars in late Imperial Russia had established their own chancelleries as a means of overseeing the work of state, the Communist Party created a vast Central Committee apparatus to monitor and direct the Council of Ministers in the Soviet era. Yeltsin was now forming his own inner bureaucracy, this time to shadow executive institutions inherited from the communist regime. The institutional presidency, which grew to several thousand officials by the mid-1990s, duplicated a staff of some 1100 officials attached to the prime minister and his deputies.¹⁰³ It was institutional redundancy on a massive scale.

The formation of a presidential leviathan in Russia was more, however, than a calculated response to an ill-disciplined state administration. It also represented a part socialist, part feudal commitment to the full employment of the army of officials who were made redundant by the collapse of the USSR. At the beginning of the 1990s, personnel from the Soviet Government and the Communist Party leapt from sinking institutions to those still afloat. Many settled into the larger and more politically comfortable ministries, but a significant number clambered to safety on presidential structures.¹⁰⁴ Just as monarchical power revealed itself in earlier centuries in the grandeur of its entourage, so bureaucratic power expressed itself in an ability to hire more people and provide them with office space, telephones, cars, and staffs.¹⁰⁵ In Russia, as in the Soviet Union before it, the number of persons in one's retinue remained an important measure of authority. Thus, the extraordinary growth of the presidency represented a search for symbolic legitimacy as well as a normal human response to the pleas of supplicants desperate for work and its perquisites.

By the June 1996 presidential elections, the institutional resources of the presidency were staggering in their scale and complexity. But like the formal powers of the office, in many respects they offered the mere illusion of political strength. Rather than enhancing the discipline of the executive, the president's own bureaucracy often undermined it through intrigue and self-destructive competition.¹⁰⁶ The size and political diversity of the presidential apparatus,¹⁰⁷ the lack of clear jurisdictional boundaries, and the inattention of Yeltsin himself to problems of state administration created the conditions for a bureaucratic "free-for-all" within the presidency and between presidential and Government structures. At no time was this more apparent than in the runup to the June 1996 presidential election, when the presidential bureaucracy was deeply, and publicly, divided over whether an election should take place at all.¹⁰⁸ As one insider observed, there was as yet no clearly-developed "technology of decisionmaking" within the presidency.¹⁰⁹

ENDNOTES

1. V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1932), pp. 35-44.
2. Egor L. Kuznetsov, *Sozdanie instituta Prezidenta SSSR. Politologicheskie aspekty*. Kandidat dissertation, Institute of State and Law, Moscow, 1994, p. 39.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.
4. "We've Got a Special Way of Thinking. On the Establishment of the Soviet Presidency," *Demokratizatsiia*, no. 2 (Spring 1994), vol. II, pp. 228-229 [interview with Georgy Shakhnazarov].
5. Yegor Kuznetsov, "The Making of a President. A Glimpse of the History of the Top Executive Post in the USSR," *Demokratizatsiia*, no. 2 (Spring 1994), vol. II, pp. 222-227.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.
7. V.I. Boldin, *Krushenie p'edestala* (Moscow: Respublika, 1995), 219.
8. Whereas the Bolsheviks in 1917 employed the slogan *vsia vlast' sovetsam* [all power to the soviets], Gorbachev used a more ambiguous formulation: *polnevlastie sovetsam* [full power to the soviets].
9. "We've Got a Special Way of Thinking...", p. 230.
10. M. Nenashev, *Poslednee Pravitel'stvo SSSR* (Moscow: AO "Krym", 1993), p. 18.
11. "From the Archives," *Demokratizatsiia*, no. 2 (Spring 1994), vol. II, pp. 316-331.
12. On the emergence of a modern legislature in the USSR, see Robert T. Huber and Donald R. Kelley, *Perestroika-Era Politics: The New Soviet Legislature and Gorbachev's Political Reforms* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1991).
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 330-331. See also Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody: reformatsiia Gorbacheva glazami ego pomoshchnika* (Moscow: Rossika, 1993), p. 136.
14. Yegor Kuznetsov, "The Making of a President...", pp. 222-227.
15. Egor L. Kuznetsov, *Sozdanie instituta Prezidenta SSSR*, p. 44. According to Shakhnazarov, "Lukianov combined the qualities of a professional jurist with a revolutionary romantic. He wrote a dissertation on the Congress of Soviets, and he was smitten by it." *Ibid.*
16. A.S. Cherniaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym: po dnevnikovym zapisiam* (Moscow: Kultura, 1993), p. 332.
17. Yegor Kuznetsov, "The Making of a President...", pp. 222-227.
18. "Ob uchrezhdenii posta Prezidenta SSSR i vnesenii izmenenii i dopolnenii v Konstitutsiiu (Osnovnoi Zakon) SSSR," *Vedomosti S'ezda narodnykh deputatov SSSR i Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR*, no. 12 (1990), st. 189.
19. Georgii Shakhnazarov claims that he championed the French model. Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody* (Moscow: Rossika, 1993), p. 138.
20. For an introduction to semi-presidentialism, see Maurice Duverger, "A New Political System Model: Semi-Presidential Government," *European Journal of Political Research*, no. 2, vol. 8 (1980), pp. 165-187.
21. The source of this description, made ironically after the collapse of the Soviet Union, is the former second secretary of the Communist Party, Yegor Ligachev. Yegor Ligachev, *Inside Gorbachev's Kremlin* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), p. 98.
22. "We've Got a Special Way of Thinking...", p. 230.
23. Valentin Pavlov, *Upushchen li shans?* (Moscow: Terra, 1995), pp. 166-168.
24. Egor L. Kuznetsov, *Sozdanie instituta Prezidenta SSSR*, p. 74. Kudriavtsev, among others, sought in vain to convince Gorbachev to accept the power of dissolution. *Ibid.*

