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Electoral and Party Systems in Post-Communist Russia

by

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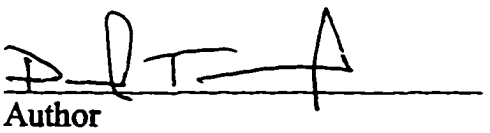

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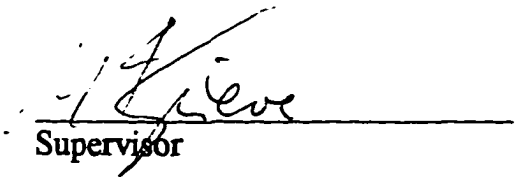

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ABSTRACT

With the collapse of the Soviet system in the early 1990s, as well as the demise of the once predominant Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Russia was launched on the path to liberal-democratic reform. Such transitions do not often go smoothly, and Russia's experience has proven no exception. As Russia attempts to build the institutions necessary for democratic governance, the weakness of state authority has contributed to such problems as increased unemployment, inflation, and crime -- all of which threaten the democratic transition. One factor that will help determine the extent to which this transition is successful is the impact of Russia's electoral system on the creation of a party system in Russia. This is because there exists a close relationship between electoral systems, party systems and the quality and stability of government. As one of the main dimensions of democratic governance, electoral systems provide a major stimulus for the development of parties as well as bringing them to the to the center of the political stage. Therefore, the influence of the Russian electoral system on the 1993 and 1995 Duma elections will play a significant role in determining whether or not Russia will emerge with a stable and disciplined legislature, a necessary element in Russia's road to democracy.

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

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Introduction

In the aftermath of the failed coup attempt of August 1991, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union four months later, Russia appeared to be successfully launched on the path to political democratization, economic reform and a cooperative partnership with the West. Enjoying widespread public support, the defenders of the Moscow White House, under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin, had committed themselves to destroying the decaying remnants of the Soviet party-state. In its place, they would attempt to build a new democratic Russia following the orientations associated with *perestroika*, which Mikhail Gorbachev had initiated a few years earlier, but had failed to see through. This would include the creation of a new constitution guaranteeing individual liberties as well as undertaking far-reaching economic reforms through the creation of a Western-style market economy.

Unlike other nations struggling with the establishment of a democratic system, or consolidating an existing system of democratic rule, Russia's post-communist transformation is uniquely difficult. Unlike many Latin American and Southern European nations undergoing democratic reform, Russia has had to deal with the widespread reform of economic as well as their political institutions. Such a transformation, from a central command economy to a mixed market economy, is no easy task. Russia has no blueprint for the creation of the extensive

institutional framework required for such a system. Such things as a modern banking system, a legal system, a stock market, and a commodity exchange are virtually foreign to Russia.

This dearth was the result of the communist legacy that entailed far-reaching eradication of civil society and destruction of the institutions and behaviours associated with market economies. In the history of the world, there may never have been a society and economy so entirely dominated by the state as was Russia. Every component of the state-socialist system was knit together with every other. In one of his last speeches as head of the soon to collapse Soviet government, Nikolai Ryzhkov alluded to this interrelationship when he exclaimed that, because of the destruction of ideology, "our economy" is falling apart.[1] And Ryzhkov was right. Such a command economy could not exist without that ideology and those politics. Thus any attempt to alter one part of the state-socialist system reflected immediately on all others.[2]

This brings to mind the oft-cited saying: "a chain is only as strong as its weakest link." Any attempt at reform of the Soviet system would entail tackling all things at once. For instance, any attempt at liberal-democratic reform in Russia would have to cope with the arduous task of fundamentally restructuring their economy, at the same time as introducing the political processes and institutions associated with democratic government.

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[1] Leonid Gordon, "Russia at the Crossroads," Government and Opposition (Vol. 30, No.1, Winter 1995), 5.

The fact that there are many different components involved in the successful development of a stable post-communist Russia in turn leads to many possible avenues of analysis: several factors might affect the pace, as well as the eventual success of such a transition. One possible attempt to analyze Russia's democratic transition might focus on the establishment of a viable market economy as an essential factor for the future of Russian democracy. Such a focus on political economy would indicate the presence of relationships between the political and the economic. In this view, a system's performance with respect to the economic standing of its citizenry may be just as important for regime stability as more directly political outcomes.[3]

Charles Lindblom made a strong connection between political economy and regime stability when he noted that while "market society has arisen in non-democratic regimes, liberal democracy has survived only in market societies."[4] Because Russia's transformation to a market economy is happening simultaneously with its transformation to a democratic system of government, it does not allow us to put Lindblom's observation to the test, as such. This is not to say, however, that economic factors will play no part in determining the eventual success of Russia's post-communist system. If the government cannot manage to get its finances under control, more and more Russian voters are going to associate

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2 Ibid., 5.

3 Peter Lange and Hudson Meadwell, "Typologies of Democratic Systems: Political Inputs to Political Economy," in Howard Wiarda, ed., *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (San Francisco: Westview Press, Inc., 1991), 108.

4 Charles Lindblom, *Politics and Markets* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 5.

such reform efforts with the economic woes of the country. Russia's ability, or more importantly, its inability to control such things as inflation, unemployment or labor unrest, provide useful but not exhaustive indicators to judge system stability.

Another element which could influence the success or failure of the liberal-democratic reforms in Russia, is through a series of external factors generally referred to as the 'international context.'[5] Such a focus would stress the favorable support of the international environment as an essential, even crucial, requirement for the successful transition to a liberal-democracy. This has even been used as a partial explanation for why the transformations to liberal-democracies in Southern Europe got off to such a better start than those in Latin America. Schmitter suggests that the international context in Southern Europe, which supported such a transition, greatly influenced such an outcome.[6]

Clearly, international support for democracy played a significant role in Russia's transformation. The liberal democracies of Western Europe and especially the United States exerted a series of long-term pressures on the Soviet bloc which helped nurture democratic aspirations in East-Central Europe. This pressure, coupled with severe economic stagnation, contributed to Gorbachev's decision to initiate his liberal reform efforts. Continued international support during the transition may also be a crucial factor in the continued success of

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5 Geoffrey Pridham, "The International Dimension of Democratisation: Theory, Practice, and Inter-Regional Comparisons," in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford, eds., *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 7.

6 Ibid., 7.

liberal-democratic reforms in Russia. As well as providing aid, the international context may have a general impact through promoting trends of democratization.[7] If such support were to falter, the Russian people could become disillusioned with the West as well as the democratic ideals it espouses.

While there are many factors in the international, political and economic environment which will undoubtedly affect Russia's transition to a liberal-democracy, perhaps the most influential have been the events within Russia itself. Notwithstanding the importance of transnational and other international influences, the crucial variable in the pre-transition phase was the nature of the reform process.[8] The transformation of the old regime was initiated by the Communist Party from the top down. As a result, the move towards democratization and marketization was conducted in a highly bureaucratic, administrative fashion. As ironic as it may sound, it was an attempt to "liberate" a country from communism by communist methods.[9]

It was felt by the democratic reform element in Russia that a strong state was required to maintain some semblance of order during the chaos of the transition period. This was an attempt to limit the threat of social turbulence that had accompanied such widespread reforms elsewhere. While this might help to maintain stability during the transition, it could also result in the development of

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7 Margot light, "The USSR/CIS and Democratisation in Eastern Europe," in Geoffrey Pridham, et al, *Building Democracy?*, 144.

8 Ibid., 144.

9 Lilia Shevtsova, "Russia's Post-Communist Politics: Revolution or Continuity?," in Gail Lapidus, ed., *The New Russia: Troubled Transformation* (San Francisco, Westview Press, Inc.,

an authoritarian regime if the state failed to limit voluntarily its power after the transition is complete. If so, it may turn out that a liberal- authoritarian state is no better than a communist one at safeguarding social and individual freedoms.[10]

President Boris Yeltsin has made no attempt to hide the fact he is an advocate of a strong president for the Russian state, not only during the transitional stage, (which Russia is still slogging through) but in the future as well.[11] While Yeltsin is a champion for a liberal-democratic Russia, such power as he advocates in someone else's hands could severely delay, or destroy such reforms altogether. One only has to imagine if the eccentric leader of the ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), Vladimir Zhirinovsky, were to ascend to such a position. This seems highly unlikely, but such powers left unchecked could prove disastrous for Russian democracy.

The job of the Russian Duma may be to act as a counter-balance to the powers of the executive. There are two factors which will help determine its success at this task: one being the amount of power it is constitutionally granted; and two, its ability to perform. The first point is rather self-explanatory. If the executive branch of government possesses substantially greater power than the legislature, the Duma cannot act as a counter-balance to the president in running the government.

1995), 30-31.

10 Ibid., 31.

11 "Yeltsin Urges Citizens to Vote for Constitution," *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* (Vol. XLV, No. 49, January 5, 1994), 1.

This brings us to the second point, which is not so obvious. Even if the legislature is granted adequate power, the Duma might still be limited in its ability to act. It may take time for the new Deputies to master parliamentary work. Individual Deputies cannot allow mutual resentments and ambitions to get in their way. As well, representatives of parties and blocs have to find a common language so the Duma can proceed with 'business as usual.'[12] If the Duma proves to be unable to function from the standpoint of classic lawmaking, it could put in jeopardy the democratic reforms altogether.[13]

Extreme cabinet instability resulted in the collapse of various parliamentary democracies in Europe prior to World War II. Such unstable systems were replaced by more authoritarian political regimes that appeared better able to provide for the efficient functioning of the system. This raised the question as to what forms of democratic systems are more fragile than others, and generated a search by political scientists for the internal weakness of such systems. One general assumption that emerged as a result of this search was that multiparty democracies were more prone to cabinet instability than were two-party systems. Due to the influence an electoral system can have over the character of a nation's party system, such a conclusion would suggest that the fragmentation of the party system was predominantly a function of the electoral system.[14]

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12 Ibid., 1.

13 "New Parliament Viewed as Antagonistic to Reform," *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* (Vol. XLVI, No. 1, February 2, 1994), 2.

14 Lawrence C. Mayer, "Party Systems and Cabinet Stability," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems: Trends and Prospects* (London: Collier Macmillan

The electoral system, that is, the manner in which an election is contested and the votes are translated into seats in the legislature, can have a great influence on the number and types of parties that develop.[15] The outcome of elections do not just depend on popular votes but also on the rules used. One could ask why nations do not simply pick the best way to allocate seats and stop playing games; experimenting with different sets of electoral rules. Since different political cultures value different government qualities, electoral engineers could simply pick the electoral system which is more likely to reflect these values in their representative institutions. This is no easy task, however, and this dilemma is exemplified quite nicely by Oliver Cromwell who was "...as much for government by consent as any man, but if you ask me how it is to be done, I confess I do not know."[16]

When choosing an electoral system, or reforming an existing electoral system, a country should first establish what they hope to achieve through such a system. For instance, some countries value proportional representation (PR); that is, they feel seats should be allocated in proportion to votes obtained, but they also take the chance that the resulting coalition government may be unstable. Some

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Publishers, 1980), 346-7.

15 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: the Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 378.

16 Vernon Bogdanor, "Introduction," in Vernon Bogdanor and David Butler, eds., *Democracy and Elections: Electoral Systems and Their Political Consequences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

countries try to assure government stability through attempts to limit the number of parties that gain representation. This can result in extreme under-representation of important minorities, which could also prove very destabilizing.[17]

While the study of the impact of electoral systems on party systems has strong claims to universal generalizability, sometimes countries adopt certain rules in expectation of certain results which fail to materialize. Some countries are fortunate enough to enjoy both stability and proportional representation, while others fare badly on both accounts. This is where a more systematic study of the electoral rules and their consequences can become especially important and useful.[18]

This study will then examine the influence of Russia's electoral system upon the creation of a party system, and its subsequent effect upon the stability of the country. This is only one link in the chain to a successful democratic transformation, albeit a very important one. This examination will cover both the 1993 and 1995 State Duma elections. While this thesis appreciates that 'two points do not constitute a trend', such a study should give some indication as to the future stability of the Russian Duma.

Chapter One will review some of the literature concerning the theory of electoral systems. It will focus primarily on the two broad groups of electoral systems known as proportional representation (PR) and plurality. The expected

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[17] Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1989), 3.

effects of these electoral systems on party system development will also be examined in detail. This will help to later determine if Russia's chosen electoral system is having the effect the literature would lead one to expect.

Chapter Two will give a brief account of some of the major events that provided the impetus for liberal-democratic reforms as well as the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and the dissolution of the communist-dominated Congress in September, 1993.

Chapter Three examines the constitutionally granted powers of the Russian Duma as opposed to those of the office of president. Repeated claims that the Duma is nothing more than a 'pocket parliament' will be discredited.

Chapter Four will focus on the Russian electoral system. It will define the means by which Russian elections are contested and how votes are translated into seats.

Chapter Five concentrates on the December 12, 1993 State Duma elections. This chapter will both introduce and utilize the *effective number of components index* as a tool to determine the effect the electoral system has had on the development of a party system in Russia. As well, the *index of party aggregation* will be introduced, which seeks to measure the stability of the party systems that emerged after the elections to the Duma.

Chapter Six will examine Russia's second post-transition legislative election, held on December 17, 1995. Once again both the *effective number of components* index and the *index of party* aggregation will be used, and the results will be compared

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[18] Ibid., 3-4.

with the 1993 Duma elections. This will provide a clue as to the direction the Russian political system is going, and whether or not the Duma will provide a stable foundation for Russia as it continues down its road to democracy. Chapter Seven will serve as a conclusion. It will analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Russia's electoral system upon the creation of a post-Soviet party system.

Chapter One: Electoral Systems and Party Systems

With more and more nations in the world entertaining the establishment of democratic systems, or consolidating existing systems of democratic rule, optimists suggest that the 1990s are likely to become known as the 'decade of democracy.' Such a trend encourages us to reflect on the meaning of democracy in its various forms. Clearly in order to discuss democracy, or any other phenomenon, it is first necessary to define it. This is no easy task, however, with the term "democracy" meaning many different things to many different people. One common thread found across most definitions is that democracy allows individual participation in the decisions that affect one's life.

It is unrealistic, however, to expect everyone in a democratic system to be able to participate in the decision making process at all times. After an election, voters transfer this decision-making power to an elected representative body. Therefore, the whole population, or some portion of them, exercise the ultimate controlling power through deputies periodically elected by themselves.[19] Defined in more restricted, operational terms, Alexander Wilde defines democracy as:

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[19] John Stuart Mill, "Of the Proper Functions of Representative Bodies," in Harry Eckstein & David E. Apter, eds., *Comparative Politics: A Reader* (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 104.

