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# **THE DECEMBER 1999 DUMA ELECTIONS**

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The Russian Duma elections will be held on 19 December 1999. Opinion polls indicate that Otechestvo-Vsya Rossiya (OVR), the Communist CPRF and Yabloko enjoy the most support. On 30 October Russian Public TV reported on an opinion poll conducted by the Public Opinion Fund asking people whom they would vote for in a Duma election. The results are:

CPRF 19%

OVR 18%

Yabloko 11%

Yedinstvo 6%

LDPR 5%

1,500 were polled in 56 populated locations in 29 regions.

Previous CSRC papers have discussed the Russian parliamentary structure and the procedure and timing of these elections. Below is an outline of the major factions that will be contending them.

## **OTECHESTVO-VSYA ROSSIYA**

The formation of the Otechestvo-Vsya Rossiya (Fatherland-All Russia) electoral bloc could be one of the most significant development in Russian politics for the period 1999-2000. The OVR consists of two separate blocs which were formed at different times, and which decided in August 1999 to merge to contest the December 1999 Duma elections.

Otechestvo was formed in November 1998 under the leadership of the mayor of Moscow, Yury Luzhkov. Its founding congress took place in Moscow in December 1998. In October 1998 Yury Luzhkov attended the annual conference of the British Labour Party, and expressed his support for the creation of a similar movement in Russia. Otechestvo's formation can be seen as his attempt to create such a movement. By his support for a Russian version of "New Labour", it can be assumed that Luzhkov favoured the creation of a movement whose values were similar to those of western social democracy. Indeed, in September 1998 he

had said that a new movement would emerge soon in Russia based on social democracy. He also argued in October that Russia should choose a third way between totalitarian socialism and vulgar liberalism. When visiting Germany in December 1998, he criticised the models of reform prescribed for Russia by US economists. On a visit to Sweden in February 1999, Luzhkov defined Otechestvo's ideological orientation as being based on western social democracy.

Luzhkov appeared to feel that Russia has a natural need for a social-democratic movement that would combine market economic reforms with a welfare state and the need for the state to play a strong role in guiding the transition to the market. A movement was needed that would avoid the Communists' aversion to any meaningful reform of the old command economy and the radical democrats' willingness to let the old Soviet industrial sector collapse. Luzhkov began arguing the need for a social democratic movement after the economic crisis of August 1998, which presumably convinced him of the need to develop a movement that could move Russia away from what he considered to be the misguided reformism of the radical democrats and the anti-reformism of the Communists. For such a movement to be successful, it would require a high-profile leader, and Luzhkov, as a result of his position as mayor of Moscow, was suitable for this role. If Russia is to develop in the social democratic direction favoured by Luzhkov, it requires a movement that is capable of winning power. Otechestvo is Luzhkov's attempt to create such a movement.

Otechestvo's founding congress took place in Moscow in December 1998. At this congress Luzhkov was elected leader. The movement has a 15 strong political council, and many leading Russian centrists occupy important positions in the Otechestvo leadership. Amongst the most prominent are Arkady Volskiy and Aleksandr Vladislavlev. These two men were in the centrist Civic Union movement in the early 1990s, which favoured a more gradualist, state-directed approach to the reform of the economy. The movement also contains a significant number of *derzhavniki*, who favour an assertive approach towards the near abroad and also a less deferential foreign policy towards the West. Luzhkov himself fits into this category, as does Konstantin Zatulin and the former interior minister Anatoly Kulikov.

Otechestvo's second congress was held in April 1999. At this congress Otechestvo's election manifesto was presented. In April Luzhkov also made clear that Otechestvo was interested in forming alliances with other movements in order to contend the December 1999 Duma elections.

### **Luzhkov As Leader**

Yury Luzhkov has been seen as a possible presidential candidate since at least November 1994. He was elected vice-mayor of Moscow in June 1991 on a ticket with Georgy Popov. Luzhkov was at the same time head of the Moscow city government. In June 1992 he was appointed mayor of Moscow by presidential decree. He was re-elected mayor in June 1996. In the period 1993-94 he supported the Chernomyrdin government and in 1995 supported the pro-government Nash Dom Rossiya bloc, led by Viktor Chernomyrdin. However Luzhkov was extremely critical of the privatisation scheme masterminded by Anatoly Chubays, and pursued his own scheme in Moscow. In April 1994 he warned that Chubays's privatisation programme was allowing too much of the

economy to be purchased by foreigners. In his autobiography he has argued that the IMF is not interested in seeing Russia as an economically strong country.

