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## **NOMENKLATURA LITE?**

### **The Cadres Reserve (*Kadrovyi rezerv*) in Russian Public Administration**

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## **Executive Summary**

In some areas of political and economic development, postcommunist Russia has distanced itself convincingly from the Soviet inheritance. In other fields, however, there has been a tendency to recreate rules and patterns of behavior from the Soviet era, following a short period during which these traditions were disrupted or abandoned. At issue is not a full revival of communist-era practices but rather a partial return to institutions that are culturally familiar and political valuable to the ruling elite. The most visible examples of this phenomenon are in high politics, whether in the creation of personalist rule in Moscow or the provinces or in the establishment of a party of power, whose development is now being pursued with particular vigor.

A less recognized, but nonetheless important, case of the reanimation of Soviet-era legacies may be found in personnel policy. Although the collapse of the Soviet Union appeared to uproot the nomenklatura system, which allowed the Communist Party to exercise patronage power over all party and state institutions, at least one element of the nomenklatura tradition is re-emerging in the form of "cadres reserves."

Reappearing on a small scale during Yeltsin's second term of office, cadres reserve lists became a standard feature of Russian administrative life by the first years of the Putin presidency. Confirmation of their status as an integral element of personnel policy came in the spring of 2003, with the passage of a new law on the civil service, which called for the formation of cadres reserves in the federal Government and its ministries and in the administrations and departments of provincial-level governments.

After describing briefly the revival of cadres reserve lists in federal, regional, and municipal governments, this paper assesses the potential perils of this Soviet legacy for Russian

politics and administration in the postcommunist era. It argues that whatever the original motivations for the revival of the institution of cadres reserves, the formation and management of pools of replacement personnel may serve to consolidate authoritarian rather than democratic rule in Russia.

## **Introduction**

In some areas of political and economic development, postcommunist Russia has distanced itself convincingly from the Soviet inheritance. In other fields, however, there has been a tendency to recreate rules and patterns of behavior from the Soviet era, following a short period during which these traditions were disrupted or abandoned. At issue is not a full revival of communist-era practices but rather a partial return to institutions that are culturally familiar and political valuable to the ruling elite. The most visible examples of this phenomenon are in high politics, whether in the creation of personalist rule in Moscow or the provinces or in the establishment of a party of power, whose development is now being pursued with particular vigor.

A less recognized, but nonetheless important, case of the reanimation of Soviet-era legacies may be found in personnel policy. Although the collapse of the Soviet Union appeared to uproot the nomenklatura system, which allowed the Communist Party to exercise patronage power over all party and state institutions, at least one element of the nomenklatura tradition is re-emerging in the form of "cadres reserves."<sup>1</sup> In the words of Olga Kryshтанovskaia, "as the main instrument of preparing a cadres reserve and generating an elite, the institution of the nomenklatura was for all intents and purposes destroyed [in the early 1990s]. Its revival began only in 1997."<sup>2</sup> Reappearing on a small scale during Yeltsin's second term of office, cadres reserve lists became a standard feature of Russian administrative life by the first years of the Putin presidency. Confirmation of their status as an integral element of personnel policy came in the spring of 2003, with the passage of a new law on the civil service, which called for the formation of cadres reserves in the federal Government and its ministries and in the administrations and departments of provincial-level governments.

Does the re-emergence of lists of administrative personnel designated for promotion represent the first step in the establishment of a nomenklatura system adapted to the new conditions of postcommunist rule? Or is it merely an attempt to enhance bureaucratic efficiency through the use of what the public administration literature calls “succession management”? After describing briefly the revival of cadres reserve lists in federal, regional, and municipal governments, this paper assesses the potential perils of this Soviet legacy for Russian politics and administration in the postcommunist era. It argues that whatever the original motivations for the revival of the institution of cadres reserves, the formation and management of pools of replacement personnel may serve to consolidate authoritarian rather than democratic rule in Russia.

### *The Revival of Cadres Reserves*

Because Vladimir Putin has championed the remaking of the Russian state through separate reforms of legal institutions, public administration, and center-periphery relations, it is tempting to identify these initiatives with his presidency. Yet the origins of these changes lie in measures adopted in 1997, in the early part of Yeltsin’s second term, when the presidential apparatus began to confront governance problems that been kept off the agenda by issues of economic reform and the partition of political power between executive and legislative institutions. While political and bureaucratic elites in Moscow debated the outlines of broad-based reforms of state administration during Yeltsin’s second term of office, federal and provincial governments began to lay the normative and educational groundwork for a revival of cadres reserve lists, which could assist the public sector to identify and retain the highly-skilled personnel who had so often abandoned state service for private employment in the 1990s.

The adoption in July 1997 of a presidential decree, “On the Preparation of Management Cadres for the National Economy,” was one of the first signals that the Russian leadership intended to recreate organized talent pools from which to fill administrative vacancies. Designed as a five-year program, this initiative envisioned training each year, in Russia and the West, 5,000 of the country’s most promising young managers from the public and private sectors. After completing the course, willing graduates were placed in cadres reserve lists for promotion to leading posts in federal or provincial bureaucracies.

Originally overseen by one of the country’s youngest and most progressive politicians, Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, this federal program spawned similar initiatives in many of the country’s 89 republics and territories, including the Golden Personnel Reserve for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Russia, organized by Sergei Kirienko. Usually less competitive and lacking the overseas training component found in the presidential program, these regional contests varied widely in the methods used to select young candidates and in the character of their training. But the purpose of the programs was similar: to create a “golden reserve list” [*zolotoi kadrovyi rezerv*] that included a region’s most promising cadres.