> ...those rules that allow (although they do not necessarily bring about) genuine competition for authoritative political roles. No effective political office should be excluded from such competition, nor should opposition be suppressed by force. More specifically, such rules would include freedom of speech, press, and assembly, and the provision of regular institutional mechanisms for obtaining consent and permitting change of political personnel (normally elections).[20]

Elections lie at the heart of the democratic process, and it is only through the act of voting that government by consent is made possible. Thus one indispensable task in representative democracies is performed by the electoral system, which can be defined as the practical instruments through which notions of consent and representation are transformed into reality. For an electoral system is, after all, a method of converting votes cast by citizens into seats in a legislature.[21] Thus, it could be argued, that the electoral system plays the most fundamental role in representative democracy.[22]

One of the crucial ways in which an electoral system can affect a democratic system is through its influence on the behavior and development of parties and party systems. Many features of a party's existence are inextricably tied to elections. In fact, political parties in competitive polities owe their very

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20 John D. Martz, "Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism, Transitions to Democracy, and the Political-Culture Dimension," in Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *New Directions in Comparative Politics*, 205. See also: Seymour M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy," in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings, 4th edition.* (Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1972), pp. 124-142; Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, 3rd edition.* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1947), pp. 232-302.

21 Vernon Bogdanor, "Introduction," in Vernon Bogdanor & David Butler, eds., *Democracy and Elections*, 1.

22 Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems: A Study of Twenty-Seven Democracies 1945-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 1.

existence to electoral systems, to compete for government office through electoral contests.

Consequently, elections occupy a special place in the study of party development. Aside from providing the mechanism through which parties find a reason for existence, elections also directly affect the form and function of parties and party systems. There has developed a relatively strong scholarly consensus that the electoral system does have a significant effect on a country's party system. In fact, the electoral system is the most commonly cited instrument of political engineering affecting parties and party systems. While this relationship may not be as strong as was first anticipated, and while scholars have modified Duverger's strongly worded law and hypothesis which sparked the modern debate,[23] few would argue that the choice of electoral system has no effect on a country's party system.[24]

In fact, Duverger himself, has come to modify his own strongly worded assumptions regarding the effect electoral systems have on party system development. In his piece entitled "'Duverger's Law': Forty Years later," he suggests that:

> ...the relationship between electoral rules and party systems is not mechanical and automatic: A particular electoral regime does not necessarily produce a particular party system; it merely exerts pressure in

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23 See, for example: Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. Barbara and Robert North (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1964), 207-245.

24 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: the Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," in *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No.4, December 1995), 378-379.

> the direction of this system; it is a force which acts among several other forces, some of which tend in the opposite direction.[25]

He goes on to point to specific social and cultural features (as well as electoral features) which can help explain the tendencies of such systems as Ireland, Austria, and Germany - despite their use of forms of proportional representation - to obtain two-party systems.[26]

As was noted earlier, not all electoral systems go about their task in precisely the same way, nor do they always end up with similar results. The kind of electoral system which is employed plays an important part in determining who or what is chosen in an election.[27] Changing the electoral system can change the general nature of representative governments. That is to say, proportional electoral systems are more inclined to allow smaller parties into the legislature, which could influence how effectively the government operates, because of the broader range of interests represented than in a plurality system. But we must be careful not to make the assumption that the electoral rules determine everything.[28] The concern is with how much influence an electoral system has in determining the stability of a particular representative democracy, namely, the Russian Duma.

While they may not determine everything, the fact that electoral rules have some influence on regime stability is undeniable. Electoral rules matter; they are

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25 Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences* (New York: Agathon Press, Inc.,1986), 5.

26 Ibid., 5.

27 Andrew Reeve and Alan Ware, *Electoral Systems: A Comparative and Theoretical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 7.

28 Ibid., 6-7.

easier to change than most other features of a political system and therefore offer a promising field for political engineering.[29] There have been many cases in which a slight change in electoral systems (or the rules in a particular system) have had a dramatic effect on the election results, and thus on the policy of the government. For example, in 1929 the British Liberal party received 23.4 percent of the popular vote. However, these votes translated into less than 10 percent of the seats in Parliament. In 1933 the Progressive Party in Iceland received practically the same amount: 23.9 percent, but the country's electoral rules and the way in which district boundaries were drawn up made an immense difference. As a consequence the Progressive Party received 33.2 percent of the parliamentary seats.[30] These examples highlight some general facts about elections. Their outcomes do not depend only on popular votes but also on the rules used. It is a question of how the votes are compiled and how the seats are allocated.

Modern democracies use a wide variety of electoral systems , and there is no agreement as to which is best, each system having its characteristic virtues and defects.[31] Electoral systems promote different values, and when choosing an appropriate electoral system, a population has to decide what values they prefer over others. It all depends, then, on what the people hope to achieve through the electoral system.[32] There are two main political consequences of electoral system

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29 Rein Taagepera and Matthew S. Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 2.
30 Ibid., 2.
31 Ibid., 1.
32 Ibid., 3.

choice. The first concerns the proportionality or disproportionality of the electoral outcomes, while the second concerns the effects on the party system, particularly the degree of multipartism, and the tendency to generate major victories.[33]

The number of electoral systems is, in principle, infinite; the number of systems that democratic engineers and reformers have proposed is much smaller; and the number that have been in actual use is even smaller still.[34] The two most popular types of electoral system are proportional representation (PR) and single-member plurality, which together account for most of the national electoral systems that are currently used. For instance, they are used for the national legislative elections (of the lower or only houses) in seventeen of the twenty-one countries that have been continuously democratic since approximately the end of the Second World War. This list would include the West European democracies plus the United States, Canada, Israel, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.[35]

The term 'proportional representation' is a generic name given to a class of specific electoral systems that even among themselves vary a great deal. They share the common aim of proportionality between seats and votes. The term also implies an ideal in its pure form, that the percentage of votes that a party receives nationally shall equal the percentage of total seats allocated to it in the legislature.

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33 Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*, 6.

34 Ibid., 1.

35 Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *Electoral Laws and their Political Consequences*, 4.

Thus, if a party receives ten percent of the vote, it should be awarded exactly ten percent of the seats to be allocated.[36]

While it is possible for plurality systems to produce a more proportional system than a proportional representation system, studies confirm that proportional representation systems on average reflect more accurately the preferences of voters in terms of seats in parliament (greater proportionality) than do plurality systems.[37] The plurality electoral system has a predisposition to favor the largest party or the two largest parties, so that third parties are denied seats and are relegated to the periphery. Proportional representation systems, on the other hand, often give even the smallest parties a chance to obtain representation in proportion to their percentage of the popular vote received. This often enables so many parties to gain seats that no one party is able to form a majority government. As a result, government must be formed on the basis of a coalition, which can produce unstable governments.[38]

It should be noted at this time, however, that the Russian Constitution adopted in 1993 does not require that the government be formed by the largest party in the Duma, nor does it require that the government should reflect the

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36 Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics: Nations and Theories in a Changing World* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1993), 46.

37 See, for example: Douglas W. Rae, *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws* (London: Yale University Press, 1967), 96-97; Arend Lijphart, "Degrees of Proportionality of Proportional Representation Formulas," in Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *Electoral Laws and their Political Consequences*, 170.

38 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 2-3.

political divisions in the Duma.[39] This differs considerably from a parliamentary system such as Canada, where the party that controls a majority in the elected assembly forms the government. In Russia, the president appoints the prime minister and the Duma simply approves this appointment. The cabinet is nominated by the prime minister and approved by the president.[40]

To counteract the most often mentioned defect of proportional representation (the lack of any disincentive to the splintering of parties), a legal threshold may be imposed. A threshold is a clause specifying the minimum vote share or threshold which a party must obtain in order to gain a seat. Thresholds vary from system to system and once the threshold is met, different methods, some of which will be described below, are used to calculate how seats will be allocated among parties.[41]

Proportional representation formulas can best be explained by classifying and sub-classifying them. The first classification distinguishes between list proportional representation, in which voters cast their votes for party lists of candidates, and the single transferable vote (STV), in which voters vote for individual candidates. List PR can then be classified into highest averages (divisor)

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39 Margot Light, "Notes of the Month: The Russian Elections and After," *The World Today* (Vol. 50, No. 3 (March 1994), 42.

40 Minton F. Goldman, *Russia, The Eurasian Republics, and Central/Eastern Europe, 5th edition.*(Connecticut: The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc., 1994), 82.

41 Brian O'Neal, *Electoral Systems* (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1993), 6.

and largest remainders (quota) systems. And these can be classified further according to the particular divisor or quota that they employ.[42]

One of the more popular variations of proportionality is the "Hare quota." This is an example of a largest remainders (LR) formula. The Hare quota is the oldest and simplest of the quota systems. Under this system, the first step is to set the threshold of votes that each party must attain to win a seat. The vote for each party is then divided by the electoral quota. The simplest method of establishing a quota (the "Hare quota") is by taking the total number of votes cast and dividing this by the number of seats to be filled. For example, in a constituency where five seats are to be filled, and 40,000 votes are cast, the quota would be 8,000 votes. The quickest method for calculating the results is to divide each party's votes by the quota, which yields the number of seats each party has won. Parties then receive a seat for each full quota, and any seats that cannot be allocated this way are given to the parties with the largest fraction of the quota.[43]

Another variation of proportional representation which is relatively popular is the d'Hondt system or 'the greatest remainder'. In this system, seats are awarded sequentially to parties having the highest 'average' numbers of votes per seat until all seats are allocated. Each time a party receives a seat, however, its 'average' goes down. These averages depend on the given set of divisors that the particular system prescribes. For instance, the d'Hondt formula uses the integers 1,2,3,4, and

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42 Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*, 153.
43 Ibid., 155-156.

so on. Under this formula, the first seat to be allocated goes to the party receiving the highest percentage of votes. This party's votes are then divided by two. If a party should nevertheless win two seats in a constituency, its votes would be divided by three. The second seat is then given to the party with the most votes. Because the first party had been divided in half, it is likely to go to the second party. If the first party still has more votes than the next highest, despite being divided in half, than it receives the next seat. Its initial vote total is then divided by three. This goes on until all of the seats in the constituency have been allocated.[44]

Both the Hare quota and the d'Hondt are both variations of list PR, in which voters cast their votes for party lists of candidates. The single transferable vote (STV) method of allocating seats, however, has voters cast their votes for individual candidates, in order of voters' preferences, instead of party lists. In this system, the voters express their preferences in terms of rankings of the candidates. Like largest remainder systems, STV requires the choice of a quota. This quota is calculated based upon a ratio of voters cast and seats to be allocated. When a party reaches this established vote total, it is awarded the first seat to be allocated in that district, but when this party appears as the first choice on subsequent ballots, the voter's second choice is counted. This process continues until all the seats to be awarded in that district are allocated.[45] Because STV voters vote for individual candidates they can vote for candidates, of different parties.

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[44] Ibid., 153.

[45] Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 46.

While these are only a few of the more popular variations of proportional representation, it must be remembered that the possible variations are infinite. The entire rationale of the proportional representation system remains the same, however, and that is for the distribution of legislative seats among parties to mirror as closely as possible their share of the vote.[46]

Plurality systems, on the other hand, are concerned more with government stability. This is achieved by discriminating against smaller parties and rewarding established parties. The plurality system is sometimes called the 'first-past-the-post' system, because like a horse race, the victor need only to finish ahead of the other candidates, the margin of victory being irrelevant. If a candidate receives forty-four percent of the vote, and the second place candidate receives forty-three percent of the vote, the runner-up goes home empty handed. There is only one seat to be won in each district (as opposed to proportional systems which usually employ multi-member districts) and this seat is only awarded to the party receiving the most votes.[47]

This is the consequence of the plurality electoral system, that only the party that comes in first in a constituency can represent that district; finishing a close second in a number of constituencies gets nothing. Although an uneven distribution of support in the nation will mean that the second-strongest party may finish first in some constituencies, the strongest party will more than likely still

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[46] Joy Esberey and Larry Johnston, *Democracy and the State: An Introduction to Politics* (Ontario: Broadview Press, Ltd., 1994), 275.

win most seats by a varying margin. This often has the effect of exaggerating the margin of victory in total seats that the winning party will receive in relation to the amount of votes it procures. Thus, the winning party is essentially overrepresented at the expense of other parties. Third-strongest parties will come in second in some districts but only rarely will they actually win in a particular district; hence they will be severely underrepresented in seats relative to their percentage of the popular or national vote.[48]

To some, this feature is the primary virtue of the single-member plurality system, the tendency to put into office a one-party majority government, which, all things being equal, offers a more stable and responsible government than do minority or coalition governments. Majority governments are more capable of enacting their legislative programs than coalition governments, and are less likely to be subject to defeat in votes of confidence.[49] However, this majority is very often manufactured by the electoral system.[50] Winning parties are awarded well over fifty percent of the seats in the legislature, while receiving less than fifty percent of the popular or national vote.

An extreme example of a 'manufactured majority' can be seen in the British Elections of 1983, in which the Conservative Party was awarded a majority in the legislature (61 percent of the seats), while only receiving 42 percent of the vote.

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47 Ibid., 271.
48 Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 49.
49 Brian O'Neal, "Electoral Systems," (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1993), 14.
50 Joy Esberey and Larry Johnston, *Democracy and the State*, 272.

Likewise, in the Canadian Elections of 1988, the Progressive Conservative party was awarded 57 percent of the seats to the legislature, while receiving only 43 percent of the vote. Thus, in both Canada and Britain, the plurality system advantaged the major parties at the expense of weaker parties, or parties with geographically diffuse support.[51]

Since the party with the most votes generally wins more seats than its share of the popular vote would indicate, other parties are correspondingly disadvantaged by plurality electoral systems. This gives rise to the most prevalent argument against such systems, being its inability to mirror the concerns of the electorate accurately. Representation, proportionalists would argue, is not well served by this kind of electoral system.[52]

In such a system, minority concerns are overlooked. Single-member plurality systems are especially tough on small or new parties, and reward established or previously successful parties. New parties with weak to moderate support will win little or nothing in this system. For minority parties to be successful, they have to concentrate their vote in areas where they already have support rather than strengthen their appeal in more marginal areas. Thus, minorities are not represented to the extent they are in proportional systems.[53]

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51 Ronald G. Landes, *The Canadian Polity: A Comparative Introduction* (Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, Inc., 1991), 348-353.

52 Brian O'Neal, "Electoral Systems," (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada), 15.

53 Joy Esberey and Larry Johnston, *Democracy and the State*, 274.

There is a trade-off: the choice is either have representation in the legislature mirroring the party preferences of the whole electorate, with the risk of a weak coalition government coming to power; or a strong and effective government relegating minority concerns to the electorate as a secondary consideration. Some systems attempt to achieve the best of both worlds. To accomplish this, some jurisdictions have chosen to use a mixture of plurality and proportional representation systems.[54]

Since the late 1940s in Germany, for example, one half of the seats in the Bundestag (the lower house of parliament) have been filled by plurality, using single-member constituencies, while the other half have been filled using party lists, according to the d'Hondt system. Voters mark two choices on their ballot papers: one from among a list of parties, the other from among a slate of candidates for district representation. After the totalitarian experience with the Third Reich, West German politicians pointedly rejected the Weimar legacy of a strong executive in favor of a party system that discourages the emergence of small extremist parties, but still allows some relatively significant participation from at least one smaller party.[55]

Before deciding upon reforming or introducing a particular electoral system, it is invaluable to appreciate first the consequences of such a choice. Electoral systems have held a prominent place in the literature that attempts to

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[54] Brian O'Neal, "Electoral Systems," (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada), 12.