Luzhkov has, however, been reluctant to declare any interest in the presidency. He has stated several times in the last three years that he will not run for the presidency in 2000. This can be seen as the natural caution of a politician not wishing to commit himself too soon. Opinion polls in 1998 and 1999 have given him a high rating as presidential candidate. However one of the key features of his strategy as Otechestvo leader has been to look for allies in order to give the movement as broad a base as possible. His search for allies has been one of the reasons why he has studiously refrained from declaring any interest in the presidency.

### **The Search For Allies - Vsya Rossiya**

He had no interest in allying with the CPRF, despite statements from the Communists indicating a willingness to work with Otechestvo. In April Luzhkov stated that he hoped that the new Duma would not contain any Communist deputies. Luzhkov also has no interest in any alliance with Nash Dom Rossiya.

In April 1999, the ally was found. The founding congress of Vsya Rossiya took place in April, virtually coinciding with Otechestvo's second congress. It was announced at Vsya Rossiya's congress that an alliance had been formed with Otechestvo to concentrate efforts on the Duma elections.

Vsya Rossiya is seen as a bloc of the governors and may be regarded as an attempt to create a party of the regions. The leading force in this movement has been President Mintimier Shaymiyev of Tatarstan. Other key figures are: President of Bashkortostan, Murtaza Rakhimov; Ingush President, Ruslan Aushev; St. Petersburg Governor Vladimir Yakovlev; Astrakhan Governor Anatoly Guzhvin; Omsk Governor Leonid Polezhayev; Vladimir Medvedev, head of the Russia's Regions group.

By allying with a movement with a broad base throughout the Russian Federation, Otechestvo hopes to be able to win the votes of those who may be put off voting for Otechestvo because of the resentment for Luzhkov felt by those outside Moscow.

The theses of the Vsya Rossiya programme express considerable dissatisfaction with the alleged reforms of the Yel'tsin era. It argues that Russia has a collapsing economy instead of a market economy, and instead of democracy it has the toleration of bureaucratic highhandedness, corruption and irresponsible authorities. It says that attempts to reform Russia from above have failed, and that instead reform should be implemented from the regions. In a political statement issued on 22 April, Vsya Rossiya stated that the current federal authorities had enclosed themselves inside the Moscow ring road and were incapable of expressing the diversity of the interests of Russian citizens. Vsya Rossiya argues for a socially oriented market economy, relying on the national manufacturing industry. It also argues for a reduction in the power of the presidency, and a more effective system of checks and balances between president, government, parliament and the courts. The government should have majority support in the Duma and Federation Council. This echoes many of

Luzhkov's ideas, as he has argued for constitutional reform and a reduction of the power of the presidency. He also favours a restoration of the vice-presidency.

Vsya Rossiya elected St.Petersburg Governor Vladimir Yakovlev as its leader in August and a joint Otechestvo-Vsya Rossiya election manifesto was agreed at the end of August. Luzhkov showed strong interest in attracting former prime minister Yevgenny Primakov over to the OVR. This was a sound move, as opinion polls made it obvious that Primakov was easily the most respected politician in the country and would be the clear favourite if he stood for president.

In August former prime minister Yevgenny Primakov agreed to head the Otechestvo-Vsya Rossiya electoral bloc, and Yury Luzhkov stated that he would not run for the presidency if Primakov decides to run. In September, Primakov stated that OVR aimed to become the party of power in Russia.

### **Primakov**

When he was appointed prime minister in September 1998, Primakov sought to move Russia away from the Gaidarite approach to economic reform that had been pursued since 1991. He criticised what he saw as inexperienced IMF advisers and the monetarist approach of his predecessors. He favoured greater state regulation of the economy, whilst rejecting any attempt to recreate a Soviet type economy. He could therefore reasonably be regarded as social-democratic in outlook. He managed to alleviate some of the effects of the financial crisis that gripped Russia in August 1998, and the economy improved slightly under his premiership. He also introduced a degree of political stability following what had been a potentially dangerous stand off between president and Duma in August-September 1998. He improved the working relationship with the Duma, which contrasted with Yel'tsin's inclination to ignore it. He is widely perceived in Russia as a politician who is not motivated by narrow self-interest, but has a genuine interest in promoting stability. For this reason he would be a strong contender for the presidency should he decide to run.