By the time of Putin’s accession to power in May 2000, therefore, at least a modest reservoir of talent for a new Russian administrative elite was already in place. Political leaders, especially at the provincial and municipal levels, continued to speak out, however, about a personnel shortage, or cadres famine, to use the more expressive Russian phrase [*kadrovyi golod*]. Among the most innovative responses to the perceived dearth of highly qualified cadres in state administration came in the Privolzh’e federal district, where the governor-general, Sergei Kirienko, used an internet-based recruiting campaign and contemporary human resource tools, such as psychological testing and role playing [*delovye igry*], to fill vacancies in his office.

Finalists in these competitions who did not receive immediate offers of employment were usually placed in cadres reserve lists, to be tapped when future vacancies arose. This recruitment experiment in the Privolzh'e federal district's own bureaucracy served as a model for many regional and municipal governments in the Volga district and beyond. <sup>3</sup>

Whereas the more visible additions to cadres reserve lists have come from those competing for widely-advertised posts or prestigious retraining programs, most personnel enter the reserve in more prosaic fashion: as a result of nominations by their superiors in the workplace. Typically, the head of a department identifies promising younger workers within their divisions who, with additional training and experience, could assume the posts of "main" or "leading" officials in a department. (Reserve lists are not generally maintained for the lowest official ranks.) Thus, cadres reserve lists are filled more frequently from below, by officials already on a career track within an organization, than laterally, by individuals not currently employed in the department or even the institution.

Before examining the operation of the current cadres reserve lists, we should note that one cannot yet speak of a single system of recruitment and management of reserves of cadres. Although the March 2003 federal civil service code envisions the formation of cadres reserves in all state bodies at all levels of government, it offers no detailed provisions on the institution. The new law on the civilian state service, now under discussion, should provide some direction for those responsible for establishing and maintaining cadres reserves. However, it is likely that forthcoming federal legislation will continue to permit significant regional variations in policy and practice on the cadres reserves. It is important, therefore, to assess the normative groundwork that has already been laid in provincial and municipal governments, whose laws and ordinances provide the daily marching orders for most of Russian officialdom.



Besides the introduction of the presidential program for identifying and training promising young managers, the years 1997 and 1998 also witnessed the adoption by regions and municipalities of the first postcommunist laws governing cadres reserves. One of the first jurisdictions to pass an ordinance on this subject was Moscow, whose February 1998 legislation stated that “civil service vacancies for the city of Moscow should be filled primarily [*preimushchestvenno*] from persons on cadres reserve lists.” Only posts for which there was no cadres reserve would be open to competition (*otkrytyi konkurs*).<sup>4</sup>

In accordance with Moscow’s status as a territory of regional significance, the city’s ordinance called for the establishment of three levels of cadres reserve in the capital: lists of personnel eligible for promotion to the core executive of the city administration (positions in the offices of the mayor, deputy mayors, and “head of Government”); lists of personnel eligible for promotion to vacancies in the various departments and agencies of citywide administration; and lists of personnel who could fill positions in the city’s borough, or prefectural, administrations. In the latter two administrative levels, a bureau chief, together with the institution’s personnel office [*kadrovaia sluzhba*], nominates persons for the reserve lists, and then the head of department or agency (at city level) or the prefect confirms the nominations.

In the core executive, matters are slightly more complicated. There, one also finds nominations made jointly by department heads and the city’s division of personnel policy, but responsibility for confirming the *rezervisty* varies according to the nature of the post. In the case of reserve lists involving career positions [category “V”], the mayor’s administrator of affairs [*upravliaiushchii delami*] confirms the nominations, whereas those involving political appointments [category “B” posts] are confirmed by the mayor or a deputy mayor.<sup>5</sup>

A review of legislation and personnel policy from more than twenty cities and regions across Russia reveals numerous common features of cadres reserve policy and practice. First, the dossiers kept on personnel on reserve lists contain the usual biographical information one would expect to find in human resource offices: a sheet with basic personal information, the *ob'ektivka* or *kadrovaia spravka*; an assessment by superiors of the individual's performance, the *kharakteristika* or *otzyv*; the results of formal performance reviews, the *attestatsii*; the labor book, *trudovaia knizhka*, which contains an employment history of the individual; and information on formal and continuing education received by the individual in reserve.<sup>6</sup> Alongside the dossiers on *rezervisty*, government agencies maintain registries of posts (*reestry*), for which the individuals in reserve are eligible. These parallel lists of jobs and personnel are reminiscent of the documentary structure of the old nomenklatura system.

The cadres reserve lists differ from the job resume files maintained by American governmental organizations not just in their systematic identification and nomination of replacement personnel but in their professional development programs organized for individuals on the reserve lists. In this regard, they are closer to the succession lists maintained and nurtured by many large companies in the West than the job application files that accumulate in American federal, state, and local bureaucracies.<sup>7</sup>

The personnel lists, therefore, have two main purposes: to create a leadership track that will simplify the selection of personnel when vacancies occur and to prepare the candidates professionally and psychology for promotion. Inclusion on a reserve list makes it more likely that the individual will receive additional training through the shadowing of superiors at work

and through leadership seminars and continuing education courses. Such an investment in the rising generation assumes that the persons in reserve have a relatively high level of commitment to the institution for which he or she is earmarked.