[55] Peter H. Merkl, "West Germany," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European*

explain variation in the type or degree of fractionalization of party systems. The concept of a party system essentially refers to the pattern of interaction among the political parties in a nation. The pattern of interaction in turn is a function of the number of parties and their relative electoral and legislative strength.[56]

A traditional distinction is drawn between two-party systems and systems involving more than two parties. The relationship between the number of parties and the subsequent strength of the legislature goes as follows: A two-party system invariably produces a majority of seats for one party. Since democratic governments operate on the basis of majority rule, both in the resolving of issues and in the support necessary to maintain a government in office in a parliamentary format, a two-party system is held to contribute to stable and effective democracies.[57]

In contrast to plurality systems which favor the formation of one-party governments, proportional representation systems cannot be counted upon to produce a majority under the control of one party. Governments and their legislative support must therefore be based on coalitions, alliances of two or more parties. Andre Blais has reported that the probability of a one-party majority government is forty percent less likely in a proportional system rather than in a plurality electoral system.[58]

Party Systems, 21-22.

56 Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 44.

57 Ibid., 44.

58 Andre Blais, "The Debate Over Electoral Systems," *International Political Science Review* (Vol. 12, No. 3, 1991), 241.

Inasmuch as the leaders of one party have little or no control over the voting behavior of members of other parties, coalition governments can become substantially less stable than governments based upon a single-member majority/plurality. This disposition towards instability should logically increase with the number of parties required to compose the governing coalition.[59] As well, because governments under proportional representation are typically formed after elections, when parties attempt to build governing coalitions, voters have little direct say regarding the complexion of their government.[60]

More than one scholar has suggested that the failure of a number of European parliamentary democracies in the years immediately preceding World War II could have been averted by the simple tactic of changing the electoral system of those countries from variations of PR to a variation of the Anglo-American plurality system.[61] No doubt one of the countries being referred to was Nazi Germany, in which it could be argued that Hitler's ascendancy in Germany was helped by the existing electoral rules, which preserved a frustrating profusion of parties and led to widespread yearning for a single strong leader.[62] While this connection is debatable, and to use a single case example is tenuous at best, it does offer the worst case scenario of party fragmentation leading to a weak government, and eventual breakdown of democracy.

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59 Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 44-45.
60 Brian O'Neal, "Electoral Systems," (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1993), 20.
61 Ibid, 47.
62 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 3.

It should be noted, however, that not all proportional systems suffer similar problems as did Germany. In fact, stable coalition governments with clear policy programs exist in many countries which utilize proportional representation for the allocation of seats to their legislature.[63] Belgium, for example, adopted PR in the early part of the twentieth century and maintained a stable three-party system for decades thereafter. The fact that the Belgium party system began to fragment to some extent in the 1960s was due to the rising salience of the issues surrounding linguistic and cultural divisions rather than to PR. While this fragmentation was not a direct result of the system Belgium had adopted decades earlier, it could be argued that a plurality system might have been better able to cope with these issues as they emerged. While one cannot say decisively that PR causes party system fragmentation, a stronger case may be made arguing that plurality systems tend to generate strong pressure for a highly aggregated party system, regardless of the socio-cultural context.[64]

While plurality systems have so far been referred to as having only two-parties, it should be noted that this is not the case. In fact, no major system has only two parties consistently contending for major political office, not even the United States. Thus, the meaning of this term is more complicated than would first appear, and is in need of clarification. A 'two-party' system is one in which only two parties have a genuine chance of gaining power in the sense of controlling the

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63 Andrew Reeve and Alan Ware, *Electoral Systems*, 122

64 Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 47.

national government. Leslie Lipson expands on this, and suggests that a two-party system is one in which a party can normally gain power and stay in office without help from a third party.[65] Even Canada could traditionally be considered a two-party system under Lipson's definition. For the sake of argument, then, we will define majoritarian systems as either being dominated by just two parties, as in the United States, or as having two substantial parties and electoral laws that usually create legislative majorities for one of them.[66]

It has been the custom of those arguing for single-member plurality systems to associate coalition governments with instability, and it is those same people who are quick to point to such cases as Italy to demonstrate some of the undesirable side-effects of PR. Up until 1992, Italian governments have lost fifty votes of no-confidence in their post-war history.[67] While there is no conclusive evidence that PR (or coalition governments) is itself productive of instability,[68] what is beyond dispute is the responsiveness of PR systems to changes in public opinion; any increase or decline in a party's support is immediately and accurately reflected in its legislative standing, a feature that is bound to affect the way parties behave towards the electorate. If existing parties are unsatisfactory to significant portions of the population, then new parties may be created to reflect this shift in

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65 Ibid., 48.

66 Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell Jr., eds., *Comparative Politics Today: A World View, 5th edition* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, Inc., 1992), 81.

67 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 3.

68 Joy Esberey and Larry Johnston, *Democracy and the State*, 276.

opinion. Such new parties appealing to those sections of the electorate are much more likely to achieve success under PR than the plurality system.[69]

Likewise, in plurality electoral systems that discourage the creation of new parties, small groups holding extreme positions may be prompted to resort to other than democratic means to achieve their cause.[70] During the 1960s, the fact that both the Republicans and Democrats in the United States supported the Vietnam war to some degree, gave no way for the number of people who protested the war to have their interests adequately represented. This lack of representation, and subsequent frustration, could ultimately result in worse scenarios than simple demonstrations, and produced civil strife on a much larger scale. Thus, if elections are to be a primary means for citizens to keep the government accountable, it seems counterproductive to employ a system that fails accurately to reflect that public opinion.[71]

While some form of proportional representation or plurality system may be the two main alternatives in choosing an electoral system, it can be argued that they are not necessarily as clear and unambiguous alternatives as one might think. When the actual degree of proportionality achieved by different electoral systems is examined, the difference between PR and non-PR systems is one of degrees, not kinds. For instance, the most proportional plurality system, the United States, is considerably more proportional than the least proportional PR system, Spain. This

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69 Ibid., 277.

70 Brian O'Neal, "Electoral Systems," (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1993), 15.

is due to a discrepancy between the principles and methods of proportionality and majority rule. In particular, in designing an electoral system, one may begin with a PR formula but then add several additional rules, such as a high minimum threshold over which a party must surmount in order to gain representation in the legislature. Such a rule will yield a far more disproportionate result, and while such a system follows PR rules, it does not follow PR principles.[72]

In designing an electoral system, it should be noted that familiarity breeds stability. The introduction of a new electoral system will inevitably involve a temporary reduction in stability regardless of whether it is a variation of PR or plurality systems. Parties, candidates, and voters have to adapt to the new system while passing through a period of great change, which can lead to enhanced surprise, disappointment, and frustration.[73] It should then be noted that any proposals for electoral reform should be minor and modest suggestions for incremental improvements, not revolutionary upheaval of the existing system.[74]

This luxury is obviously not available to newly democratic countries, where a first electoral system has to be chosen which will be used to guide the democracy's elections for years to come. The early students of electoral systems often tried to devise the best possible electoral system, condemning all competing systems. The more we study electoral systems, however, the more we appreciate

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71 Joy Esberey and Larry Johnston, *Democracy and the State*, 273.

72 Bernard E. Brown & Roy C. Macridis, *Comparative Politics, 8th edition* (California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996), 7.

73 Rein Taagepera and MatthewShugart, *Seats and Votes*, 218.

74 Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*, 151-152.

that all systems appear to have both disadvantages and advantages, so that it ultimately comes down to a question of what exactly a particular democracy wants to provide as well as taking into account local peculiarities and history.[75] Only with these things in mind should one start to contemplate the needs of a country in relation to the formation of a democratic system.

Electoral systems tend to adapt, however, and nations with different electoral systems learn to achieve the same goals by different means. In particular, most plurality systems, over the long run, are not as unrepresentative as their detractors might suggest. Nor are PR systems as unstable as their detractors might suggest. A sound polity could accommodate a defective electoral system, while no electoral system can save a self-destructive political system.[76] This does, however, leave the marginal cases, and there are many regimes that fit this category.

The case for or against an electoral system, then, should not be based on arguments derived from abstract principles alone (such as whether proportionality or strong government is to be preferred). It should be based on national context, for the way in which a system will ultimately work depends upon the interaction of the electoral system with the social and political conditions of the particular country.[77] For instance, a large number of parties in a system does not in and of itself produce government instability. There have been many coalition and

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75 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 217.

76 Ibid., 235.

77 Maurice Duverger, "Duverger's Law: Forty Years Later," in Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *Electoral Laws and Their Political* Consequences, 81.

multiparty governments in existence that have proved very effective. More important is the degree of antagonism or polarization among the parties. Where multiparty systems consist of relatively moderate antagonists, stability and effective performance seems possible. Where systems consist of highly antagonistic elements, government instability is ever possible irrespective of the number of parties.[78]

This once again brings us back to the marginal cases. It must once again be remembered that a system does not exist in a vacuum. The way in which a system works will in part be a function of its response to the total social and physical environment.[79] Thus, the extent to which plurality systems discriminate against all but the strongest party in the allocation of seats reflects the social and geographical concentration or dispersion of a party's electoral support. Catchall parties with a very heterogeneous basis of support are more likely to have their support widely dispersed, and therefore either do very well or very badly depending on the system employed. The important point here is that the outcome is not completely a function of electoral laws, but also of political and social influences.[80]

Likewise, the main purpose of proportional representation, it may be recalled, is to have the distribution of seats among the political parties mirror the distribution of opinion and loyalties in the electorate as closely as possible. It is

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78 Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell jr., eds., *Comparative Politics Today*, 83.

79 David Easton, "The Analysis of Political Systems," in Bernard E. Brown and Roy C. Macridis, eds., *Comparative Politics*, 8th edition, 48.

80 William H. Riker, "Duverger's Law Revisited," in Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences*, 35.

then logical to surmise that PR systems allow a fragmented socio-cultural context to be reflected in the legislature.[81] This does give hope to an aspiring electoral engineer, in that if a plurality government is adopted, it may stifle such a fragmented context, albeit at the risk of sacrificing legitimacy as well.

It is important to note, that while different people advocate different electoral systems, there is almost universal agreement that both proportionality and stable government are desirable things. It is also agreed that PR methods are likely to lead to greater proportionality, and plurality to stable one-party government.[82] These are some considerations that "electoral engineers" might take into consideration when devising, or altering an existing electoral system.

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81 Lawrence C. Mayer, John H. Burnett and Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 47.

82 Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphard, eds., *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences*, 6.

Chapter Two: The Collapse of Communism

Upon coming to power as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, it was soon made apparent that Mikhail Gorbachev planned to revive the stagnant Russian economy. To do this, Gorbachev would initiate a series of reform programs that he hoped would help in his quest to 'accelerate socio-economic development and the perfection of all aspects of social life.'[83] Whatever his aspirations when he became the Soviet leader in 1985, it is doubtful that Gorbachev could have foreseen that he would be remembered as the person who presided over not only the loss of Moscow's dominion over Eastern Europe but the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union as well.

Of all the reform policies that were promoted by the Gorbachev leadership, *glasnost* was perhaps the most distinctive. Usually translated as 'openness' or 'publicity', glasnost should not be mistaken for freedom of the press or right to information. It did, however, reflect the general secretary's belief that without a greater awareness of the real state of affairs and of the considerations that led to particular decisions there would be no willingness on the part of the Soviet people to commit themselves to his program of reforms.[84]

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83 Stephen White, "Introduction: From Communism to Democracy?" in Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian and Post-Soviet Politics* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1994), 4.

84 Ibid., 4.

While the key issue in the early months was the acceleration of economic growth, which would require a greater degree of decentralization, there was still no talk of 'radical reform,' let alone the creation of a market. By 1987, however, these reform initiatives would take a dramatic shift. It was realized at this time that economic reconstruction required a degree of political democratization. It was felt by Gorbachev that political stability would be assisted if reformist (albeit pro-Soviet) leaders could build up their domestic legitimacy by introducing official accountability, and by democratizing their political system.[85]

There have been great strides taken since Gorbachev initiated these efforts for democratization in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev established plans for elections to a new system of legislative power at the level of the Soviet Union in 1989, and to the Supreme Soviets in the Republics in 1990. Both of these plans were faithfully implemented. At the union level, Gorbachev's two-tiered legislature came into being following elections in March 1989. The prospect of competitive elections to the soviets stimulated groups of democratic activists to mobilize their followers to elect known reformers and to defeat the candidates representing the old communist establishments in an attempt to overcome the power of the Communist Party. The democrats were successful in doing this, and Gorbachev, as

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[85] Margot Light, "The USSR/CIS and Democratization in Eastern Europe," in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford, eds., *Building Democracy?*, 151.

party leader, lost considerable power, especially in his ability to control the pace of reforms.[86]

Flanked by increasingly active opponents, from the hard-line conservatives based in the central state bureaucracies on his right and on his left from democratic forces allied with the movements for national sovereignty in the union republics, Gorbachev moved in early 1990 to strengthen his own political position further. Railroading constitutional amendments on the creation of a state presidency through the Congress of People's Deputies, Gorbachev won the deputies' approval for the creation of the post of president. Moreover, Gorbachev urged that Congress elect the president, as opposed to letting the people decide through direct popular elections. Using his still extensive powers, Gorbachev had himself elected president of the USSR, being the first, and last, person to hold that position.[87]

Keeping with his dual strategy of consolidating his personal power while expanding mass participation in the political system, the presidential office Gorbachev created was (at least on paper) an extremely powerful one. The president could name and dissolve the government, suspend legislative enactments, declare emergencies, and impose presidential rule.[88] However, the establishment of the presidency brought about the problem of 'competing mandates' between the legislative and executive branches. Deep conflict over the proper divisions of

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86 Thomas F. Remington, "Representative Power and the Russian State," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian and Post-Soviet Politics*, 66-67.

87 Ibid., 68.

88 Ibid., 68.

power between president and legislature resulted, and, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, continued to be one of the most decisive areas of divergence in the creation of a post-Soviet Russia.