25. For an analysis of the tensions between executive leaders in post-communist Eastern Europe, see Thomas Baylis, "Presidents vs. Prime Ministers: Shaping Executive Authority in Eastern Europe," *World Politics*, no. 3 (1996), pp. 297-323.
26. Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody* (Moscow: Rossika, 1993), pp. 137-138.
27. "From the Archives," pp. 327-328. For insider accounts of the Prime Minister's office at the end of the Soviet era, see the interview with Nikolai Ryzhkov in M. Nenashev, *Poslednee Pravitel'stvo SSSR*, and Valentin Pavlov, *Upushchen li shans?*
28. For a critical assessment of this style, see the memoirs of Gorbachev's foreign policy advisor, A.S. Chernaiev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym* and Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody*.
29. "From the Archives," pp. 327-328.
30. Even reformists in Gorbachev's entourage, such as Georgii Shakhnazarov, did not initially favor direct contested elections for the presidency. He proposed instead that the Communist Party nominate a single candidate for the presidential "election." Egor L. Kuznetsov, *Sozdanie instituta Prezidenta SSSR*, p. 51.
31. In this decision as well, he was following the precedent of the V Republic in France. In France, however, the V Republic Constitution envisioned the indirect election of the president as a permanent feature of the political system. In the Gaullist-inspired referendum of 1962, the French electorate approved the change to direct elections for the president. Shakhnazarov regarded Gorbachev's avoidance of direct elections as his "achilles heel." Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody*, p. 137.
32. Art. 127.3 (15). Such extraordinary measures were to be introduced "at the request or with the consent of the supreme soviet presidium or the supreme organ of state power of the corresponding union republic." However, if such consent was not forthcoming, the revised constitution allowed the president to act if he received the support of two-thirds of the USSR Supreme Soviet. "Ob uchrezhdenii posta prezidenta SSSR i vnesenii izmenenii i dopolnenii v Konstitutsiiu (Osnovnoi zakon) SSSR," *Vedomosti S'ezda narodnykh deputatov i Verkhovnogo soveta SSSR*, no. 12 (1990), st. 189.
33. The odd man out was Belarus', which retained the "speaker's parliamentarism" of the late Soviet era until the introduction of a presidential system in 1994. See Alexander Lukashuk, "Survey of Presidential Power: Belarus," *East European Constitutional Review* (Fall 1993-Winter 1994), pp. 58-61.
34. One of these was Sergei Stankevich, whose memo of February 2, 1990, warned of the consequences of introducing republican presidencies. Egor L. Kuznetsov, *Sozdanie instituta Prezidenta SSSR*, p. 60.
35. According to one Russian observer, the system collapsed when the CPSU, which had been the central nervous system, shut down without something to take its place. Anatolii Utkin, "Piat' rokovnykh shagov Gorbacheva," *Rossiiskaia federatsiia*, no. 7 (1995), pp. 6-7. Thereafter, each economic leader in factories and farms felt himself "master in his own domain" [*svoego roda monarkhanii v svoei votchine*]. *Ibid.*
36. For a lucid and compelling survey of the reasons for the collapse of the USSR, see Alexander Dallin, "The Causes of the Collapse of the USSR," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, no. 4 (1992), pp. 279-302.
37. N.I. Ryzhkov, *Ia iz partii po imeni "Rossiia"* (Moscow: Obozrevatel', 1995), p. 22.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 48. When Gorbachev assumed the presidency in 1990, he reportedly stated that the country only needed 5-6 all-union ministries, to supervise areas such as defense, transportation, and economics. He envisioned that the remaining sectors could be handled by republican and local authorities. V.I. Boldin, *Krushenie p'edestala*, p. 369.
39. In his autobiography, Yeltsin observed that Gorbachev's descent from power began in early 1991, when, having thrown in his lot with only one pole, the Right, "he was stripped of his chief weapon--the political game, the maneuver, the balancing act." Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia* (New York: Random House, 1994), p. 24. On the role of the prime minister as "whipping boy" in post-Soviet Russia, see Vladimir Mironov, "Nuzhen li prezidentu 'mal'chik dlia bit'ia'? Bor'ba za pravitel'stvo prodolzhaetsia," *Vek*, no. 28 (1994), p. 3.
40. Cite to M. Nenashev, *Poslednee Pravitel'stvo SSSR*, p. 97.