### **Yel'tsin's Fear Of The OVR**

Yel'tsin may well be concerned at the rise of this movement, as he may fear that he and/or members of his family may face investigation and possible prosecution for financial corruption once he leaves office. It has been speculated that Sergey Stepashin was dismissed as prime minister in August 1999 for his failure to nullify the emergence of this movement. Luzhkov has sought to allay Yel'tsin's fears by stating that he opposes any attempt to prosecute Yel'tsin once the current president leaves office. This however has not prevented the development of serious tension in the Yel'tsin-Luzhkov relationship. In June and July Luzhkov accused the Kremlin of conducting a dirty tricks campaign against him. Luzhkov has also said that Yel'tsin should step down as president, although he opposed the attempt made in April 1999 to impeach Yel'tsin.

Fear of the OVR may prompt Yel'tsin to consider manufacturing a pretext for postponing or cancelling the presidential elections in 2000.

### **Conclusions**

OVR is a movement that could well become the party of power in post-Yel'tsin Russia. Vsya Rossiya is an attempt to create a movement that would give strong

regional backing to a president. This is essential if Russia is to have a viable federal system. Judging from the comments made by Luzhkov and OVR policy documents, a Primakov or Luzhkov presidency (should one of these two men be elected), would attempt to create a more socially-oriented market economy. It would also attempt to involve regional leaders closely in the processes of economic and constitutional reform. However, whilst the attempt to create a social market economy would be genuine, it is difficult to feel confident that the commitment of OVR to a democratic political system is necessarily stronger than Yel'tsin's. Luzhkov has often been accused of running Moscow in an authoritarian style; there were reports in the 1996 mayoral campaign that shops were forced to place Luzhkov posters in their windows. The presidents of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan run what are effectively one-party states in their respective republics. When he was prime minister, Primakov spoke of replacing democratically elected regional leaders with leaders who would be one of several candidates appointed by the centre, and who would then be chosen by a local assembly. Russia may therefore remain a semi-democracy under an OVR leadership. However, as an OVR presidency would have a broader social base than Yel'tsin's presidency, having the backing of a nationwide movement of regional leaders, it would be more inclined to seek consensus in formulating and implementing economic policies.

The presence of a nationalist and *derzhavnik* element in the OVR leadership could also lead to a deterioration in relations with other CIS members and the West. Luzhkov, for example, takes a hard line over Crimea, and unsuccessfully opposed the ratification of the Russo-Ukrainian friendship and cooperation treaty.

## **YABLOKO**

The Yabloko bloc, led by Grigory Yavlinskiy, may be regarded as a mixture of liberalism and social democracy. Yavlinskiy has consistently favoured market economic reforms, but has been critical of the approaches of liberal reformers in government since 1991. He has, for example, opposed the price reforms of 1992 as they occurred when state monopolies still existed. Yabloko currently advocates a new economic policy, which envisages a significant role for the state in modernising and developing Russian manufacturing industry.

Like most other parties and movements, Yabloko also favours reducing the power of the presidency in relation to other branches of power. Yabloko desires an enhancement of the powers of the government and parliament in relation to the president. Yabloko serves as a political base for supporting Grigory Yavlinskiy's presidential campaign. He is likely to run for president in 2000, but is unlikely to win. Both Yavlinskiy and Yabloko seem content to act the role of being the conscience of the nation, opposing both the current party of power and communist and nationalist forces.

## **THE CPRF**

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation remains the best organised and largest political party in the country. It is likely to receive the largest number of votes in any Duma election. The CPRF regards itself as the ideological and organisational successor of the CPSU. The CPRF's ideology is a synthesis of traditional pre-Gorbachevian Soviet socialism and Russian nationalism. It argues that Russia can only be a strong and independent power if it follows a socialist path. Whilst it criticises the over-emphasis made on the role of the state during the Stalinist period, it remains loyal to the fundamental features of the political and economic system that prevailed in the USSR from 1917 until its demise in 1991. It speaks highly of the cautious authoritarian reformism of Yury Andropov when he was General Secretary of the CPSU (1982-84), and sees Andropov's policies as the ideal form of socialism. Gorbachev's *perestroika* is viewed as a policy of betrayal which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The current Yel'tsin leadership is regarded as a regime of betrayers, which is destroying the national economy and turning Russia into a colony, supplying raw materials to the West.

The CPRF would probably establish a political system very similar to the Soviet political system that existed prior to 1985. Its current leader, Gennady Zyuganov, has praised Stalin, and argues that if he had lived another five to seven years, then socialism would have been consolidated, and Gorbachev's *perestroika* would have been impossible. The CPRF is authoritarian and anti-western, and it also contains significant antisemitic elements, of which Duma deputy Albert Makashov is the most prominent representative. There are also social-democratically oriented elements in the CPRF. The Duma chairman, Gennady Seleznev, is a key representative of this element.