This attempt to create a powerful presidency, however, did not inhibit the popular tides of republican sovereignty and democratic reform. In fact, these movements were given further momentum by the round of elections to the legislative organs of all the union republics which were held in 1990. The Democratic forces won approximately forty percent of the newly elected Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) parliament. The democratic forces quickly used this success to consolidate their support, by electing prominent democratic politicians to positions of power. In the Russian Congress, for instance, the democrats succeeded after three ballots, in winning the election of Boris Yeltsin as Chairman of the Russian parliament. In turn, by assuming control of the powers of the chairmanship, Yeltsin helped ensure that the committees of the parliament were headed by democratically-orientated deputies, which further helped to ease the stranglehold the Communist Party had on Russian politics.[89]

While the democratic and conservative sides were roughly equal in strength, the strength of popular hostility to communist power and privilege enabled the democrats to win a number of significant legislative victories in the newly established Congress. This was especially the case in large cities and industrial centers and weakest in rural areas, where conservatives and high-ranking

officials still faced little significant opposition. Soon, however, the democratic forces at all levels began to splinter into rival factions. Inexperienced, with few incentives to maintain any sort of partisan discipline, the newly elected legislators soon expressed frustration over their inability to seize the levers of power and force the state to become more responsive to the will of the people.[90]

As 1990 wore on, a widespread trend developed in which nationalists in the republics demanded powerful presidents that could resist the central government in Moscow. The hold the Communist Party had over the Union was beginning to fragment. As the Communist Party began to weaken and disintegrate, many groups, both conservative and reformist, came to regard a strong presidency as the only solution to the decay of order and authority in the state.[91] Gorbachev agreed, and in a pattern that was to become all too familiar under Yeltsin, Gorbachev attempted to expand the power of the presidential office.[92]

In January 1991, responding to Gorbachev's call for a union-wide referendum on the concept of a 'renewed' federal union, Yeltsin won over the Russian parliament's leadership to the idea of placing another question on the referendum ballot in Russia. This would test the Russian electorate's support for a directly elected president, and would thus have an enormous moral and political advantage over the union president. A referendum was held in March 1991 to test

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89 Ibid., 70.
90 Ibid., 72.
91 Ibid., 74.
92 Ibid., 73.

the Russian electorate's support for the creation of a Russian presidency. About 70 percent of the voters in the referendum endorsed the proposal, and later in the month, at the 3rd Congress of Peoples Deputies, Yeltsin's plans for a popularly elected executive presidency were approved.[93]

The presidential election for the Russian republic was held in June and was vigorously contested. The balloting marked the first time in Russia's history that its political leader had been chosen by means of popular democratic elections. Boris Yeltsin triumphed in this election, winning over 57 percent of the vote in a field of six candidates. This gave him democratic legitimacy that virtually no other politician in the former Soviet Union could claim. While the elections of 1990 and 1991 were integral in the development of political institutions, they also set the stage for a bitter struggle between President Yeltsin and his legislative opponents. This struggle centered on whether the country should have a parliamentary system dominated by a strong legislature or a presidential system dominated by a powerful chief executive.[94]

After rallying the country to defeat the August coup attempt in the fall of 1991, President Yeltsin looked virtually unchallengeable. In November, the Russian Congress of People's Deputies voted Yeltsin special powers for a year, and endorsed the presidential blueprint for rapid marketization drawn up by

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93 *Four Hard Years For Russian Democracy.* http://www.spb.su/sppress/136/election/four.html (May 6, 1996), 1-2.

94 Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, *Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Politics of Upheaval.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 126.

Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar. However, as economic reform generated increasing economic hardships, relations between the president and the parliament began to sour. Yeltsin's short honeymoon with the legislature was over.[95]

Ironically, Yeltsin, as chairman of the national legislature, had played a substantial role in enhancing the legitimacy of legislative prerogatives during the last year of Soviet rule. Legal amendments assured that the powers of the executive were derived from the legislature, with political accountability extending from the former to the latter. However, post-Soviet realities quickly altered Yeltsin's view, and he struggled for new constitutional arrangements which he hoped would bolster the powers of the executive.[96]

The speaker of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, Ruslan Khasbulatov, a one-time ally of Yeltsin who would emerge as a leading spokesperson against the President and his initiatives, sought to curb Yeltsin's extensive power. Khasbulatov proved quite savvy in directing the legislature and safeguarding the prerogatives it had secured during the late Soviet period, and formulated his own draft constitution that would drastically constrain Yeltsin's powers.[97] Each leader had sufficient power to block the other's major initiatives, but neither had enough political strength to push his preferred constitutional model through the drafting process. Political gridlock and constitutional crisis resulted.

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95 Robert Sharlet, "The New Russian Constitution and Its Political Impact," *Problems of Post-Communism* (Vol. 42, No. 1, January/February, 1995), 4.

96 John P. Willerton, "Yeltsin and the Russian Presidency," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian and Post-Soviet Politics*, 27.

97 Ibid., 26.

By late 1992, the struggle between Yeltsin and Khasbulatov was already quite pointed, contributing to a political gridlock that reflected not only the politics of personality, but the politics of fundamental system and institution building in post-Soviet Russia.[98] Yeltsin continued in his attempts to resolve the constitutional debate. Every time he offered to put the constitutional referendum back on the political agenda to solve this frustrating deadlock in Russia, however, his opponents continued to derail all his efforts. The Supreme Soviet was continuing to issue counter-edicts to every presidential decision, and the ensuing deadlock threatened to destroy the regime as well as to put in jeopardy the transformation. Something had to be done to alleviate the powerlessness of the Russian government which was for the most part a result of this persistent constitutional debate.[99]

Divisions within the parliament and its leadership constrained legislative dominance during 1992-3, but Yeltsin failed to find the legal means - either by directive or national referendum - to secure a preeminent decision-making position for the executive branch. Only a presidential crackdown in late 1993 enabled the executive to secure the position Yeltsin so desired. In August, the Russian parliament set in motion constitutional amendments that would have reduced the president to a political figurehead. On September 21, Yeltsin counter-attacked by issuing Decree 1400, dissolving the Supreme Soviet and calling for new legislative

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98 Ibid., 26.

elections on December 12, at which time the electorate would also decide the fate of a draft constitution Yeltsin had constructed that was decidedly weighted in favour of the executive.[100]

This turn of events did not sit well with the Supreme Soviet, and in a move reminiscent of the USSR Supreme Soviet two years earlier, rebel deputies refused to leave the political stage gracefully. For two weeks, supporters of the parliament, including many ex-deputies occupied the White House. On October 4, Yeltsin's forces succeeded in forcing the rebels out of the building through the use of superior military force. The White House was charred black as a result of extensive tank fire, and over one hundred people were killed. A victorious Yeltsin then scheduled elections for a new parliament and a referendum on a new constitution, suspended the Constitutional Court, and reopened the constitutional drafting process.[101]

History is written by the victors, and so are new constitutions. When the text of Yeltsin's constitutional proposal was published on November 10, there were few surprises. Yeltsin's draft constitution provided for a very strong presidency. To provide some semblance of constitutional foundation for the fruits of his labor, Yeltsin issued a decree placing the draft constitution before the

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99 Lilia Shevtsova, "Russia's Post-Communist Politics: Revolution or Continuity?," in Gail W. Lapidus, ed., *The New Russia*, 22-23.

100 Ibid., 23.

101 Robert Sharlet, "The New Russian Constitution and its Political Impact," *Problems of Post-Communism* (Vol. 42, No. 1, January/February 1995), 4.

electorate to be approved in a popular referendum on December 12, 1993, the same day as the parliamentary elections.[102]

According to the official (and controversial) results, the constitution was approved by 58 percent of those voting. However, only 54.8 percent of the electorate took part in the referendum.[103] Critics of Yeltsin's draft have deemed the constitution illegitimate on the grounds that it contravenes the 1978 Constitution (Basic Law) of the Russian Federation (and subsequent amendments) and of the 1990 Russian Federation's law "On Referendums."[104] According to the Russian Federation Law "On Referendums," in order to adopt a Constitution or make amendments to the Constitution, a majority of the votes of the total electorate must be obtained.[105] As it was, the Constitution was approved by the votes of less than a third of all eligible voters.

Yeltsin attempted to thwart such criticism by having his decree describe the vote as a 'plebiscite' rather than a referendum, and therefore only a simple majority of actually-participating voters would suffice for the draft to be adopted.[106] Despite the fact that the constitutionality of this procedure has yet to be established, the decline in criticism against the constitution in the past few years suggests that it has become generally accepted. As well, after gaining control

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102 Ibid., 4.

103 Lilia Shevtsova, "Russia's Post-Communist Politics: Revolution or Continuity?," in Gail W. Lapidus, ed., *The New Russia*, 24.

104 "The News of the Week: The Russian Federation," *The Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press* (Vol. XLVI, No. 3, 1994), 15.

105 Ibid., 15.

of the Lower House after the 1995 State Duma elections, it seems unlikely that the Communists (previously the chief critics of the Constitution) would continue to argue so vehemently against the constitutions adoption, especially if the Duma proves to be an effective counter-balance to the executive.

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106 Matthew Wyman, Bill Miller, Stephen White and Paul Heywood, "The Russian Elections of December 1993," in *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 13, No. 3, September 1994), 255.

Chapter Three: The Russian Constitution

Before studying the Russian elections to the State Duma, it is necessary to establish the influence such a representative body will have in the formulation and execution of its policy initiatives. This becomes necessary in light of repeated claims that the 1993 Russian Constitution reduces the State Duma to a proverbial 'pocket parliament,' in which the power imbalance is so pronounced in favor of the executive as to make the legislature defenseless against it. If this were in fact the case, and the new Russian constitution was anything like the 1977 Constitution which it replaced, there would be no need to examine the influence the Duma elections had on party system development. Such constitutional arrangements would effectively stifle the development of a viable party system. This is because under the 1977 Constitution only a single political organization - the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - had a legitimate existence.[107]

Both the pre-Soviet and Soviet political systems had a strong executive with considerable authority resting with the top decision maker - whether Tsar or Communist Party General Secretary.[108] Article 6 of the 1977 Soviet Constitution, adopted during the years of stagnation under Brezhnev, gave legal effect to the Communist Party's political monopoly. It made it the "leading and guiding force

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107 Stephen White, Matthew Wyman and Olga Kryshtanovskaya, "Parties and Politcs in Post-Communist Russia," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* (Vol. 28, No. 2, 1995), 183.

108 John P. Willerton, "Yeltsin and the Russian Presidency," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian and Post-Soviet Politics*, 28.

of Soviet society and the nucleus of its political system, of all state and public organization."[109] This party was under the control of an extremely centralized and authoritarian leadership, which prompted Mikhail Gorbachev to suggest, upon coming to power in 1985, that he was more powerful than any other world leader.[110]

By the early 1990s, however, the Soviet system had ended, and with it the predominance of a single party. The Communist Party had abandoned its leading role, allowing other parties and movements the right to take part in the administration of state and public affairs. What must now be determined is the extent to which the emerging Russian constitution allow the participation of the legislature in the governing of post-communist Russia. This will be done through a look at the various ways constitutions allocate governmental power (primarily between executive and legislative branches), as well as comparing the powers of the Russian legislature with its French, and, to a lesser extent, American counterparts.

As in most modern nations (Great Britain and Israel are two notable exceptions) the basic structure of government is set forth in a written constitution. Whether written or unwritten, however, a constitution expresses the 'fundamental agreement' of the political society on how it will be governed. It usually defines the scope of governmental authority, the way in which decisions are made, and the

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109 Stephen White, Matthew Wyman and Olga Kryshtanovskaya, "Parties and Politics in Post-communist Russia," in *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* (Vol. 28, No. 2, 1995), 183-184.

manner in which decision makers are selected and held accountable.[111] Constitutions both create and limit governmental power. Ivo Duchacek defines constitutions as "...those collections of solemn declarations, ideological commitments, and written as well as unwritten rules that identify the sources, goals, uses, and restraints on official power and are labeled by political authorities as national constitutions."[112]

The most significant difference between a presidential democracy, such as the United States, and parliamentary democracies, is the separation-of-powers principle. Separation of power means the constitutional division of government power among separate legislative, executive, and judicial branches. As an example, the Constitution of the United States specifically vests the legislative power in the Congress (Article I), the executive power in the president (Article II), and the Judicial power in the federal courts, headed by the Supreme Court (Article III).[113] The three branches are separated in several ways, the most important of which is the requirements in Article I, Section 6, that "No person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his continuance in office."[114] This is the direct opposite of the function of powers in most parliamentary democracies in which the political head of the executive must

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110 Ibid., 184.

111 Benjamin Ginsberg and Theodore J. Lowi, *American Government: Freedom and Power, 2nd edition* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1992), 104.

112 Ivo D. Duchacek, "National Constitutions: A Functional Approach," in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, eds., *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings, 8th edition*, 328.

113 Austin Ranney, "Politics in the United States," in Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., eds., *Comparative Politics Today, 5th edition*, 567-8.

be a member of parliament. This is to prevent any abuse of power, which some feel is an inherent drawback of the presidential system. However, abuse of power is hardly a presidential monopoly. Parliamentary regimes have produced more than their share of abuses of power, enough not to deem it system specific.[115]

The Russian Constitution contains similar safeguards.[116] Article 10 states that: "State power in the Russian Federation shall be exercised on the basis of the separation of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches. The bodies of legislative, executive and judiciary powers shall be independent."[117] As well, Article 97, section 2, states that: "...a deputy to the State Duma may not be a deputy to any other representative body of state power or bodies of local self-government."[118]

Despite such safeguards, however, the balance between executive and legislative power can vary dramatically between systems, and even within the same system over time. While representative systems may include presidents who are elected by direct vote, they may lack the ability to compete seriously for power with the prime minister.[119] Such is the case with the French Fifth Republic which, since 1962, also has a popularly elected president, in what can be called a mixed

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114 Ibid., 568.

115 Donald L. Horowitz, "Comparing Democratic Institutions," in Bernard E. Brown and Roy C. Macridis, eds., *Comparative Politics, 8th edition*, 322.

116 Relevant articles of the Constitution of the Russian Federation can be found in Appendix A.

117 Russian Constitution SECTION ONE Chapter 1. This information is obtained at: http://www.bucknell.edu/...s/russian/const/ch1.html (June 21, 1996)

118 Russian Constitution SECTION ONE Chapter 5. This information is obtained at: http://www.bucknell.edu/...s/russian/const/ch5.html (June 21, 1996)

119 Ibid., 310.

presidential-parliamentary system. Despite the amount of power any French president has been able to wield (which at times has been substantial), the government is still constitutionally accountable to the National Assembly. This emphasizes the parliamentary nature of governmental authority in French politics.[120]

The French Constitution of 1958 was introduced primarily to strengthen the executive. From 1870 to 1958, French governments had been weak and unstable. De Gaulle was convinced that chronic instability was one of the major causes of the decline of France, and he based his cure on constitutional remedies. In framing the French constitution, General de Gaulle hoped a strong president could put an end to the perversion of parliamentary government, in which the combination of a dominant National Assembly and a fragmented party system made stable government impossible.[121] De Gaulle's recipe to alleviate the instability of French institutions was attacked from the start as both authoritarian and undemocratic.[122] It is not altogether clear whether General de Gaulle wanted a presidency along American lines or not, but it is important to note that General De Gaulle did not achieve a constitutionally defined presidency as powerful as he may have liked. In fact, according to the letter of the Constitution, the powers of the president of the Republic are relatively limited. Constitutionally, the French president is to be

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120 Peter Morris, *French Politics Today* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 25-26.