41. For a bitter account of the removal of the Government, see the memoirs of the then prime minister, Valentin Pavlov, *Upushchen li shans?*, pp. 157-159.
42. Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody*, pp. 143, 490.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 491.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
45. Valentin Pavlov, *Upushchen li shans?*, p. 103; V.I. Boldin, *Krushenie p'edestala*, p. 372; and Iu.M. Kozlov, "Ispolnitel'naiia vlast': federal'nyi uroven'," *Vestnik MGU (Pravo)*, no. 6 (1992), p. 6.
46. A.S. Cherniaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym: po dnevnikovym zapisiam*, p. 337.
47. On the role of "pacted" transitions to democracy, see Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, (eds.), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).
48. Valentin Pavlov, *Upushchen li shans?*, pp. 11-12.
49. The periodization of post-communist Russian history into distinct republics, along the French model, has been championed by Robert Sharlet. See, for example, his "Reinventing the Russian State: Problems of Constitutional Implementation," *The John Marshall Law Review*, no. 4 (1995), pp. 775-786. This approach has the advantage of alerting readers to the very different institutional arrangements in place before and after December 1993, when the adoption of the new constitution ushered in the Second Republic. The one disadvantage with this periodization is that it ignores the first Russian republic of this century, which separated the collapse of the autocracy in February 1917 and the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917.
50. Egor L. Kuznetsov, *Sozdanie instituta Prezidenta SSSR.*, pp. 87-90.
51. Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, pp. 156-160.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 155-160.
53. E. Gellner, "From the ruins of the Great Contest. Civil society, nationalism, and Islam," *Times Literary Supplement*, 13 March 1992, p. 10.
54. Anders Aslund, *How Russia Became a Market Economy* (Washington, DC: "The Brookings Institution," 1995), 88.
55. See, for example, A.A. Sobyenin, "Political Cleavages among the Russian Deputies," in Thomas F. Remington (ed.), *Parliaments in Transition* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), pp. 181-216.
56. Lilia Shevtsova writes that "Russian development in these years became characterized by attempts on the part of all political actors and all political institutions to *monopolize* [her emphasis] power, instead of sharing it." She also contends that the deterioration in executive-legislative relations was due in part to the executive's use of parliament as a scapegoat for the country's declining fortunes. "Parliament and the Political Crisis in Russia, 1991-1993," in Jeffrey W. Hahn, *Democratization in Russia: The Development of Legislative Institutions* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 38-40.
57. David Remnick, "Gorbachev's Last Hurrah," *New Yorker*, 11 March 1996, p. 77. On this point, see also Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody*, p. 222.
58. Yeltsin claims in his autobiography that he selected Rutskoi on the recommendation of two of his speechwriters. Khasbulatov's appointment was similarly "accidental," coming after three unsuccessful attempts to install Sergei Shakhrai as speaker. Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, pp. 31, 184.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169.
60. R. Khasbulatov, "The Congress of People's Deputies and Constitutional Reform," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 9 January 1993, as translated in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, 14 January 1993, p. 37.