Whereas ministries or departments tend to select internal candidates for their reserve lists, especially in fields like law enforcement, for which specialized training is required, the core executive seeks cadres from more diverse sources.<sup>8</sup> In many jurisdictions, cadres reserve lists for appointment to posts in the offices of mayors and governors contain private sector employees as well as civil servants.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, there has been an attempt by chief executives in some regions and municipalities to cultivate an integrated list of the area's most promising young managers, regardless of the sector.

The movement of personnel between public and private sectors is not unique to Russia, of course. While it is more widespread in some countries at the upper levels of administration, such as France, where *pantouflage* enjoys a long tradition, in the United States one finds numerous examples of public-private partnerships in administration at the local level. It is traditional, for example, for local chambers of commerce to recruit young Americans into leadership training programs from both private companies and government service.<sup>10</sup> In part, Russia's distinctiveness lies in its deep distrust of a labor market to provide the necessary personnel for the public sector, which leads it to rely on administrative as well as financial and marketing tools in recruitment.

The identification of new talent by governmental chief executives begins in some jurisdictions as early as high school and university, with government personnel offices tracking the most able students whom they hope to attract to public service posts upon graduation. In Omsk, for example, the mayor's office maintains a register of all recent graduates who finish

their schooling with gold and silver medals.<sup>11</sup> Nizhnii Novgorod organizes competitions among the recent graduates of area universities for places of employment or places on the cadres reserve lists of regional administration. They also operate a special program designed to identify promising rural youth in high school and then to return them to management positions in the countryside after the completion of training.<sup>12</sup>

One finds, moreover, increasing links between youth organizations and city governments, which seek to coopt youth leaders into state service. In St. Petersburg, for example, the local authorities have adopted an ordinance that provides internships for representatives of local youth organizations, who may then be included in the cadres reserves for employment in municipal service.<sup>13</sup> Another jurisdiction created a “youth government” for similar purposes.<sup>14</sup> Although it may be premature to speak of a postcommunist Komsomol, these efforts to mobilize the youth into state service are clearly reminiscent of Soviet-era practices, which some young leaders welcome. The thirty year-old head of the Youth Council of Voronezh oblast insisted recently that the “youth council should occupy the place that the Komsomol previously held in decisions on the creation of a cadres reserve for state and economic (*khozrashchet*) structures.”<sup>15</sup>

Russian public administration is also unusual in the maintenance, in some jurisdictions at least, of cadres reserve lists for private enterprises as well as state institutions. That is, government may seek to influence the recruitment decisions of private firms and not just draw talent from their ranks. In most cases, government officials are merely identifying replacement personnel for government seats on the boards of enterprises partly or wholly-owned by the state. In some instances, however, the government is insinuating itself into the recruitment decisions of non-governmental institutions in ways that are similar to the nomenklatura practices of the Soviet era.

In Yakutia, for example, the republic's Department for the Selection and Distribution of Cadres and State Service assumes responsibility for personnel matters not only in government agencies but in "economic enterprises with state capital, federal structures located in the republic, scientific establishments, social organizations, and non-productive collectives."<sup>16</sup> In Belgorod, the local authorities are pursuing a "unified personnel policy," which supports a cadres reserve that will fill vacancies in local enterprises as well as government service.<sup>17</sup> And in Vologda, the "unified personnel policy" led to the creation of an interagency council, chaired by the governor, which seeks to coordinate the work of human resource offices of large private companies in the region.<sup>18</sup> If expanded to other areas of Russia, such practices would re-establish the foundations for an authoritarian order.

There is some variation in titles and responsibilities in Russia's many provincial and municipal governments, but the basic structure of personnel management in state institutions is similar. Unlike at the federal level, where no ministry or cabinet-level agency for personnel matters exists in the Russian Government,<sup>19</sup> provincial and local governments tend to maintain a separate department for cadres, which answers to a deputy prime minister (in the case of regions or republics) or a deputy mayor (in the case of cities). In smaller jurisdictions, an "organizational department" may assume responsibility for personnel matters along with other administrative functions.

As the earlier discussion on cadres reserve lists in Moscow city government indicates, below the level of the core executive, personnel offices operate in each of the ministries and agencies of the province or municipality. It does not appear, however, that the department for cadres in the core executive attempts to coordinate or supervise the activities of the intra-ministerial or intra-agency personnel offices. Thus, there is a vertically drawn division of labor in

the formation of cadres reserve lists and in personnel management more generally. Whereas the department of cadres in the core executive assumes responsible for reserve lists that would fill vacancies in the offices of the chief executive as well as top positions in the ministries and agencies, such as deputy ministers, the personnel offices of individual ministries and agencies have within their purview *rezervisty* destined for positions at the department head level and below.<sup>20</sup>

This compartmentalization of personnel management is one factor contributing to what public administration specialists call a “silo mentality” in many Russian executive institutions—a phenomenon known as “departmentalism” [*vedomstvennost*'] in Russian. Under “departmentalism,” officials are unable to take a broader view of state interests because of their exclusive focus on the good of the ministry or department. Whereas turf protection exists in all bureaucracies, most modern states have mechanisms in place to limit this pathology, such as highly-developed party loyalties, which transcend institutions, or career rotation, which separates the fates of individual officials and the institutions in which they work.

Career rotation also enables officials to understand *raison d'état* by providing numerous perspectives from which to view the state. However, having lost its integrating party and its earlier tradition of cadre rotation, Russia no longer has effective antidotes to the problem of departmentalism. Recognizing this, the country's political leadership in the last several years has sought to revive party loyalties and to emphasize the advantages of governmental careers that span multiple institutions.