121 Ibid., 23.

122 Jean Blondel, "The Government of France," in Michael Curtis, et.al., *Introduction to Comparative Government, 3rd edition* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1993), 137.

concerned only with the long-term interests of the country rather than with daily politics. This relegates the President to being not much more than head of state, on paper at least.[123]

Despite the letter of the constitution, however, De Gaulle and his successors managed to exercise a considerable amount of influence in the politics of France from his position as president. In different periods since its establishment, the Presidency has at times been able to dominate the Fifth Republic.[124] Despite these periods of domination, however, the presidency was still constitutionally limited. The Constitution of France provides a distinct role for the government, and specifies that the Prime Minister is the head of that government. The republican principle of the accountability of the government to legislature was fundamental to the agreement reached in 1958. The French Fifth Republic is thus parliamentary in character. Nothing in the 1958 text stops Prime Ministers, supported by a majority of the National Assembly, from using their constitutional powers to determine national policy over the head of the President.[125] Even throughout periods when the President has dominated politics and policy, the government has had a major role in the formation and execution of policy in many areas.[126]

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123 Ibid., 139.
124 Peter Morris, *French Politics Today*, 26.
125 Ibid., 25-26.
126 Anne Stevens, *The Government and Politics of France* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 94.

The ratification of the new Russian Constitution in December 1993 laid to rest its heavily amended 1977 Soviet predecessor. As a text, the new Russian Constitution is one-sided in terms of the separation-of-powers doctrine, assigning awesome powers to the president while relegating the State Duma to a decidedly inferior status. The Constitution grants sweeping powers to the President, making him the person to name the Government (Article 83) while the Parliament is to participate in setting the national agenda and (most importantly) passing the yearly budget. The president has the right to appoint the prime minister, and (on his nomination) to appoint and dismiss deputy premiers and other ministers (Article 112). If he thought it was necessary, the President could dismiss the government as a whole.[127]

The Duma can for its part reject nominations to the premiership, but after the third such rejection it would be automatically dissolved (Article 111, section 3). The Duma might equally be dissolved if it twice voted a lack of confidence in the government as a whole, or if it refused to express confidence in the government when the matter was raised by the prime minister. The president can be impeached, but only for serious anti-state crimes and after a complicated procedure has been initiated (Article 93).[128]

There was criticism of the new Constitution, before and after it was put to the electorate. The extraordinary powers attributed to the president aroused

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[127] Stephen White, "Introduction:From Communism to Democracy?," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian & Post-Soviet Politics*, 11-14.

particular concern. A statement issued by the various leaders of Parties and Public Associations, published in *Pravda*, Jan. 19, 1994, suggests that the text of the Constitution "...revives an authoritarian system in the Russian Federation." It goes on to argue that "by granting the President dictatorial powers, the Constitution leaves Russia defenseless before the ill will or whims of both its present and future rulers."[129] As well, Mikhail Gorbachev complained that the Russian president had more powers than the Tsar had before the revolution.[130] Such criticism sounds hypocritical coming from Gorbachev seeing as he wielded at least as much, if not more, power as General Secretary. With the Communist Party as the only legal political entity, Gorbachev had no counterbalance to his rule such as the Duma is to Yeltsin.

One of the most extraordinary powers granted to the Russian president is the ability to issue decrees which have the force of law, and are binding throughout the territory of the Russian Federation (Article 90).[131] The president under the Fifth Republic in France possesses similar powers but only in the case of a grave threat to the institutions of the Republic. Such emergency powers have been used very sparingly by French presidents. In fact, emergency powers were

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128 Ibid., 15.

129 "The News of the Week: The Russian Federation," *Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press* (Vol. XLVI, No. 3, 1994), 15

130 Ibid., 26.

131 Russian Constitution SECTION ONE Chapter 4. This information is obtained at: http:// www. bucknell.edu/...s/russian/const/ch4.html (June 21, 1996)

used only once by General de Gaulle. While these powers seem rather dictatorial, they still must be exercised only within the framework of the constitution.[132]

While General de Gaulle used these powers infrequently, Yeltsin, in only his first term, flexed this executive muscle relatively often, but with rather lackluster results. To date, these decrees have proven rather fanciful and often unenforceable, which goes far in explaining their poor results. Despite the implications for such power, the offhand nature in which Yeltsin wields it has created a system in which these decrees have come to be seen as almost irrelevant. It should be noted here that the ineffectiveness of such Presidential decrees issued by Yeltsin is not a function of the power of the Duma, but rather stems from a lack of central authority. This reiterates the earlier point that despite the letter of the constitution, the powers that each branch of government possess may evolve over time. It is unlikely, then, that this power granted to the Russian President should threaten the democratic nature of the transition, nor the legislature's ability to influence policy.

Despite the fact that the new Russian Constitution adopted in December 1993 endowed the President with substantial powers, and likewise has cast the parliament in a constrained role in the politics of Russia, it will remain unclear for a time to come how such powers would be exercised and how far in political terms

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132 Henry W. Ehrmann and Martin A. Schain, "Politics in France," in Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., eds., *Comparative Politcs Today, 5th edition*, 192.

they will extend.[133] As well, there is no reason to think a Duma dominated by anti-Yeltsin sentiments, coupled with a strong and influential speaker, would not cause serious headaches for the executive branch. If a coherent coalition or voting bloc controls more than two-thirds of the seats, then the Duma can flex its muscles. With those votes it can overturn vetoes, uphold its own legislation, and even attempt to rewrite the constitution. If a Duma coalition controls more than half of the seats it can dispute the president's right to choose a prime minister, and so claim more sway over the government.[134] This is why a study of party system fragmentation is so important. It will help determine whether the State Duma has matured from one election to the next, to the point where it can use its constitutionally granted powers as an effective counterbalance to the powers of the President.

The first test of the new constitution came in February 1994. The State Duma, exercising its power to grant amnesty (Art. 103, sec. 1, subsec. f), went beyond the conferral of mercy on various classes of criminal convicts and released from all charges the coup conspirators of 1991. Two of those released were Yeltsin's greatest opponents, former vice president Aleksandr Rutskoi and former Congress of Peoples' Deputies speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, who were imprisoned along with the others after the military assault on parliament of the previous fall.

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133 John P. Willerton, "Yeltsin and the Russian Presidency," in Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian and Post-Soviet* Politics, 46.

134 "Russia and Democracy: It's a Long Road," *The Economist (London)* (Vol. 337, December 16, 1995), 20.

President Yeltsin was outraged, and was urged by his close advisors to use the great powers granted the executive from the constitution, and possibly even extra-constitutional action if necessary, to prevent the release of Rutskoi and Khasbulatov. Yeltsin abided by the Duma's decision, however, and the prisoners were released. The president had exercised political restraint, and the constitution had survived its first test of the new legislative-executive relationship.[135]

What maintains the democratic nature of both parliamentary and presidential systems is the constitutionally entrenched system of checks and balances. The constitution provides a network of relationships within which and from which the dialogue of power can peacefully proceed. Despite its presidential bias, the first post-Soviet Russian constitution symbolically conveyed the message that Russia would continue down the road of government by law.[136] This was a definite step in the right direction towards the eventual fulfillment of a liberal-democratic transformation in Russia.

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135 Robert Sharlet, "The New Russian Constitution and its Political Impact," *Problems of Post-Communism* (Vol. 42, No. 1, January/February, 1995), 6.

136 Ibid., 6.

Chapter Four: The Russian Duma Elections

On polling day, an elector was handed his voting slip, but instead of putting it into the ballot box without looking at it, he began to read the name of the sole candidate.
'What do you think you're doing?' asked an official in a suit, menacingly.
'I want to know who I'm voting for.'
'Don't be stupid. Don't you know that the election is secret?'
(Soviet-era anecdote)[137]

In place of the recently dissolved parliament, there was established a new bicameral Federal Assembly, which is commonly referred to as the Russian parliament. The Federal Assembly consists of an upper house (the Federation Council) and a lower house (the State Duma). Both were elected to special two-year terms in December, 1993 following the dissolution of Congress by Yeltsin in October of the same year. All members of the State Duma are elected at the same time and serve four-year terms.[138]

The upper chamber, the Council of the Federation, resembled a typical European upper house in that it was substantially weaker than the lower. The Federation Council consisted of the governors (or chief administrators) and heads of local legislatures from each of the 89 regions of Russia.[139] The lower house, the State Duma, consists of 450 representatives. Given its structure, the Duma alone is often referred to as the parliament. Deputies to this lower chamber are

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137 Peter Frank, "Russia Decides," *The World Today* (Vol. 51, No.7, July, 1995), 139.

138 Russian Duma Elections-'95: A Scorecard. http://users.aimnet.com/~ksyrah/ekskurs/elect.html (December 16, 1996), 1.

chosen by a mixed electoral formula: half, or 225 seats, are chosen by the familiar 'first-past-the-post' (plurality) system in single-member districts based roughly on population. The remaining 225 seats are filled by a proportional voting system by party list.[140] The proportional voting section is carried out with Russia serving as one immense electoral district called the 'general federal district.' The Russian electoral system then combines the two extremes along the plurality-PR continuum as independent parts of the same system.[141]

This differs somewhat from the aforementioned German system of 'personalized PR,' which also combines elements of both plurality and PR systems in a two-tiered electoral system. In the German system, the results of the plurality and PR systems are not separate as in the Russian system, but are interconnected. After the results of the single-member plurality contests are computed, parties are awarded the number of seats roughly proportionate to their share of the national vote in the PR contest minus the number of seats they won in the plurality contests. This system allows parties that were denied seats in the plurality contests to be compensated by the concurrently held PR race.[142]

The Russian electoral system provides for no such link. Parties and blocs are awarded all of the seats they win in both races regardless of whether the

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139 Ibid., 1.

140 *The Russian Parliamentary Elections - 1995.* http://www.ceo.cz/rtoday/glance/rustats.html (June 19, 1996), 1.

141 Sergei Chugrov, et.al. *Political Tendencies in Russia's Regions: Evidence from the 1993 Parliamentary Elections.* http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/slavrev/fall94/d.sl.html (May 3, 1996), 3.

distribution of seats to the State Duma coincided with the distribution of votes in either one of the electoral races. The mixed PR-plurality electoral system used by Russia makes it a particularly useful case for anyone exploring the influence of proportional representation and plurality electoral systems on party development. This is because it allows the simultaneous study of these two electoral systems under the same set of social, economic, and cultural conditions.[143]

Before the campaign even began, electoral blocs and individual candidates were required to collect signatures to appear on the ballot. Parties and electoral blocs wishing to field a party list in the national PR contest were required to collect 100,000 signatures. In an attempt to discourage parties based in just one or two regions from participating in the elections, these signatures had to come from a reasonably wide geographical distribution. Signatures had to be collected from among at least seven different administrative districts, with no more than 15 percent of the signatures coming from any one district.[144] Despite the overwhelming obstacles regionally based parties must surmount, Duma deputy and Yobloko member Viktor Sheinis, one of the primary authors of the law on parliamentary elections, said the registration requirement of 100,000 signatures has proven too easy to achieve.[145]

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142 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 383.

143 Ibid., 377.

144 Ibid., 382.

145 Laura Belin, "Author of Electoral Law on its Strengths and Weaknesses," *Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) Special Report.* No. 8 (November 21, 1995), 1.

Individual candidates for the single-member districts to the State Duma could get onto the ballot either by being nominated by an electoral bloc which met the signature requirement for the above mentioned party list vote, or by gathering signatures equal to one percent of the number of voters in his or her electoral district. This typically averaged about 5000 signatures.[146] In addition to these registration hurdles, certain legal thresholds were also employed. In the party list PR contest, a legal threshold of five percent of the national vote was imposed before any party list could gain representation. This threshold was implemented in an effort to encourage Russia's weak parties to join together in coalitions or blocs.[147] While many politicians from small parties have criticized the 5% hurdle as being too high, Sheinis believes that the barrier for winning Duma seats is one of the law's best features. He takes a rather Darwinist view on the matter when he argues that tiny parties "do not have the right to exist," and that the electoral law should encourage the formation of a few strong parties, just as wolves preserve a "biological balance" by eating weaker animals.[148]

For those candidates participating in the single-member plurality races, a minimum of 25 percent of an electoral district's registered voters had to turn out. This threshold only invalidated races in six electoral districts. In one of these, in

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146 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 382.

147 Sergei Chugrov, et.al. *Political Tendencies in Russia's Regions: Evidence form the 1993 Parliamentary Elections* http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/slavrev/fall94/d.sl.html (May 3, 1996), 3.

148 Laura Belin, "Author of Electoral law on its Strengths and Weaknesses," in *Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) Special Report.* (No.8, November 21, 1995), 1.

Chechnya, electoral sites were not opened and the election was not held. In the five others in Tartarsan, the local elite called on the population to boycott the elections and the turnout was well below the 25 percent threshold. Despite these isolated instances, however, the threshold proved not to be a problem.[149]

All of the parties are allocated free television time for political advertisements. In addition, paid time is available, reportedly for $20,000-30,000 per minute. The free-time is allocated in blocks, by a random drawing. This free-time is not distributed over the entire period in which advertisements are permitted. Rather, some parties have all of their time at the beginning of the period, while others receive their free-time on the eve of the elections. The parties are allowed to spend 250,000 times the minimum wage on their advertising campaign.[150]

Before the electoral campaign even began, the registration rules played a significant role in determining the number and type of parties that would participate in the elections. The requirement of the collection of 100,000 signatures for registration excluded a significant number of would-be electoral candidates. This requirement narrowed the field from an endless number of small groups and cliques, to thirteen. Only these organizations had any chance of putting

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149 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 382-3.

150 Russian Duma Elections-'95: A Scorecard. http://users.aimnet.com/~ksyrah/eksurs/elect.html (December 16, 1995), 5.

together the required petition campaign.[151] Another target of the registration rules was regionally, or ethnically based parties. Many of Russia's ethnic minorities have their own administrative districts. By requiring that no more than 15 percent of a bloc's valid signatures come from one region, registration rules acted in greatly undermining the formation of ethnically based electoral blocs. As intended, no electoral bloc representing a particular nationality (e.g. Tatars or Bashkirs) nor any bloc representing the interests of ethnic-based areas as a whole were able to get on the party list ballot.[152]

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151 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 384.

152 Ibid., 384.

Chapter Five: The 1993 State Duma Election Results

On December 12, 1993 Russia held its first truly multi-party parliamentary elections. According to the head of the Central Election Commission, Nicole Ryabov, 3,303 candidates were contesting the State Duma elections. Of these 1,586 competed for 225 seats in single-member constituencies, and 1,717 names were included on the party lists.[153] Table 1 shows the distribution of seats for both the PR and single-member district contests. As expected, the PR portion of the election allowed a large number of parties to gain representation. Of the thirteen parties participating, eight of them overcame the five percent legal threshold required to win seats in the Duma.