61. The top three vote-getters, in declining order, were Yurii Skokov, Chernomyrdin, and Gaidar. Skokov's extensive support among Communist deputies angered Yeltsin and led to a rapid deterioration in their relations and, ultimately, the removal of Skokov from his post as head of the president's Security Council.
62. Chernomyrdin's original political base was with neither of the two major political forces in the parliament, Communists or Democratic Russia, but rather with a third force in Russian politics, the Civic Union. Although Civic Union had little popular support, it maintained close ties to leading state and economic institutions and sought to become what would later be called a "party of power," that is, a party of officialdom.
63. John Lowenhardt, *The Reincarnation of Russia. Struggling with the Legacy of Communism, 1990-1994* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 126.
64. "Prezidentskii proekt soglasheniia federal'nykh organov zakonodatel'noi i ispolnitel'noi vlastei RF po stabilizatsii konstitutsionnogo stroia na period do priniatiia novoi Konstitutsii RF," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 19 February 1993. This draft document gave the Constitutional Court the responsibility for enforcing the agreement.
65. "Chto predlagaet Prezident (iz Obrashcheniia k grazhdanam Rossii)," *Izvestiia*, 23 March 1993, pp. 1-2.
66. Irina Savvateeva, "Vykhodiashchii iz teni," *Izvestiia*, 15 March 1994, p. 5.
67. Sergei Filatov, *Na puti k demokratii* (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1995), p. 166.
68. Aleksandr Rutskoii: *Lefortovskie protokoly* (Moscow: Paleia, 1994), p. 33.
69. Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, p. 205.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
72. Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and Market Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 36.
73. John Lowenhardt, *The Reincarnation of Russia*, pp. 128, 136.
74. For competing constitutions, advanced by presidency and parliament in the spring of 1993, see "Novaia konstitutsiia Rossii: dva proekta," *Konstitutsionnyi vestnik*, no. 16 [spetsial'nyi vypusk] (May 1993).
75. Sergei Filatov, *Na puti k demokratii*, p. 169.
76. "Nikolai Fedorov: Parlament dopuskaet antikonstitutsionnye deistviia," *Rossiiskie vesti*, 13 March 1993, p. 2.
77. Sergei Filatov, *Na puti k demokratii*, p. 178, 333. As his memoirs make clear, Yeltsin had no intention of resigning if impeached. Indeed, Yeltsin refused to accept the legitimacy or "seriousness" of such proceedings, believing that "a directly elected president could never be impeached." Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, p. 210.
78. Sergei Filatov, *Na puti k demokratii*, pp. 181-192. Filatov adds: "[w]e had information that in a number of ministries, including the State Customs Committee, people from the White House were already sitting with guns in their hands, de facto holding hostage all the activities of this committee." *Ibid.*, p. 180.
79. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 5. no. 1 (1994), p. 59.
80. See, for example, the analyses of Aleksandr Sobianin, E. Gel'man and O. Kaiunov, "The Political Climate of Russia's Regions: Voters and Deputies, 1991-1993," *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, no. 1 (1994), pp. 63-84.
81. "Konstitutsiia Rossiiskii Federatsii (proekt)," *Izvestiia*, 10 November 1993, pp. 3-5.
82. Vladimir Kvasov, "Konflikta mezhdru pravitel'stvom i Prezidentom ne budet," *Rossiiskaia federatsiia*, no. 6 (1994), pp. 7-8.
83. The Duma and Government agreed to the following rules regarding the interpellation of ministers: they would invite members of Government to weekly question time at least three days in advance; they would invite no more than two, and preferably one minister; and they would make sure that deputies in the sector were prepared to ask informed, rather than childish [*detskie*], questions. Liubov' Vladimirova, "Deputaty prevrashchaiut 'Chas Pravitel'stva' v vecher voprosov i