## **THE UNITY BLOC**

The Unity bloc was formed in September 1999, following a statement made by 39 regional leaders calling on Russian regional leaders to use their power, influence and experience to bring honest and responsible people to the Duma. The governor of Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, Aleksandr Nazarov, is a prominent spokesman for the movement. He was elected to the political council of Nash Dom Rossiya in April 1998. Other signatories to the statement of the 39 are: Aleksandr Ruts koy, Governor Kursk oblast; Yevgenny Nazdratenko, Governor Primorskiy kray; Eduard Rossel, Governor Sverdlovsk oblast; Leonid Gorbenko, Governor, Kaliningrad oblast; Yevgenny Savchenko, Governor Belgorod oblast; Yury Yevdokimov, Governor Murmansk oblast; Gennady Igmunov, Governor, Perm Oblast. There is some speculation that Nash Dom Rossiya may merge with this movement. The emergencies minister Sergey Shoygu has agreed to head Unity, and it appears to be backed by the Kremlin, possibly to counter the Vsy a Rossiya movement.

## **UNION OF RIGHT FORCES**

The Union of Right Forces (URF) is a bloc of 14 parties and movements, of which the main ones are: Demokraticheskiy Vybor Rossii; Obshcheye Delo; Novaya Sila; Rossiya Molodaya and Golos Rossii.

The URF is a democratic reformist bloc. Its ideology is based on classical western liberalism, and a belief in free market economics. It rejects the notion that the Russian people are inherently collectivist. All the parties and blocs in URF espouse these views. They are led by Russia's leading liberals, Yegor Gaydar (DVR), Sergey Kiriyenko (Novaya Sila), Boris Nemtsov (Rossiya Molodaya), Irina Khakamada (Obshcheye Delo), and Anatoly Chubays (Pravoye Delo). The effective leader of Golos Rossii is the Samara governor Konstantin Titov, a former member of DVR and Nash Dom Rossiya, the party led by former prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. Golos Rossii is, like Vsya Rossiya, a governors' bloc, with the support of several regional leaders. By including Golos Rossii in the bloc, Russia's liberals hope to be able to gain widespread support throughout Russia.

It suffers from the handicap that many of its leaders (eg Gaydar, Chubays, Kiriyenko and Nemtsov) have occupied important positions in the Russian government since 1991, and so are blamed by many for the failure of reform and the emergence of the *nomenklatura* capitalism and kleptocracy that has been a prominent feature of the Russian political and economic system since 1991. It favours developing free market reforms in order to rid Russia of these elements. The URF has little to say about constitutional reform, but does favour limiting the power of the President to form a government. They also argue that the president should be allowed to leave office without the risk of being prosecuted once he does so. The URF admits that liberals have suffered by being too closely identified with Yel'tsin.

The URF is unlikely to do well, as the electorate identifies liberalism with the economic failures of the Yel'tsin period. The bloc does appear to be the most cohesive liberal bloc that has appeared in the post-1991 period, but the unpopularity of liberalism means that it is unlikely to be an effective organisational base for any liberal wishing to run for president in 2000.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Duma election results December 1995**

Election Results 17 December 1995

Total number of voters – 107,496,856

Participants in election (number of ballots distributed) – 69,614,693 (64.76%)

Participation in voting (number of ballots returned to boxes) – 69,204,820

Size of 5 Percent Barrier – 3,460,241 votes (in 1993 – 2,687,585)

Valid ballots – 67,884,200

Invalid Ballots – 1,320,620 (1.91%)

Number of votes cast for each electoral organization

**Name Votes % Seats**

Kommunisticheskaya partiya RF (KPRF) 15,432,963 22.30 99

(Communist Party – Gennady Zyuganov)

Liberal'no-Demokraticeskaya partiya 7,737,431 11.18 50

Rossii (LDPR)

(Zhirinovskiy)

Nash Dom – Rossiya 7,009,291 10.13 45

(Chernomyrdin)

Yabloko 4,767,384 6.89 31

(Yavlinskiy)

Zhenshchiny Rossii 3,188,813 4.61

(Women of Russia)

Kommunisty – Trud.Rossiya – Za 3,137,406 4.53

Sovetskiy Soyuz

(Anpilov)

Kongress Russkikh Obshchin (KRO) 2,980,137 4.31

(Skokov – Lebed')

Partiya Samoupravleniya 2,756,953 3.98

Trudyashchikhsya (PST)

(Sv Fedorov)