As was suggested before, by combining plurality and PR contests for seats in the State Duma, the Russian electoral system provides the unique opportunity to study the impact of these two types of electoral systems within the same political system at the same time. Therefore, in examining the impact the electoral system has on party development in Russia, the PR and plurality contests will first be examined separately. Then the party system that emerged in the State Duma out of the mixed PR-plurality system will be analyzed. This will be done using the Laasko Taagepera effective number of components index.

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153 Matthew Wyman, Bill Miller, Stephen White and Paul Heywood, "The Russian Elections of December 1993," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 13, No. 3, September 1994), 256,

Table 1. Results of the 1993 elections to the State Duma

Electoral Bloc	% of votes (party list)	No. seats (party list)	No. single member seats	Total seats
Liberal Democratic Party	22.9	59	5	64
Russia's Choice	15.5	40	18	58
Communist Party, Russia	12.4	32	16	48
Women of Russia	8.1	21	2	23
Agrarian Party	7.9	21	12	33
Yabloko	7.8	20	2	22
1. Party of Russian Unity and Accord	6.7	18	1	19
Democratic Party of Russia	5.5	14	1	15
Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms	4.0	--	4	4
Civic Union	1.9	--	1	1
Russia's Future	1.2	--	--	--
Cedar	0.7	--	--	--
Dignity and Charity	0.7	--	2	2
Independents	--	--	155	155
Unfilled	--	--	6	6
Total		225	225	450

Source: Robert G. Moser, "The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," in *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (December 1995), 308.

The Laasko Taagepera "effective number of parties" index is used to determine the number of effective parties produced by an electoral system. It is designed to determine the number of effective parties in a system taking into account each party's relative size. This is accomplished through allowing the vote or seat share a party receives to "determine their own weights."[154] For instance, a party with a fractional share of .40 (that is, 40 percent of the votes) also receives a weight of .40 so that its weighted value is .40 x .40 = .16. A party with a 10 percent share receives a much smaller weighted value of .10 x .10 = .01. This

index differs from others which utilize an arbitrary cutoff point below which no party is counted as such. The party with one percent of votes is practically discounted, because its weighted value becomes $(.01)^2 = .0001$. The result of adding up such weighted values for all components (whether it be party votes, or seats in a legislature) is called the *Herfindahl Hirschman Concentration Index,* Which is designated as *HH*:

$$HH = \Sigma p_i^2$$

Where p_i is the fractional share of the i-th component and Σ (sigma) stands for the summation over all components. The values of *HH* can range from 0 to 1. If one component has a 100 percent share, *HH* = 1.00. If all components have extremely small shares, *HH* tends towards zero.[155]

The Laasko and Taagepera effective number of components index (*N*) is defined as the inverse of *HH*:

$$N = 1/HH = 1/\Sigma p_i^2$$

The index can be based on either the proportion of the electoral vote (N_v) or on the proportion of seats a party receives after these votes are translated into seats (N_s). *N* indicates the number of hypothetical equal-sized parties that would have the same effect on fractionalization of the party system as have the actual parties of varying size. If we have four parties with equal vote shares (.25-.25-.25-.25), the number of effective parties is clearly four and, indeed, the equation also yields *N* =

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154 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 78.

155 Ibid., 79.

4. As opposed to other systems that attempt to determine the number of parties in a system, when vote shares change gradually, the value of N also changes gradually. This is in contrast to the sharp changes that can occur when an arbitrary cutoff is used. This is because the Laasko and Taagepera number of effective parties index is much more sensitive to small changes since it can assume fractional values.[156]

By comparing the effective number of electoral parties (N_v) with the effective number of parliamentary parties (N_s) one can determine the effect of the electoral system on the number of parties entering the legislature. Both plurality and PR systems tend to constrain the number of parties entering the legislature, the former to a much greater extent than the latter. Typically, the relationship between the number of assembly and electoral parties, is close to: $N_s = N_v - 0.4$. In other words, the workings of the electoral systems in general tend to reduce the effective number of parties by an average of about one half of a party.[157]

By using this index on the 1993 Russian Duma elections, it becomes apparent that the number of parties and blocs contesting the party list portion of the election is substantially more than the average number given by Taagepera and Shugart. They analyze the results of the effective number of parties for 48 country's most recent national elections to their respective lower houses, as of 1985.[158] This analysis found that the average number of effective electoral parties

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156 Ibid., 79.

157 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral* Studies (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 388.

158 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and* Votes, 82-83.

(N_v) was 2.8, with a range from 1.8 (1984 Egypt) to 10.3 (1984 Ecuador). The average effective number of legislative parties (N_s) was 2.4, and the range went from 1.3 (1984 Egypt and 1984 Botswana) to 7.0 (1985 Belgium). Australia happened to have the average coordinates in 1984, and thus its election could be described as typical.

The effective number of electoral parties for the PR portion of the 1993 Russian elections was 7.6.[159] In comparative perspective, 7.6 is quite high. In fact, according to Taagepera and Shugart's aforementioned analysis only one other system utilizing PR, namely Ecuador in 1984, had a higher number of effective electoral parties (10.3). The effective number of legislative parties for the PR portion of the vote was 6.4.[160] Thus, the PR system constrained the number of parties gaining legislative representation by over one effective party. This is more than the average offered by the Taagepera and Shugart analysis of 48 PR and plurality systems, which was stated above as being almost one half a party on average, or rather: $N_s = N_v - 0.4$.

Looking strictly at the workings of PR rules in Taagepera and Shugart's analysis, the average number of parties gaining legislative representation is almost three and a half. While this suggests that the PR section with its legal threshold of five percent did have its intended effect in constraining the number of parties

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[159] To account for the total vote for the thirteen electoral blocs being less than 100 percent (95.78), (probably due to the "against all" vote) each bloc's vote percentage is divided by 0.9578. The rest of the equation is carried out according Laasko and Taagpera's formula.

gaining representation, it still allowed almost twice the number of parties into the legislature than the average.

Robert Moser feels that the threshold may not have been set high enough.[161] He suggests that a higher threshold of ten percent would have had a much stronger constraining influence on the party system. This would have denied representation to all but the three strongest parties (Russia's Choice, Liberal Democratic Party, and the Communists). As it was, the five percent threshold denied representation to only the most marginal parties. A more formidable barrier might have encouraged some of the smaller parties to consider more seriously pre-election coalition-building.

As noted above, while PR systems are thought to be more permissive, allowing greater proliferation of political parties, plurality systems tend to constrain the number of parties. This is found to be the case in Taagepera and Shugart's analysis with the plurality systems constraining the average number of effective assembly parties to 1.6, whereas the PR systems allow a higher 3.3 effective parties into the legislature on average. Plurality systems, according to this study, do correspond to a low number of parties and a strong reduction in the number of assembly parties compared to electoral parties.[162]

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160 Six seats were left unfilled and four independents remained unaffiliated. To account for this, the percentage of seats for each legislative faction was computed by dividing each faction's number of seats by 215 rather than 225.

161 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Developent: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 389.

162 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 84.

The PR component of the Russian electoral system appeared to act as expected in allowing the representation of a large number of electoral blocs. The single-member plurality system, however, was surprisingly unable to constrain the number of parties entering the legislature. Single-member plurality elections are supposed to encourage pre-election consolidation of like-minded forces into larger parties. Small parties are presumably punished for their inability to win a significant number of pluralities in individual districts. Consequently, they do not win sufficient representation to sustain existence.[163]

In the election, the plurality system actually allowed more parties and electoral blocs (12) to win at least one seat than the PR system with its five percent threshold. This is not altogether surprising, when one considers this is a "founding election" for Russia. Douglas Rae indicates that plurality systems have a lower threshold for the entrance of new parties than PR systems because they only require that a party win a plurality in one district. This requires fewer votes than a legal or effective threshold in PR systems which require a proportion of the national vote to achieve representation.[164]

Some problems with the data and very nature of the results from the single-member districts make it difficult to determine the effect of the plurality system on the emerging party system in Russia. Moser suggests that the number of

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163 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 389.

164 Douglas Rae, *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws*, 78.

independents being elected in single-member districts (121), more than all of the candidates from electoral blocs combined, makes it virtually impossible to determine the effective number of electoral parties (N_v) with any certainty.[165]

However, one can calculate the number of effective parliamentary parties (N_s) produced by the plurality contests if one treats legislative factions as parliamentary parties. This means including within the term 'parliamentary party' legislative factions or new deputy groups that had no corresponding electoral party, as well as counting independents who later joined a legislative faction as party members. Technically, a 'faction' in the Duma corresponds to a party block of at least 35 MPs. A recognized 'deputy group', also of at least 35 MPs, need not have a coherent ideological line or voting whip, but are still subject to the perks and privileges of committee chairmanships as other parties and factions.[166]

Based on the legislative factions joined by candidates from single-member districts, taking into account the six seats that were unfilled and four independents who remained unaffiliated with any faction or deputy group, the number of effective parliamentary parties emerging from the plurality portion of the election was 5.8. This is only slightly lower than the 6.4 number of legislative parties

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165 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral* Studies (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 390.

166 Robert Cottrell, "Russia's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," *Government and Opposition* (Vol. 31, No. 2, Spring 1996), 167.

produced by the PR contest.[167] Comparatively, using Taagepera and Shugart's analysis of countries using only plurality rule, this is relatively high. This analysis found that the average number of effective electoral parties (N_s) using plurality was 1.6, and the range went from 1.3 (1984 Botswana) to 2.1 (1983 United Kingdom).[168]

Moser explains the failure of the plurality portion of the Russian elections to constrain the number of effective parties as being a result of a lack of established parties before the elections.[169] He suggests that the consistent correlation between two-party systems and single-member plurality elections has been observed in systems which have pre-existing large parties over a series of elections. For the greater part of the 20th century Russia has been dominated by the Communist Party, which exercised a virtual political monopoly. In the final years of the Soviet Union, a wide range of parties, groups, and coalitions replaced the decaying communist regime, but these parties were weak and evolved and mutated at an extraordinary rate.[170] Many of the parties contesting the 1993 Russian elections were very new organizations. Indeed, well over half had been

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167 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Part Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral* Studies (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 391.

168 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and* Votes, 82-84.

169 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 391.

170 Richard Sakwa, "Parties and the Multiparty System in Russia," *Politics* (Vol. 2 No. 31, July 1993), 7.

founded in 1993, and many of these organizations were simply *ad hoc* coalitions formed purely for the purpose of contesting the elections.[171]

Aside from the lack of well developed parties, the plurality races for the Russian elections were contested on a nonpartisan ballot. Under such a system the ballot listed a candidate's name, year of birth, occupation, and residence but not his

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171 Matthew Wyman, et al, "The Russian Elections of December 1993," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 13, No. 3, September 1994), 256.

or her partisan affiliation. Such information could be obtained only through media coverage as well as through a candidate's personal campaign. Therefore, party candidates were essentially hidden except to the few voters politically active enough to know their local candidate's partisan affiliation. This absence of partisan labels on the single-member district ballot made it quite difficult for voters to vote a straight ticket in both the PR party-list race and the single member plurality contest.[172]

The results of the 1993 elections suggest that in founding elections, when there are no well established parties capable of contesting each district, local notables will predominate. These local candidates already possessed more name recognition and support from their position in government or business in their local district than any electoral bloc or party could provide. As a result, in most cases parties and electoral blocs were left recruiting the only candidates who would possibly benefit from such partisan affiliation, little known candidates with few resources.[173]

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172 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 383.

173 Ibid., 391.

Russian parties and blocs were only successful in single-member district races where they could recruit already established notables to run under their party label. Such parties as Russia's Choice, the Communist Party and the Agrarian Party could offer these local notables something through their extensive patronage systems or local organizational base. On the other hand, the PR party-list contest allowed parties and electoral blocs with little or no local organization or cadre base to gain representation. In this section, a bloc having one charismatic candidate who could effectively use the media could commandeer an election. Zhirinovsky and his Liberal Democratic Party are good examples of this, winning an impressive 59 seats in the PR section of the vote.[174]

Because the PR and plurality systems favoured different parties, it is of no surprise that their combination into one system tended to multiply the number of effective parties in the State Duma. The number of effective parliamentary parties of all 440 deputies elected to the State Duma who joined factions was 8.7, higher than both the PR score (6.4) and plurality score (5.8) when the two are examined

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[174] Ibid., 395.

independently. Looking at Figure 1., shown below, it is easy to see how different parties fared under the two sets of electoral rules. In a strictly PR system, Russia's Choice, the Agrarian Party, and the Communists would have been less influential. They obviously benefited greatly from the plurality section. The plurality election also spawned an additional three legislative factions that would not have been formed otherwise, including the Union of 12 December, New Regional Policy, and Russian Path. These were composed predominantly of representatives who had no partisan affiliation during the election.

The different electoral systems also had different effects on the ideological content of the State Duma. The PR contest accentuated the polarization of the liberal

Western tendencies on the one side and communist and nationalist tendencies on the other, with little representation for centrist blocs.[175] This polarization is also apparent in the single-district contests. The one exception is the largest legislative faction formed by independent deputies after the election. This 'New Regional Policy' (NRP), is believed to lie somewhere in the amorphous center.[176]

Figure 1. Percentage of seats by PR and plurality rules (1993)

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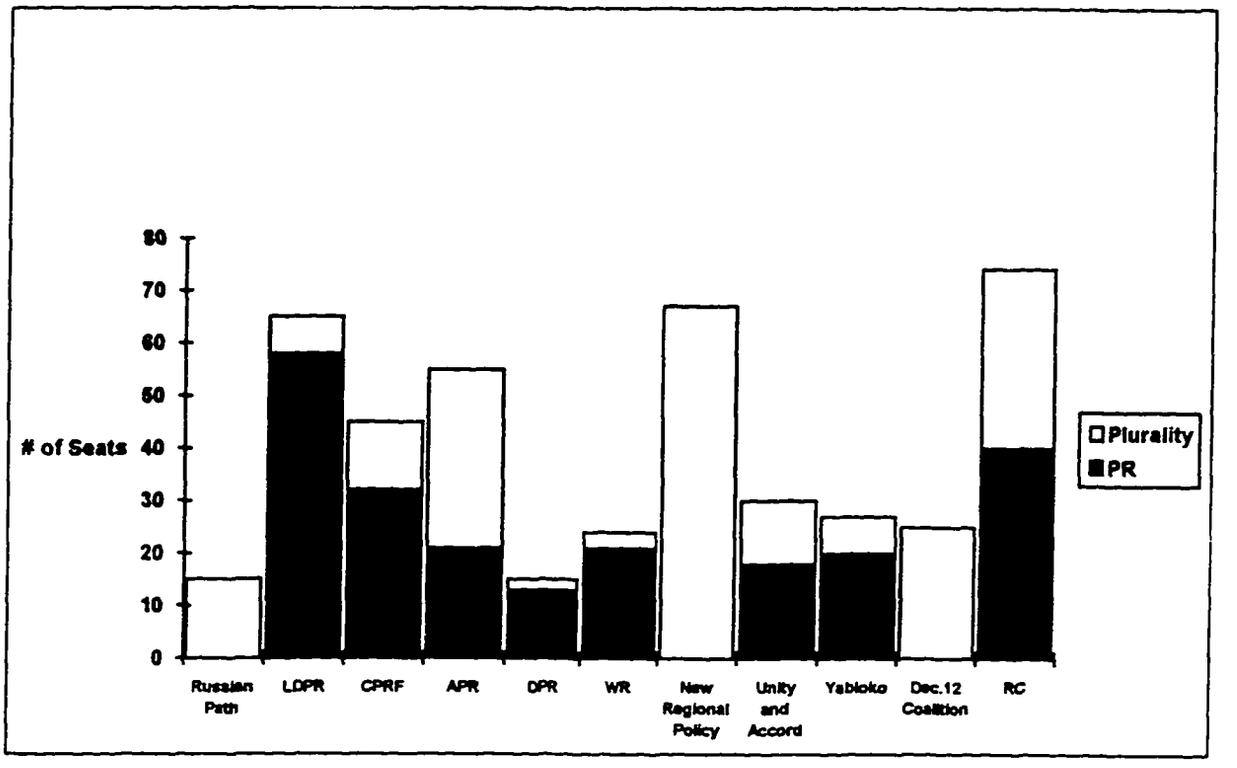
175 Parties are classified according to their political programs and political views proclaimed by their leaders. The grouping of parties in any ideological category does not imply that such programmatic statements would later serve as a guide to that parties behaviour in parliament. It does presume, however, that voters were influenced by the parties platform.