otvetov," *Rossiiskie vesti*, 21 June 1994, p. 1. See also I.P. Rybkin, *Gosudarstvennaia Duma: piataia popytka* (Moscow: International Humanitarian Fund "Znanie", 1994), p. 77.

Earlier drafts of the 1993 constitution had envisioned Duma confirmation of all but the power ministries. Yeltsin returned to that idea in October 1994 in discussions with parliamentary factions. He never agreed, however, to this major concession to parliament. "Vyzaziv votum nedoveriia pravitel'stvu, Gosduma mozhet postavit' pod udar sebii," *Izvestiia*, 27 October 1994, p. 1.

84. Vladimir M. Lysenko, "Toward Presidential Rule," *Journal of Democracy*, no. 2 (1994), p. 11.

85. Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii, art. 80/2-3.

86. On this point, see the comments of Sergei Filatov in "Chinovnik pod kolpakom," *Iuridicheskii vestnik*, nos. 11-12 (1995), p. 2.

87. In this, and many other, votes, many of Yeltsin's former democratic allies in the legislature joined the opposition. Aleksei Kiva, "Limit oshibok ischerpan," *Rossiiskie vesti*, 25 April 1995, p. 2.

88. Barry, Donald, "Amnesty under the Russian Constitution: Evolution of the Provision and Its Use in February 1994," *Parker School Journal of East European Law*, no. 1, (1994), pp. 437-461.

89. "Democracy," Mainwaring notes, "presupposes the willingness of political actors to accept electoral and policy defeats. This willingness is enhanced when actors believe that defeats are reversible through the democratic struggle and that they are not catastrophic." Scott Mainwaring, "Presidentialism, Multipartism and Democracy. The Difficult Combination," *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1993), p. 219.

90. Although the 1993 Constitution envisioned a five-year term for parliament, its transition provisions provided for an initial term of only two years. This exception was apparently designed to stifle legislative development and to prevent a recurrence of the executive-legislative stalemate that had characterized the first two years of post-communist Russia. It should be noted that the new constitution granted the president the right to dissolve the parliament--except in the first year after its election or during a state of emergency or the last six months of a presidential election campaign.

91. Maksim Meier, "Duma mezhdru prezidentom, pravitel'stvom i konstitutsiei," *Novoe vremia*, no. 9 (1994), p. 6.

92. Rybkin and Yeltsin noted the "constructive dialogue" between president and speaker that characterized the first session of the Duma. Aleksei Kirpichnikov, "Duma: The President approves of the Duma, and its Chairman approves of the President," *Sevodnia*, 6 October 1994, p. 1, as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, no. 40 (1994), p. 1.

93. Mikhail Leont'ev, "Prem'er Skokovets [sic] kak produkt 'obshchestvennogo soglasiia'," *Segodnia*, 25 October 1994, p. 1. For a revealing self-portrait, see I.P. Rybkin, *Gosudarstvennaia Duma: piataia popytka*, especially pp. 116-125.

94. Thomas F. Remington and Steven S. Smith conclude that Shumeiko's position in the Federation Council is more dominant than that of Rybkin in the Duma, where parties are more developed and deputies more active. "The Early Legislative Process in the Russian Federal Assembly," *Journal of Legislative Studies*, no. 1 (1996).

95. As of the beginning of 1995, there were three separate offices in the presidency with responsibilities for liaison with parties or the parliament. According to the head of the Administration for Relations with Parties, these bureaus were designed to bridge the "empty space" that exists between the executive and legislature. Anna Ostapchuk, "Proshlo soveshchanie dvukh vetvei vlasti," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 4 October 1994, p.2.