Dem.Vybor Rossii – Ob'yedinennye 2,674,084 3.86

Demokraty

(Gaydar)

Agrarnaya Partiya Rossii (APR) 2,613,127 3.78

(Lapshin)

Derzhava 1,781,233 2.57

(Rutskoy)

Vpered, Rossiya! 1,343,428 1.94

(B.Fedorov)

Vlast' – Narodul 1,112,873 1.61  
(Ryzhkov – Baburin)

Pamfilova – Gurov – Vladimir Lysenko 1,106,808 1.60

Profsoyuzy I Promyshlenniki Rossii - 1,076,072 1.55

Soyuz Truda  
(Vol'skiy)

Ekologicheskaya Partiya Kedr 962,195 1.39

Blok Ivana Rybkina 769,258 1.11

Blok Stanislava Govorukhina 688,496 0.99

Moye Otechestvo 496,276 0.72  
(Gromov)

Obshcheye Delo 472,615 0.68  
(Khakamada)

Partiya Lyubiteley Piva 428,727 0.62

Musul'manskoye Dvizheniye "Nur" 393,518 0.57

Preobrazheniye Otechestva 339,654 0.49  
(Rossel')

Natzional'no-Respublikanskaya Partiya 331,700 0.48

Rossii  
(N.Lysenko)

Blok, Vkl.Ruk.Partii Zashchity Pensionerov 323,232 0.47  
(Dzhuna)

Partiya Ross.Yedinstva I Soglasiya (PRES) 245,977 0.36  
(Shakhray)

Assotsiatsiya Advokatov Rossii 242,966 0.35

Za Rodinu! 194,254 0.28  
(Polevanov)

Khristiansko-Dem.Soyuz – Khristiane Rossii 191,446 0.28  
(Pokoinyy Savitskiy)

Blok, Vkl.Ruk.Partii Zashchity Detey 145,704 0.21

(Delo Petra I)

Partiya Narodnyy Soyuz 130,728 0.19

(Obmanutye Vkladchiki)

Tikhonov – Tupolev – Tikhonov 102,039 0.15

Soyuz Rabotnikov Zhilishchno- 97,274 0.14

Kommunal'nogo Khoz-Va

Sotzial-Demokraty 88,642 0.13

(G.Kh.Popov)

Partiya Ekonomicheskoy Svobody (PES) 88,416 0.13

(Borovoy)

Rossiyskoye Obshchenarodnoye Dvizheniye 86,422 0.13

(ROD) (Kazaki)

Blok Nezavisimyykh 83,742 0.12

Federal'no-Demokraticheskoye Dvizheniye 82,948 0.12

(FDD)

Stabil'naya Rossiya 81,285 0.12

Duma-96 55,897 0.08

Pokoleniya Rubezha 44,202 0.06

89 (89 Regionov Rossii) 40,840 0.06

Mezhnatsional'nyy Soyuz 39,592 0.06

AGAINST ALL 1,918,152 2.77

### **Election Results By Single Member District**

Two hundred and twenty five deputies were elected in 225 districts.

### **Electoral Bloc Number of Seats**

Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Rossiyskoy Federatsii (CPRF) 58

Agrarnaya Partiya Rossii (APR) 20

Yabloko 14

Nash Dom – Rossiya 10

Vlast' - Narodu! 9

Demokraticheskiy Vybor Rossii - Ob`yedinennye Demokratiy 9

Kongress Russkikh Obshchin (KRO) 5

Blok Ivana Rybkina 3

Vpered, Rossiya! 3

Zhenshchiny Rossii 3

Pamfilova - Gurov - Vladimir Lysenko 2

Liberal'no-Demokraticheskaya Partiya Rossii (LDPR) 1

Blok Nezavisimyykh 1

Blok Stanislava Govorukhina 1

89 (89 Regionov Rossii) 1

Kommunisty - Trudovaya Rossiya - Za Sovetskiy Soyuz 1

Moye Otechestvo 1

Obshcheye Delo 1

Partiya Rossiyskogo Yedinstva I Soglasiya (PRES) 1

Partiya Samoupravleniya Trudyashchikhsya 1

Partiya Ekonomicheskoy Svobody 1

Preobrazheniye Otechestva 1

Profsoyuzy I Promyshlenniki Rossii - Soyuz Truda 1

Independents 77

157 deputies from the first convocation of the State Duma also became members of the second convocation:

93 from single member districts and 62 by party list.

15 members of the Federation Council were elected to the Duma (12 in districts, 3 via party list).

Source: Central Electoral Commission of the RF.

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