176 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections" *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 394.



Source: Robert Moser, "The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," in *Electoral Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995). 394.

Party System Fragmentation

After having determined the effect the electoral system has had on the development of a party system in Russia, the next examination is the effect this will have on the stability of the government. Because governments in parliamentary systems by and large govern only at the sufferance of a majority of the lower house

of the legislature, it can easily be seen how two-party systems are thought to be more stable than systems with more than two parties. A strict two-party system will invariably produce a majority for one party capable of being disciplined in support of

the government. However, in a three-or more party system (usually referred to as multiparty), such a majority is less likely to result from an election. In such systems, governments normally must be formed from coalitions of two or more autonomous parties. Although parties may find it relatively easy to discipline their own members, they do not have the same power over coalition partners to force them to go along with government decisions.[177]

A problem arises, however, in that the distinction between a two-party and a more than two-party system is a distinction that has virtually no applicability in the real world. Even Great Britain, the quintessential model of the classic two-party system, not only regularly places candidates from more than two parties in parliament, but in recent years has even been characterized by minority governments. Rather than speak of a simplistic typology of a two-party or multiparty system, a more useful way of characterizing the differences among party systems would be to characterize them along a continuum of more or less fragmented.[178]

The term 'fragmentation' was introduced by Gabriel Almond in his proposed typology of political systems. According to Almond, the primary feature of the fragmented system is their self-contained, mutually exclusive subcultures. Almond also made a link between social fragmentation and political instability. This is a logical connection, for as was discussed previously, the primary function

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[177] Lawrence Mayer, "Party Systems and Cabinet Stability," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems*, 336.

of political parties is to translate social cleavages and mass political orientations, through the medium of the contests between parties, into political action.[179]

The party system should then reflect the principle lines of cleavages within a society and the principle political subcultures by appealing to different sets of voters with competing party leaders, competing slogans, and competing ideologies. Those parties that succeed in gaining power or a share of it in governing coalitions will put their leaders in office. Fragmentation, then, refers to those party systems in which governments are formed by a process of negotiating, bargaining, and compromising after the election.[180]

Fragmentation makes the cohesion of government more tenuous, thus adversely affecting the productivity and ultimately the stability of government. In a highly fragmented system, it is harder for the smaller parties to align themselves with a larger party to form a coalition government.[181] If a parliamentary democracy finds itself overly fragmented to the point where it becomes difficult to form a coalition government, it will not be able to function.[182] This suggested relationship between multiparty systems and cabinet stability explains at least partially the instability of the Third and Fourth French Republic, Weimar

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178 Lawrence Mayer, John H. Burnett & Suzanne Ogden, *Comparative Politics*, 49.

179 Gary K. Bertsch, Robert P. Clark and David M. Wood, *Comparing Political Systems: Power and Policy in Three Worlds, fourth edition* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991), 126.

180 Lawrence Mayer, "Party Systems and Cabinet Stability," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems*, 340.

181 Edmund A. Aunger, *In Search of Political Stability: A Comparative Study of New Brunswick and Northern Ireland* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981), 4.

182 Lawrence Mayer, "Party Systems and Cabinet Stability," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems*, 335.

Germany, prewar Austria and Italy.[183] While we have identified the relationship between party system fragmentation and government instability, there must now be developed some measure to indicate the degree to which a party system is fragmented.

There have been devised a number of indexes that are used to measure party system fragmentation. One of the simplest, the index of aggregation, measures the converse of fragmentation in party systems. It divides the percentage of the largest party by the number of other parties in the system. This index attempts to show the fragmentation of the party system by measuring the aggregation of electoral support. This variable then combines two measurable characteristics, the number of parties in a system, and the strength of those parties. The fewer the number, the less fragmentation; the more even the strengths of the parties, the greater the fragmentation.[184]

Party system aggregation, it is believed, will more fully account for the variations in the stability of the system than simply the number of parties. While it is generally believed that a party system with many parties better fits what is commonly understood by the term fragmented than a system with fewer parties, it is equally apparent that the number of parties in and of itself constitutes an inadequate conception of aggregation or explanation of cabinet stability.[185]

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183 Gary K. Bertsch, Robert P. Clark and David M. Wood, *Comparative Political Systems, 4th edition*, 336-7.

184 Ibid, 127.

185 Lawrence C. Mayer, "Party Systems and Cabinet Stability," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems* 337.

It is suggested by Lawrence Mayer that there are other variables that affect cabinet stability. The size of the parties in the legislature, especially that of the largest party, also affects the impact of the party system on cabinet stability. For example, small splinter parties do not generally change the essential character of the party system as a whole. In fact, a dominant party can provide a stable government despite weak coalition partners or a fragmented opposition. Therefore, it would seem that the relative size of the strongest party in the government is another important dimension in a conception of party aggregation.

For instance, a four-party system would ordinarily be more fragmented than a three-party system. But if the strength of the three parties in the latter system is evenly distributed, each party having one-third of the vote, it would be more fragmented than would a four-party system in which two parties each had forty-five percent of the voters' support and the remaining two parties each had five percent. That is, voter support is more concentrated in the four-party system than in the three-party system.

Presumably it would be easier to draw together a majority coalition when you start with a party enjoying a solid foundation of forty-five percent of the vote, as opposed to finding a way of reconciling two proud 30-35 percent parties in the same coalition government.[186] The aggregation index, therefore, measures the extent to which the government is dominated by one power center rather than

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[186] Gary K Bertsch, Robert P. Clark and David M. Wood, *Comparing Political Systems, 4th* edition, 127.

having to bargain and compromise among several autonomous power centers in order to hold the government together.[187]

As was suggested above, the index of aggregation is calculated by dividing the percentage of the largest party by the number of other parties in the system, with the higher the score, the more aggregated the party system. By this measure, the 1983 British legislature can be used as an example of a highly aggregated party system, receiving a score of 30.5. Conversely, the 1983 Italian legislature proves to be much less aggregated, receiving an index score of only 8.9.[188] When this index is applied to the Russian party system that emerged as a result of the 1993 Duma elections, it arrives at a score of 1.7. This index of aggregation is exceptionally low and indicates that coalition formation in the new Duma could prove to be very difficult.

Since no one political force received a majority in the Duma, the different parties have to start looking for allies to form voting blocs. Therefore, the willingness of party leaders to enter and sustain coalitions with each other, was a very important factor for Russia's emerging party system.[189] This would prove difficult, however, because most party leaders did not want to join any coalitions.[190] The Democrats simply could not come to an agreement on creating

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187 Lawrence C. Mayer, "A Note on the Aggregation of Party Systems," in Peter H. Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems*, 516-17.

188 Gary K. Bertsch, Robert P. Clark and David M. Wood, *Comparing Political Systems, 4th edition*, 135.

189 Douglas Rae, *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws*, 98.

190 "Will Duma Have a Communist-Centrist Coalition?" *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* (Vol. XLV, No. 51, 1993), 5.

an "anti-fascist front", and the Communist Party suffered similar afflictions. What resulted was a Duma with no political force succeeding in maintaining an organized coalition. Instead, voting would be done on an issue to issue basis.[191]

Now that the effects the Russian electoral system on party system development have been examined for the 1993 Russian Duma elections, this study will look at the next election held just two years later. The electoral rules for the December 1995 election were essentially the same as in 1993, except for two minor exceptions: parties qualifying for the national ballot must submit petitions with signatures of at least 200,000 voters with at most 7% from any one of the 89 regions in the Federation.[192] These changes were likely an attempt to limit the number of parties or electoral blocs contesting the election, but as will soon be made apparent, this was not to be.

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191 "New Parliament Viewed as Antagonistic to Reform," *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* (Vol. XLVI, No. 1, February 2, 1994), 1.

192 Russian Duma Elections-'95: A Scorecard. http://users.aimnet.com/~ksyrah/eksurs/elect.html (December 16, 1995), 3.

Chapter Six: The 1995 State Duma Election Results

The Russian parliamentary elections of December 17, 1995 were the second in the Russian Federation's short history. Once again, there was great interest shown in both individuals and parties contesting the election. Over 100 parties attempted to get registered for the party-list section of the vote. Of those 100 only 43 actually made it through the registration process, and only four were able to split the 225 party-list seats amongst themselves. In addition to the party-list voting, a total of 2687 candidates were registered to participate in the 225 single-member contests. As well, there were once again an enormous amount of independents running in the plurality section of the election. Of the 2687 single-member candidates, over 1000 were independent.[193]

According to a Central Electoral Commission (TsIK) spokesperson, the turnout for the 1995 Duma elections was 64.95%. Tslk Chairman Nikolai Ryabov noted that in every region of the Russian Federation, the turnout was higher than the 25% necessary for the elections to be considered valid, ranging from 69.2% in Altai Republic to 39.2% in Ingushetiya.[194] This was in contrast to the 1993 elections in which both Chechnia and Tartarstan did not reach the required 25%. In Tartarstan, an unofficial boycott resulted in a turnout of less than 13%. In Chechnia, as a result of President Dzhokhar Dudaev declaring the

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[193] Ibid., 2.

republic independent of Russia in late 1991, a boycott of the election took place and no polling stations were allowed to open.[195]

Table 2. Results of the 1995 elections to the State Duma

Electoral Bloc	% of votes (party list)	No. Seats (party list)	No. single member seats	Total Seats
Communist Party, Russia	22.73	99	58	157
Our Home is Russia	10.13	45	10	55
Liberal Democratic Party	11.2	50	1	51
Yabloko	6.89	31	14	45
Agrarian Party	3.85	--	20	20
Power to the People	1.64	--	9	9
Democratic Choice, Russia	3.94	--	9	9
Congress of Russian Communities	4.39	--	5	5
Forward Russia	1.98	--	3	3
Ivan Rybkin's Bloc	1.13	--	3	3
Women of Russia	4.70	--	3	3
Pamfilov-Gurov-Lysenko	1.63	--	2	2
Other*	22.98	--	11	11
Against all candidates	2.83	--	--	--
Independents	--	--	77	77
Total		225	225	450

Source: *Maximov -- Election Results*, obtained at: http://www.Maximov.com/ Elections/ results.html (July 28, 1996), 1-2.
*Denotes the eleven different parties or blocs that failed to surpass the 5% threshold but managed to win one seat in the plurality section of the vote.

In the year preceding the 1995 Duma elections, it appeared that the formation of large coalitions would effectively reduce the number of political parties participating in the election. With 43 parties contesting the 1995 election to the Duma, this was obviously not the case. The coalitions formed

194 Anna Paretskaya, "High Turnout in Duma Elections," in *Open Media Research Institute (OMRI)* (December 18, 1995), 1.

195 Sergei Chugrov, et.al. *Political Tendencies in Russia's Regions: Evidence from the 1993 Parliamentary Elections.* http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/slavrev/fall94/d.sl.html (May 3, 1996), 4-5.

after the 1993 elections disintegrated in favor of special interest parties, which lead to the large number of parties and blocs contesting the elections. While the effective number of electoral parties (N_v) in the party-list section of the 1993 election was 7.6, the 1995 equivalent saw a substantial increase to $N_v = 10.1$. This is almost as high as the most extreme case given in the Taagepera and Shugart's analysis in which Ecuador had an index of $N_v = 10.3$ in 1984. It is also substantially higher than the average effective number of electoral parties of 2.8 for any system.[196]

One explanation for this unexpected proliferation of parties participating in the elections is that many of the parties still have no strong political philosophy, but were founded essentially to allow politicians to move to the top of a "party-list."[197] Another suggested explanation for the lack of parties uniting into coalitions leading up to the 1995 elections was that many parties did not see the Duma elections as very important and were more interested in positioning themselves for the presidential election held in June, 1996. While this trend is evident across the ideological spectrum, it is most apparent in the liberal Western orientation.[198] While both the Communist and the liberal Western tendencies were predicted to each enjoy 25 percent of the electorate on the eve of the 1995 elections, the support for the democratic parties was

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196 Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 82-83.

197 *Russian Duma Elections-'95: A Scorecard.* http://users.aimnet.com/~ksyrah/ekskurs/elect.html (December 16, 1995), 5.

198 Peter Rutland, "Western Scholars Pessimistic on Election Prospects," OMRI (No.2, October 31, 1995), 1.

divided among several parties, with the largest share going to Yobloko. As a result, their vote was split up, leaving the better organized Communist Party of Russia to make substantial gains in the State Duma.[199]

While the PR rules failed to constrain the number of parties contesting the 1995 elections, it did manage to do a much better job in constraining the number of parties that were able to gain representation in the legislature. As was noted above, the effective number of electoral parties for the PR portion of the 1995 Russian Duma elections was 10.1. The effective number of those parties gaining legislative representation was only 4.0.[200] This is a remarkable reduction of over six effective parties, especially given that the average reduction for any system is less than one half of a party on average. While 4.0 effective parties is still slightly higher than the average number of assembly parties of 3.3 for systems utilizing PR rules, it is much lower than the 6.4 parties in 1993. This marks a decrease of almost two and a half parties gaining representation in the legislature from only two years earlier.