96. The phrase is that of Mikhail Shchipanov in "Osoboi prezidentskoi partii ne budet," *Kuranty*, 7 April 1994, p. 4.

97. "Novaia nomenklatura ili novaia kadrovaia politika?" *Rossiiskie vesti*, 23 September 1994, p. 1.

98. Andrei Uglanov, "Ministry prikhodiat i ukhodiat, apparat ostaetsia," *Argumenty i fakty*, no. 20 (May 1994), p. 3. The Administration of Affairs is a powerful, but little studied, arm of the Russian presidency, which now houses under one roof the remnants of the administrations of affairs of the Communist Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers.

99. Robert Ortung, "Duma Seeks Financial Independence from Presidential Administration," *OMRI Daily Report*, 13 February 1996.
100. As is so often the case in Russian parliamentary votes, the motion failed because of high levels of tactical non-voting by deputies. Non-votes are counted as nay votes in the Duma. As Thomas F. Remington and Steven S. Smith point out, "...for the January-July 1994 period, the mean number of "yea" votes was 211 and the mean number of "nay" votes was 49, so the typical motion was defeated (211 is less than a majority) because of nonvoting." "The Development of Parliamentary Parties in Russia," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, no. 4 (1995).
101. Andranik Migranian, "Prezident dolzhen priniat' reshenie i naznachit' prem'erom cheloveka, kotoryi sposoben sozdat' pravitel'stvo natsional'nogo spaseniia," *Nezavisimaja gazeta*, 4 November 1994, pp. 1,3. This argument was first made by Sergei Chugaev, "Bol'shinstvo politikov zainteresovano v krakhe pravitel'stva," *Izvestiia*, 27 January 1994, p. 2.
102. "U nas net bolee vazhnoi problemy, nezhegi dogovorit'sia o pravilakh igry," *Posev* 1993, no. 5, 7-17. This is an interview with Gaidar.
103. Vladimir Kvasov, "Konflikta mezhdou pravitel'stvom i Prezidentom ne budet," *Rossiiskaia federatsiia*, no. 6 (1994), pp. 7-8.
104. The number of bureaucrats in Russia rose 1.7 times from 1989 to 1994, with local and regional government accounting for two-thirds of that increase. The total number of non-uniformed officials is 1.66 million, half of whom work in "organs of state administration" and half in "other budgeted organizations" Aleksandr Bekker, "Pravitel'stvu predlagaiut samosokratit'sia," *Segodnia*, January 13, 1995, p. 2.
105. No one was more aware of this than Boris Yeltsin, who, as head of the Russian parliament before June 1991, struggled to obtain for himself decent living and working conditions. Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, pp. 19-20. According to Yegor Ligachev, provincial secretaries on short trips to Moscow struggled to get a meal, so the Central Committee set up a special canteen for them. Yegor Ligachev, *Inside Gorbachev's Kremlin*, p. 148. Western scholars ignore these cultural/economic conditions of politics at their peril.
106. Iu.M. Kozlov, "Iсполnitel'naia vlast': federal'nyi uroven'," *Vestnik MGU (Pravo)*, no. 6 (1992), p. 8.
107. Gavril Popov, the former mayor of Moscow, argues forcefully that Yeltsin had no "team." Gavril Popov, "Boris El'tsin i avtoritarnoe gosudarstvo," *Izvestiia*, 24 December 1994, p. 5.
108. Tat'iana Malkina, "Aleksandr Korzhakov schitaet, chto prezidentskie vybory nuzhno otlozhit'," *Segodnia*, 6 May 1996, p. 1.
109. "Georgii Satarov: Prezidentu nado chashche ob'iasniat' svoju pozitsiiu," *Argumenty i fakty*, no. 33 (1994), p. 3; and V.A. Mironov, "Rossiiskoe gosudarstvennoe stroitel'stvo v postsoiuznyi period (1991-1994 gg.)," *Kentavr*, no. 3 (1994), p. 11.