Some of the most serious efforts to rotate cadres across territories and institutions have been launched by the heads of the seven federal districts that were created by Vladimir Putin in 2000.<sup>21</sup> As part of Putin's campaign to reorient federal territorial officials toward the center and

away from local political networks, the seven governors-general have begun to create cadres reserve lists that can be used to fill vacancies in federal posts located in the provinces.<sup>22</sup> In 2001, the governor-general of the Urals federal district, Petr Latyshev, committed himself to a more systematic and less informal [*kuluarnyi*] approach to forming the reserve. In his view, officials will be less likely to “slack on the job” if they know that there are qualified replacements waiting in the wings.<sup>23</sup>

Although cadres reserves maintained by federal district offices include individuals eligible for promotion to a wide range of federal posts in the provinces—there are from 45 to 80 different federal agencies located in each Russian region or republic—the initial emphasis of the governors-general has been on recruiting federal law enforcement officials who have not been “captured” by local political elites. In order to reduce the influence of republican presidents and regional governors on federal judges, procurators, police, and Ministry of Justice officials, the Russian president’s emissaries in the federal districts have been recruiting replacements for these posts from outside the province or, at a minimum, from outside the circle of influence of the political clan in charge of the region.<sup>24</sup> Not surprisingly, the development of cadres reserves to fill these and other federal posts in the provinces has prompted resistance, not only from territorial bosses but from the heads of agencies in Moscow to whom these officials are subordinate.

Another potential antidote to departmentalism—and to the concentration of patronage power in the hands of a few top executives—is the assertion of legislative influence in personnel selection. Whereas the patronage role of the assembly in the United States and some other countries is expansive, in Russia it touches only a few high-ranking constitutional officers. Because republican presidents and regional governors tend to control the assemblies in their

territories, executive patronage powers in provincial politics and administration have been virtually unlimited. However, in the few areas where the parliaments are not under the thumb of the chief executive, deputies may seek a role in key personnel decisions. Vladimir is one such jurisdiction, where deputies were able to introduce legislation that grants them a voice in shaping the list of *rezervisty* who fill vacancies in economic enterprises owned by the local government.<sup>25</sup>

### *The Implications of Cadres Reserves for Russian Politics and Administration*

On the surface, the cadres reserve appears to be a benign institution that merely assures the smooth transition of qualified personnel into more responsible posts. That goal undoubtedly motivates many of those championing the revival of cadres reserve lists, and especially those responsible for recruiting mid-level officials in the bureaucracy. But whether intended or not, the revival of cadres reserves has potentially disturbing consequences for the politics-administration nexus in Russia.<sup>26</sup>

First, the increasing reliance on cadres reserves threatens to complicate the shift from a spoils to a merit system by limiting the applicant pool to those personnel who have been pre-screened by political or administrative leaders. In general, positions for which there are *rezervisty* already in place are not subject to open recruitment competitions.<sup>27</sup> Although internal candidates enjoy a privileged position in job hires in most bureaucracies, the selection of replacements from an already existing short list limits the ability of organizations to tap the widest pool of talent available.

While such an approach may be appropriate for mid-level civil servants, especially in institutions requiring more specialized education and experience, it may be less desirable in the hiring of senior executives. To prevent past decisions on promotion to the reserve from dictating



the future outcomes of administrative recruitment, it is vital that forthcoming legislation on the civilian state service mandate open competition for senior positions in the bureaucracy, such as those of deputy ministers.

Another disadvantage of the cadres reserve system is its reliance on those forming the reserve to elevate the good of the institution above their own career interests. Put simply, will a department head nominate the best candidates for the reserve list as his or her potential replacement? To build on Latyshev's comment above, why should a superior nominate someone who could be a threat to them, when the safer course is to fill the reserve lists with individuals distinguished by their personal loyalty to the boss rather than their professionalism?<sup>28</sup>

To avoid this problem, in some jurisdictions higher-level officials place favored candidates in reserve lists several rungs down the administrative ladder. This option presents its own problems, however. In Stavropol, the immediate superiors of the *rezervisty* who had been selected by higher-level officials sought to use any means to rid themselves of these members of the cadres reserve, whom they regarded as their main competitors.<sup>29</sup>

In the Soviet system, the management of the reserve lists by an external institution, the Communist Party, counterbalanced this tendency toward self-protection, but there is no comparable mechanism in place in postcommunist Russia. To be sure, in a narrow range of reserve lists in the provinces, the offices of the governors-general are now seeking to limit the self-dealing of those who nominate *rezervisty*. Furthermore, the power to confirm nominees to reserve lists, whether wielded by the core executive or higher authorities within a ministry or department, can also serve as a check on the nomination of candidates who have been chosen because they enhance the position of their superiors rather than the well-being of the institution. In Kazan, for example, the local departments of education regularly reject nominations from

school principals for the principals' reserve list because the teachers nominated as *rezervisty* are selected for their weakness instead of their strength.<sup>30</sup> Such careful oversight of the formation of reserve lists does not appear to be the norm, however. Most checking institutions in Russia do not actively cultivate alternative sources of information from lower levels of the bureaucracy, which are essential to the promotion of professionalism over favoritism.

Perhaps the most serious danger in the current reserve system is that persons on the reserve lists will wish to see the maintenance in power of the current leadership, given that a change of leadership could--and in many cases almost certainly would--lead to a complete revamping of the reserve lists. The development of a politically neutral civil service is impossible when key personnel, and particularly the rising generation, view the removal of the existing leadership as a threat to their careers--and here it should be noted that cadres under 40 comprise the vast majority of persons on these promotion lists.

In a sense, then, what the political leadership is doing in creating reserve lists is taking its present power and projecting it into the future by coopting those who stand to gain if the ruling political elite remains in office. Given the ability and willingness of politicians to mobilize the state bureaucracy behind their re-election efforts, or those of their political allies, making civil servants such stakeholders in the continuation in power of the incumbent leader or his clan strengthens authoritarian rather than democratic tendencies in Russia.

This danger is especially pronounced at the upper reaches of the bureaucracy, among the deputy ministers (or the equivalent personnel in regions and municipalities), who are formally tenured civil servants (category "V" officials) but who wield considerable political as well as administrative power. Given their prominence and their numbers--one of the unfortunate legacies of the Soviet era is the army of deputy ministers who stand between the ministers and

department heads—deputy ministers represent a formidable base of support for an incumbent administration.<sup>31</sup>

Should a new chief executive come to power, he or she would likely appoint new ministers, who could bring in new members of their personal staffs but would inherit a coterie of potentially hostile deputy ministers just beneath their offices. In this case, a minister has three alternatives, each unsatisfactory. First, he can continue to live with the deputy ministers, who may undermine his leadership of the ministry or agency and resist his policies. This is a recipe for administrative stalemate and internecine conflict. Second, he can reorganize the ministry and thereby eliminate the position of particularly recalcitrant deputy ministers, and thereby *encourager les autres*. Such reorganizations are an extremely common means of removing unwanted tenured civil servants, whether at the deputy minister level or below. This approach, of course, encourages administrative chaos and a nihilist approach to civil service tenure, which is an essential guarantor of the political neutrality of the bureaucracy. Finally, a minister may, in clear violation of existing legislation, fire the deputy. Such an approach is most likely to occur in outlying regions where an appeal to the courts or higher authorities by a deputy minister would be unusual.

As Adam Przeworski reminds us, democracy is political power held *pro tempore*. The refusal of many political and administrative elites to accept electoral defeat as an essential ingredient of politics has many sources in postcommunist Russia, from the cultural legacies of the old order to the high stakes game surrounding the partition of national wealth and the dearth of life chances for Russian officials outside of politics. Although one may not regard the cadres reserve list as an insurmountable barrier to democratization, it is, at a minimum, an institution that encourages loyalty to persons rather than to offices, which is a standard Weberian measure

of the modern bureaucracy. Established in many cases with the best of intentions, the cadres reserve lists could easily impede Russia's political development by deepening relations of dependency between the rising generation of officials and the senior administrators who maintain them in reserve as well as between the senior administrators and the politicians who protect their jobs and their prerogatives in selecting their subordinates and successors.

### *Conclusions*

The development of cadres reserves in postcommunist Russia has the potential to recreate in state administration some of the same levers of influence that were available to political leaders under the nomenklatura system of the Soviet era. To perfect this system on a national level, of course, would require the further development of a party of power like *Edinaia Rossiia*, whose role in federal and many provincial bureaucracies has become more overt and influential of late. The recent comments of Governor-General Latyshev on this point are striking. He has come out as an unabashed supporter of *Edinaia Rossiia* because, in his words, "it represents the policies of *vlast* ' to the population" and "the population supports it [*ona imponiruet naseleniiu*]." Latyshev has even proposed the revival in state institutions of primary party organizations, one of the pillars of one-party rule in the Soviet era.<sup>32</sup>

This inability of high-ranking Russian officials to distinguish between their administrative and political personae was evident in remarks by Sergei Kirienko, made a few months after being appointed by Putin to head the Privolzh'e federal district. "I came to work for President Putin," he said, "and I will do everything I can so that he is elected again in the next presidential campaign."<sup>33</sup> President Putin himself has insisted that "we need to change our attitude to municipal elections, where there's not sufficient monitoring [*kontrol*'] or an existing

cadres reserve.”<sup>34</sup> Such a statement should come from Putin as the leader of a political party, not as a chief executive intent on creating an administrative chain of command, or *vertikal*’.

Although it is difficult to obtain precise information on the level of involvement of the governors-general in the recruitment of candidates for legislative and executive posts at the provincial and municipal levels, it is clear that they are helping to nominate and promote not just high-ranking executive appointees but elected officials. For example, Latyshev’s office vets deputies standing for office, which a leader of a party allied to *Edinaia Rossiia* regards as normal. In the words of this party official, “we exchange information [with the federal district office]. Who becomes a deputy is important to the Governor-General [*polpredu nemalovazhno, kto deputat*].”<sup>35</sup>

This effacement of the boundaries between electoral politics and state administration was one of the hallmarks of the Soviet order. The likelihood, of course, is not that a vigorous *Edinaia Rossiia* would become the CPSU but that it would develop into the hegemonic party in a nominally democratic state, much as the PRI did in Mexico. In such a system, the cadres reserves could serve as a mechanism for party control of administrative and not just political appointments.<sup>36</sup> When some deputies sought to establish a barrier to such party dominance of the civil service by including a prohibition on party membership in the ranks of officialdom, *Edinaia Rossiia* and its allies in the Duma rejected the proposal.<sup>37</sup>

In Saratov, one study has proposed formalizing the links between cadres reserves and electoral campaigns by creating a reserve list of prospective members of the regional parliament—a reserve that would be maintained by the state rather than a party. Chosen after submitting themselves to psychological testing, *rezervisty* would be sent to “specially created professional schools for raising the qualifications of the cadres reserve.” Upon completion, they

would be subjected to review (*aprobatsiia*) by the media to determine their likely level of popularity.<sup>38</sup>

This extraordinary proposal to bureaucratize democracy must be understood as a vestige of the old regime, which believed that questions of politics could be reduced to pure administration. Unfortunately, such overconfidence in the science of bureaucratic management compromises liberal and democratic values by sustaining a belief—akin to that contained in the ideology of party rule—in the possibility of the end of politics. Echoing remarks this observer heard in interviews with Russian officials and faculty at the academies of state service, the rector of the Institute of Management and Economics in St. Petersburg lamented the role of elections in bringing dilettantes, rather than experts, to power.<sup>39</sup>

One of the most serious barriers to the establishment of a party-dominated system of cadres reserves has been the reluctance of the Russian president to tie his fortunes to a single party. However, Putin's recent appearance at the *Edinaia Rossiia* conference—and the overtly partisan statements of some of his subordinates—are signals that a fusion of presidential power and party institution-building may be underway. Shortly after coming to power, Putin gave instructions to the presidential and Government apparatuses to revive cadres reserve lists for key federal posts.<sup>40</sup> The question now is whether the Russian president will champion a party-based patronage system, and if so, whether it will be detached from, or subordinate to, the state.<sup>41</sup>

Besides its use as a formal term of public administration, “reserve” in Russian also refers to any group eligible to fill political or administrative posts. In Putin's Russia, the most important informal reserve of cadres is the military. Olga Kryshstanovskaia and others have done

important research on the militarization of high-ranking cadres, but the country's vast corps of demobilized officers also represents an enormous pool of replacement personnel for mid-level and senior executive positions in the Russian bureaucracy.<sup>42</sup>

With the graying of Russian civil servants, and the opening up of hundreds of thousands of administrative vacancies in the next decade, demobilized officers in search of employment are a logical replacement pool for these positions. As Kryshstanovskaia notes, "beginning in 2000, persons in uniform came into the second or third highest-ranking posts in the hierarchies of all federal agencies, making up, it seems, the most visible group in the cadres reserve."<sup>43</sup>

To facilitate the movement of retired or retiring military personnel into the civilian bureaucracy, lawmakers have adopted legislation that creates a common set of civilian and military ranks and integrates the pension and benefits packages of the two bureaucracies. Some military officers are also receiving training in the civil service academies to prepare them to assume positions in civilian administration.<sup>44</sup> The continued militarization of the Russian bureaucracy would raise serious questions about the ability of Russia to reform its bureaucracy while integrating a large "reserve" of senior personnel whose values and professional experience were forged in some of the most traditional Soviet institutions.

## ENDNOTES

1. Here we use the term *nomenklatura* to refer to the system of recruiting personnel rather than the ruling class itself. One should note that a feature of the Soviet *nomenklatura* class has been revived by Putin, namely the refusal to send those who leave office into the political wilderness, witness the treatment of two of the President's political enemies, the former mayor of St. Petersburg and governor of Primor'e. See Viktor Loshak, "Obratnaia sviaz'. Vechnaia oboima," *Moskovskie novosti*, 17 June 2003, p. 4.
2. Ol'ga Kryshchanovskaia, "Vremia issledovani. Molodezh' idet v oligarkhi," *Vremia MN*, 18 January 2002, p. 6.
3. For details on the competition in Kirienko's federal district, see Marina Volkova, "Chinovnika staviat v ramki," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 6 May 2003, p. 4, and Mikhail Aleksandrov, "Privolzh'e. U Kirienko tri vakansii," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 1 June 2002, p. 7. Information on the open competition for a cadres reserve in the Ulianovsk oblast, which sought to exclude the influence of "*blat*" on the outcome, may be found in "V Ul'ianovskoi oblasti sozdaetsia rezerv kadrov oblastnoi administratsii. Chinovniki nabiraiut po konkursu," 18 July 2001, *Pravda.ru*.
4. O rezerve kadrov dlia zameshcheniia vakantnykh dolzhnostei gosudarstvennykh sluzhb goroda Moskvy, *Rasporiazhenie mera Moskvy*, 26 fevralia 1998g., N 186-pm, and accompanying *polozhenie*.
5. *Ibid.*
6. See, for example, the legislation on this from Sakhalin, "O poriadke zachisleniia v rezerv i nakhozheniia v rezerve gosudarstvennoi sluzhby Sakhalinskoi oblasti" (24 January 2002), [http://vff-s.narod.ru/sb/b7/314\\_1.html](http://vff-s.narod.ru/sb/b7/314_1.html). Besides the detailed files maintained on individual civil servants, including those in reserve, new legislation calls for the establishment of a combined registry (*svodnyi reestr*) of all federal and provincial civil servants, to be regulated by presidential decree. See Art. 15, "O sisteme gosudarstvennoi sluzhby Rossiiskoi federatsii," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 30 May 2003, p. 10.
7. Typically, reserve lists are culled once a year to remove individuals who are no longer eligible for promotion to the designated posts or who no longer enjoy the confidence of the leadership.
8. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation represents an exception to this pattern. It recently announced competitions for three supervisory posts that were to be filled through an open competition that it hoped would draw applicants from private as well as public institutions. One wonders, however, whether employees in the private sector will be willing to make a career move to a ministry if they could be fired within a three-month trial period, presumably without any of the severance payments that would be negotiated for such positions in the West. This ministry, which helped to write pending legislation encouraging the use of open competitions for the hiring of civil servants, viewed these three competitions within its own bureaucracy as an experiment, which it hoped would encourage other ministries to follow suit. Mikhail Vorob'ev, "Konkursy na gosudarstvennye dolzhnosti voidut v modu," *Vremia novostei*, 15 May 2003, p. 4..
9. See, for example, article 3.3, "Polozhenie o rezerve kadrov dlia zameshcheniia vakantnykh dolzhnostei gosudarstvennykh sluzhb goroda Moskvy," *Rasporiazhenie mera Moskvy*, 26 fevralia 1998g., N 186-pm, and article 2.1 of postanovlenie no. 46 O poriadke zachisleniia v rezerv munitsipal'noi sluzhby, Tazovskii raion, Iamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, [www.fakttv.ru/official/2002/04/22/01.html](http://www.fakttv.ru/official/2002/04/22/01.html).
10. For other examples of cross-training between public and private sectors, see Gambhir Bhatta, "Senior Management Development in the New Zealand Public Service," *Asian Journal of Political Science*, no. 2 (2001), p. 122.
11. Artem Galin, "Korporatsiia munitsipal'nykh sluzhashchikh," *Kommercheskie vesti*, 2 July 2003.
12. Svetlana Grigor'eva, "Kollektivnyi razum vospityvaetsia trudom," *Nizhegorodskie novosti*, 5 July 2001.
13. O privilechenii predstavitelei molodezhnykh obshchestvennykh ob'edinenii k uchastiiu v deiatel'nosti ispolnitel'nykh organov gosudarstvennoi vlasti Sankt-Peterburga, *Rasporiazhenie ot 21 dekabria 2001 goda*, N 1406-ra. <http://gov.spb.ru/gov/admin/otral/kpmp/dokument/rasporyagheniya/2> (sic).



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14. "Uspekhov!" *Iunost*, 23 October 2002. This article describes the youth government in Yaroslavl.
15. "Zdorovyi patriotizm, demokraticheskie tsennosti, uvazhenie mneniia drugikh," *Kommuna* [Voronezh], 15 April 2003.
16. "Aleksandr Samsonov: 'My poluchili real' nuiu kartinu o kadrovom potentsiale respubliki," *Iakutiia*, 6 June 2002.
17. V. Kizilov, "Vypusnikov mnogo-spetsialistov net," *Belgorodskaia pravda*, 19 November 2002. In Krasnoyarsk, the city government has created a single cadres reserve, noting that the "municipality serves as a coordinating and organizing center for the development of personnel resources of the city, nurturing its intellectual potential and assuring the professional socialization of its management cadres." "Kontury programmy 'Munitsipal'nyi kadrovyy rezerv'," [www.povestka.ru/shkr/kras/an/sta1.htm](http://www.povestka.ru/shkr/kras/an/sta1.htm). In Karelia, the republican government has adopted what it calls an "integrated cadres policy" to embrace the forming of reserves and training of personnel for municipal government and enterprises." "Kak utopit' kadrovyy golod?" *Kareliia*, no. 118 (7 November 2002). [www.gov.karelia.ru/gov/Karelia/965/18.html](http://www.gov.karelia.ru/gov/Karelia/965/18.html).
18. "Kadry reshait vse!" *Krasnyi Sever* [Vologda], 2 March 2002.
19. The presidential apparatus has an Administration for Cadres Policy, but it has played a negligible role in personnel policy or practice. There is also a *Departament gosudarstvennoi sluzhby i kadrov* in the apparatus of the Government.
20. On the operation of personnel policy at the regional level, see the informative interview with the head of the administrator of affairs of the Vologda region. "Kadry reshait vse!" *Krasnyi Sever* [Vologda], 2 March 2002.
21. For an example of rotation used for leading posts in a republic, where 42 percent of persons appointed to "leading posts" are drawn from other state institutions or from economic enterprises, see "Aleksandr Samsonov: 'My poluchili real' nuiu kartinu o kadrovom potentsiale respubliki," *Iakutiia*, 6 June 2002. See also Aleksandr Strakhov, "Otsupat' nekuda. Nastupat'—tozhe. V regionakh u tsentra kadrovogo rezerva net." *Izvestiia*, 6 March 2002, p. 4.
22. See Svetlana Ofitova, "Polpredam razreshili 'vziat' kassu. Odnako prioritetye zadachi namestnikov—eto zemel'naia i sudebnaia reformy," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 24 April 2003, p. 2.
23. Svetlana Ofitova, "Petr Latyshev: nasha tsel'—edinoe prostranstvo," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 22 April 2003, p. 10, and Larisa Aidinova, "6,5 milliona chinovnika dlia Rossii—eto zapredel'no," *Vek*, 16 March 2001, p. 9.
24. For a fascinating article on the influence of the president of Tatarstan on the selection of the republic's procurator, see "Kafil' Amirov: zakonnost' dolzhna byt' odna—vserossiiskaia, a ne kaluzhskaia ili kazanskaia," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 15 July 2000, p. 4.
25. "Prezidium Vladimirovskogo gorodskogo Soveta narodnykh deputatov," *Molva* [Vladimir], 26 February 2002.
26. On the significance of the politics-administration nexus, see Peter Hall, "Policy Innovation and the Structure of the State: The Politics-Administration Nexus in France and Britain," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (March 1983), pp. 43-59.
27. Although the white paper on "Reform of the State Service of the Russian Federation, 2003-2005" calls for the cadres reserves to be formed on a competitive basis, there is no indication that this method of selection is being used for most reserve lists. "Ofitsial'nye materialy," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 23 November 2002, p. 5. The first deputy leader of the presidential administration, Dmitrii Medvedev, responding to criticism that the new draft law on the civilian state service had gutted the use of open competitions in civil service hiring, noting that it will remain an important element of civil service hiring, though he admitted that in cases where persons are hired on fixed term contracts, as well as from the reserve, open competitions would not be used. Marina Volkova, "Chinovnika staviat v ramki," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 6 May 2003, p. 4. Speaking in late 2001, a prominent Duma deputy, Vladimir Yuzhakov, estimated that 30 percent of all civil service vacancies would be filled through open competition, though that figure is almost certainly high. Tat'iana Khudiakova, "Chinovnik i ego komanda," *Vremia MN*, 12 October 2001, p. 8.
28. The idea of cadres rotation is so important, one official tied to Kirienko observed, because "a boss never includes in the reserve for his post a subordinate who is more talented [*perspektivnee*] than he is. He prefers a person who's not able to replace

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[podsidet'] him." V. Kochetkov, "Dmitrii Zharkov. Iaponskii opyt preobrazhaet kadrovuiu politiku PFO," *Izvestiia Mordovii*, 5 March 2002.

29. Mikhail Lukin, "O tekhn, kto 'vse reshaet,' i morskikh prostorakh," *Stavropol'skaia pravda*, 26 July 2003.

30. Personal interview with Tamara Nikolaevna Shamaeva, deputy head, Education Department, Sovetskii raion, Kazan, 24 May 2003.

31. Some deputy ministry posts are rumored to sell for large sums of money, which suggests that they are often used for personal enrichment. The sale of such sinecures would, of course, make a mockery of the cadres reserve lists, but it would not negate the point that deputy ministers have an interest in preserving the status quo, which is usually guaranteed by re-electing the current power holders.

32. Svetlana Ofitova, "Petr Latyshev: nasha tsel'—edinoe prostranstvo," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 22 April 2003, p. 10.

33. Mikhail Kushtapin, "Polpred Kirienko v krughe pervom," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 28 February 2001, p. 4.

34. Andrei Makarychev, "Lebedev protiv Putina?" *Birzha*, 20 May 2002. Putin's desire to exercise influence over local elections is of course part of a larger campaign to diminish the power of regional elites, who have themselves sought to have allies elected to city and district offices.

35. Svetlana Ofitova, "Polpredy zhдут ot Kremliia deneg i vlasti," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 22 April 2003, p. 2.

36. *Ibid.* Among the electoral tasks of Latyshev's office is the organizing of "hot lines" that could be used by the media to "receive explanations and recommendations [from the authorities] on questions relating to their activity during the electoral campaign. We are obligated to monitor the carrying out of the law which guarantees that parties and the media explain issues properly." He was unable to explain to a journalist what he meant by "properly." *Ibid.* Dmitrii Medvedev admits that Russia could see the develop of cadres reserves with a strictly party orientation, though he believes this is a "matter for the future." Marina Volkova, "Chinovnika staviat v ramki," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 6 May 2003, p. 4.

It should be made clear that there is extraordinary variety in the ways in which democratic states structure the politics-administration nexus. Where Britain allows only about 100 key posts to be turned over when a new administration comes to office, the number is approximately 3000 in the United States. Whatever the ratio between political appointees and permanent civil servants, there is general agreement that there should be a clear delineation between political and administrative posts in a democratic state. However, in practice, in most countries that are traditionally labeled as democratic, permanent civil servants find themselves at times under severe political or partisan pressure. One such case is Israel, which has allowed some parties to gain a foothold within the administrative life of certain ministries. Eva Etzioni-Halevy, "Administrative Power in Israel," *Israel Affairs*, no. 4 (2002), pp. 30-42.

37. Irina Granik, "Organy vlasti. Povestka. Pravitel'stvo mozhet stat' partiinym," *Kommersant-Daily*, 17 April 2003, p. 2.

38. Ol'ga Kopsheva, "Test na loial'nost' vlasti. V Saratove ne vse soglasny igrat' po gubernatorskim pravilam," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 18 December 2002, p. 4.

39. "Diletantam vo vlasti delat' nechego," *Spb Vedomosti*, 21 April 2000. The rector's solution was to restrict office-holding to those with the requisite education and professional background.

40. Mikhail Kushtapin, "Polpred Kirienko v krughe pervom," *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 28 February 2001, p. 4.

41. Although he imagines the state rather than a party engaged in the formation of a reserve for republic presidents and regional governors, the president of Chuvashia, Nikolai Fedorov, favors the preparation of provincial leaders for office by ensuring that they first have experience in federal ministries and agencies. Marina Kalashnikova, "Rossiiu nado uderzhat' ot samoizoliatsii," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 27 February 2002, p. 1. It is striking that Russian politicians like Fedorov do not seem to understand that in democratic regimes career movements of this sort are matters for parties and not the state, and that state control of this process removes the element of choice and uncertainty essential to a democracy.

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42. Ol'ga Kryshstanovskaia, "Vremia sotsiologii. Elita v pogonakh," *Vremia MN*, 18 September 2002, p. 9. This article merits careful reading by anyone interested in cadres policy in Russia.

43. *Ibid.* She notes that 34.9 percent of all federal deputy ministers appointed from 2000 to 2002 had military backgrounds. Kryshstanovskaia argues that another reason for drawing demobilized officers into the civilian bureaucracy is to prevent "insulted elites" from becoming fodder for the Communist Party and other opposition-oriented organizations. "Vremia elity. Sinekury dlia 'byvshikh,'" *Vremia MN*, 18 April 2003, p. 3.

44. Personal interview with Natal'ia Fedorovna Luk'ianova, Head of Kafedra of State and Municipal Administration, Institute for Qualification Raising, Moscow, 27 May 2003.