While the PR portion of the 1995 Duma elections made substantial gains in constraining the number of parties entering the legislature, the 1995 plurality system once again failed to act as a constraining influence on the number of parties gaining representation. As well, there was once again a

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199 Brian Whitemore, *Russia's Swinging Voters Set to Reject the Future and the Past.* Http:// www.spb.su/sppress/136/election/more.html (February 2, 1996), 2.

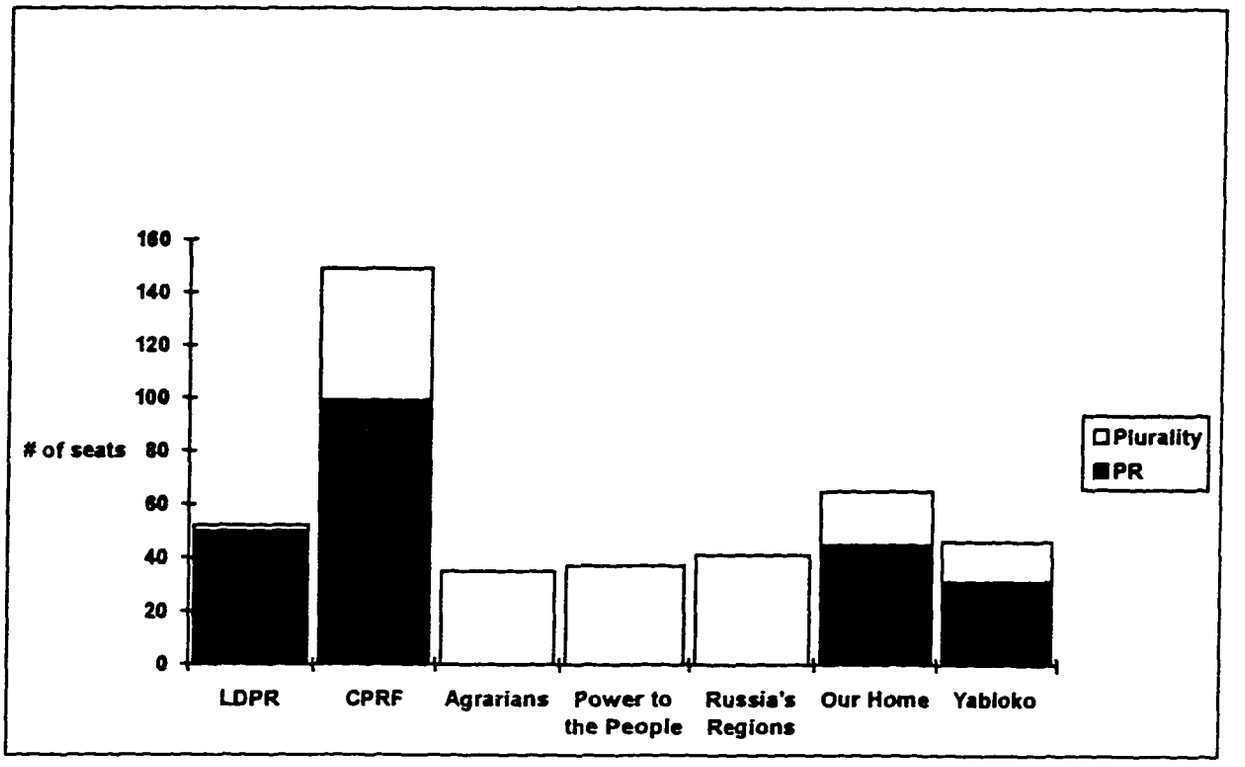
200 26 independents remained unaffiliated. To account for this, the percentage of seats for each legislative faction was computed by dividing each faction's number of seats by 199, rather than 225.

substantial number of independents elected to the 1995 Duma, but this number was reduced to 77 from the 121 independents elected in 1993. The raw groupings in Table 2. underwent some modifications at the hands of the MPs themselves, as the 142 Deputies not affiliated to any of the four main blocks joined established factions or formed new deputy groups. The Communist Party 'lent' deputies to two left-wing groups, the Agrarians and Power to the People, to help them achieve the 35 members needed to become deputy groups. Only one new faction was created, 'Russia's Regions', comprised of independent and small party MPs who were generally favorable to economic reform and to decentralization of power.

Figure 2, shown below, compares the number of seats won by the four electoral blocs and three post-election legislative factions in the PR and plurality elections. These figures are based on the party affiliation as of February 1996. Note: 26 deputies still remained unaffiliated at this time. Once again, by treating legislative factions as parliamentary parties, we find that the plurality portion allowed 5.4 effective parties into the legislature. This is almost one and a half more parties than the PR portion of the election (4.0), and still very high in comparison to the 1.6 average number of effective parliamentary parties in systems using plurality rules. Despite this inability to constrain the number of parties entering the legislature, the plurality section did manage to reduce the effective number of parties gaining representation

from two years earlier by almost one half of a party (0.4). However, as in 1993, the plurality section did allow for three parties and/or post-election factions to

Figure 2. Percentage of seats by PR and Plurality rules (1995)



Source: Robert Cottrell, "Russia's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," *Government and Opposition* (Vol. 31, No. 2, Spring 1996), 168

gain representation that otherwise would not have. In a strictly PR system these factions would not exist, and the influence of Yabloko, Our Home is Russia, and the Communist Party would have been greatly diminished. As well, only these three parties enjoyed significant success in both the PR and plurality portions of the election.

Once again, these three parties were the only parties capable of attracting local notables to run on their label, and as a result, were able to make

significant gains in the single-member districts. Conversely, Zhirinovsky's LDPR could once again not manage to garner support from the single-member districts. This is more than likely still the result of the use of nonpartisan ballots which effectively stifled straight ticket voting. The Liberal Democratic Party, as was the case with the majority of the parties, simply did not possess the extensive patronage system and organizational base to allow them to recruit influential persons on their label. Therefore, in a strictly plurality system, Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party would be virtually devoid of representation.

As Figure 2 illustrates, by combining the two systems an expansion of the number of legislative parties occurred. Moreover, a more equitable distribution of the numbers of deputies in each legislative party was produced. Much like in 1993, blocs which performed well in the PR race once again saw their percentage of their seats in the State Duma diminish with the addition of the single-member district winners and vice versa. The effective number of parliamentary parties of all 450 deputies elected to the State Duma was 5.1. While this was higher than the PR section by a little over one full party, it was not as high as the plurality section (5.4) when examined independently. Overall the effective number of parties entering the Russian legislature as a result of the 1995 Duma elections was almost three and a half less than in 1993. As well, save for the exception of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation,

such a combining of the two systems once again produced a more equitable distribution of the number of deputies in the legislative parties.

The index of aggregation for the 1995 Russian legislature is calculated to be 4.7. This should suggest that the party system emerging as a result of 1995 parliamentary elections is substantially less fragmented than in 1993, which had an aggregation index score of 1.7. As a result, the formation of a coalition government should be easier achieved than in 1993. However, figure 2. also shows that Russian voters are still sharply split between capitalism and some form of state-socialism.[201] The ideological content of the State Duma is once again relatively polarized, with the liberal western tendencies on the one side, and the communist and nationalists on the other. This polarization was most apparent in the PR section of the vote, with the plurality section having a more moderating influence. However, this time around the plurality section allowed even less representation to centrist parties compared with the 1993 Duma.

Peter Reddaway has suggested that the political coloration of the State Duma as a result of the 1995 elections will look something like this: about 25 percent democratic (roughly half of the 1993 figure), 45 percent communist (twice the 1993 figure), 15 percent hard-line nationalist and five percent

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201 *The Globe and Mail*, July 4, 1996, A9.

special interest and "other."[202] This should give the anti-reformers an advantage on political issues over the liberal western tendencies, enough to give it a slight majority of the Duma. Once again, however, this majority in the legislature is lost if the communists and ultranationalist-LDPR cannot join together to form a anti-reform coalition. It is likely that they will have a difficult time coalescing, seeing as the Ultranationalist hard-line parties are as disunited as their notoriously fractious opponents. To get Zhirinovsky on side would be a huge accomplishment for the communists, but Zhirinovsky has never been interested in making a stable coalition with any other party.[203]

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202 Peter Reddaway, "Russia's Election Results Revisited.Red Alert," *The New Republic* (January 29, 1996), 1.

203 Ibid., 1.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

After the collapse of the Soviet Union a variegated network of parties, groups and coalitions replaced the decaying communist regime. These parties were new, inexperienced and weak, and the emergence of a stable and disciplined party system in Russia would clearly not happen overnight. Nor, hindsight has shown us, would such a party system emerge after just two sets of elections to the State Duma. The legal scholar and reformist deputy Viktor Sheinis has been credited as the principal author of Russia's electoral system. In formulating the Russian electoral system, Sheinis had as one of his purposes the stimulation of party formation and party organization.[204] While the Russian electoral system has allowed the creation of a myriad of parties to contest the State Duma elections, a viable party system has yet to emerge.

Before any analysis is offered as to the effects the Russian electoral system has had on the creation of a party system in Russia, it must first be recalled that 'two dots on a graph do not make a trend.' However, while the Russian electoral system is still in a process of maturing, an examination of the 1993 and 1995 State Duma elections can offer some insight as to the problems that such a fledgling system faces as well as the direction it may be headed.

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[204] Richard Sakwa, "Parties and the Multiparty System in Russia," *RFE/RFL Research Report* (Vol. 2, No. 30, July 1993), 15.

The first lesson which this study has brought to light is that the Russian electoral system has produced some results that do not conform with the scholarly literature examined in the opening chapter, namely the number of parties allowed by PR and plurality systems. It should quickly be recalled that seats to Russia's lower house are chosen on both a party list PR basis and in single-member, first-past-the-post races. While PR is expected to allow for the entrance of many parties, plurality systems on the other hand, are expected to constrain the number of parties and promote consolidation of political forces into large coalitions which it failed to do.

The PR portion of the State Duma elections, while allowing a large number of effective parties to enter the Duma in 1993, exhibited a remarkable ability to constrain the number of parties gaining legislative representation in 1995. Through the use of the 'effective number of parties index,' the number of parties entering the legislature from the PR portion of the vote was found to be a very high 6.4 in 1993. This index is used to determine the number of parties in a system taking into account each party's relative size. As was suggested earlier, 6.4 effective parties is substantially higher than the average number of effective parties for PR systems of 3.3.[205] In 1995, however, the PR portion of the Duma elections allowed only 4.0 effective number of parties to gain representation in the Russian legislature. This could be considered an almost

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[205] Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes*, 78.

ideal number of effective parties entering the legislature, if the average of 3.3 offered by Laasko and Taagepera might be considered as the benchmark for ideal. The election of 1995 showed an improvement over the 1993 Duma elections in the development of a post-Soviet party system, by not allowing too many parties representation in the Russian Duma.

The plurality portion of the State Duma elections, however, has not enjoyed quite the improvement between the two sets of elections as did its PR counterpart. In 1993 the plurality portion of the vote to the State Duma allowed 5.79 effective number of parties into the Russian legislature. The Laasko and Taagepera study found that plurality systems tend to constrain the effective number of parties gaining legislative representation to a much greater extent than systems utilizing PR rules. While PR systems tend to constrain the average effective number of parties entering the legislature to 3.3, plurality systems manage to constrain the number of effective parties to just 1.6, on average. Thus, instead of producing approximately two large political parties and shutting out smaller parties, the single-member first-past-the-post races in Russia produced very different results.

While the PR portion of the 1995 election showed considerable change in constraining the number of parties into the legislature to an almost ideal level from one set of elections to the next, the 1995 plurality portion could not manage similar results. The plurality portion of the 1995 Duma elections

should not be slighted for its failure to constrain the number of effective parties gaining representation to an ideal level. On the contrary, such a showing by the PR portion of the vote is that much more amazing if it is recalled that the average electoral system constrains the effective number of parties entering the legislature from one set of elections to the next by almost one-half a party.[206] The dramatic success of the PR portion of the vote seems to mask the fact that the plurality portion of the 1995 elections showed a slight improvement in allowing only 5.35 effective number of parties to enter the legislature. While this result is far from ideal it is still an improvement, and conforms more closely with the literature than the PR portion.

These results would suggest firstly that the PR system has had increased success in fulfilling its expected capacity to impose party labels on the electorate, thereby bolstering the status of parties as electoral agents. This is done by forcing voters and candidates to think in terms of party affiliation. Secondly, it could suggest that the electorate, while remaining polarized between reformist and anti-reformist tendencies, is beginning to become familiar with some of the larger and more established parties. This was obviously not the case in the 1993 Duma elections, for as late as September 1993, more than three years after party politics had been fully legalized, only 24 percent of a Russia-wide sample was able to identify even a single political

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206 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral Studies*

party, movement, or association.[207] Further, while the Russian electorate was attempting to become familiar with the parties, many of them continued to split, creating new parties.

While this increasing party familiarization had an effect on the PR portion of the vote, there was none on the plurality half of the Russian Duma elections. This is because candidates in the plurality portion of the election could run as independents, thus depriving parties of the preferential treatment they need to become established in the initial years of democratic governance. Another important factor that can account for this problem affecting party system development in Russia arises from the use of the nonpartisan ballot in the single-member district contests. Partisan candidates in the plurality portion of the elections are essentially hidden to all but the most politically active Russian voters. Even if candidates in single-member districts were forbidden to run as independents, only the most astute of the electorate would be aware of this affiliation. Moreover, the nonpartisan ballot removed any chance for a significant amount of straight-ticket voting that would have benefited parties that had a strong showing in the PR race, such as the Liberal Democratic Party.

It should be noted that the use of nonpartisan ballots does not necessarily make a system vulnerable to independents, nor do all national elections include partisan descriptions of candidates. For example, ballots in

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(Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 388.

Great Britain have only recently introduced candidate descriptions of any kind onto the ballot. However, British parties were well-established long before competitive elections with universal suffrage were held.[208] This was obviously not the case in Russia's second post-Soviet parliamentary elections. It is conceivable to expect the Russian electorate to become familiar with some of the larger parties by this time, which they seem to have done. But to expect them to know the partisan affiliation of all the candidates in single-member district races is asking a little much.

While the number of independents elected to the State Duma was reduced from 121, in 1993, to 77 in 1995, an improvement of almost thirty-six percent, this permeability to independent candidates remains as one of the major problems in undermining post-Soviet party development. By allowing independent candidates onto the ballot easily, coupled with the use of a nonpartisan ballot, it is no wonder that Russian voters continue to place more emphasis on the personal characteristics of the candidates in single-member district races. As a result independents continued to rule the day and parties continue to elect only a handful of their best candidates in single-member districts.

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207 Stephen White, Matthew Wyman and Olga Kryshtanovskaya, "Parties and Politics in Post-Communist Russia," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* (Vol. 28, No. 2, 1995), 190.

208 Robert G. Moser, "The Impact of the Electoral System on Post-Communist Party Development: The Case of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary Elections," *Electoral* Studies (Vol. 14, No. 4, December 1995), 380.

Another serious problem facing the development of a post-Soviet party system in Russia is fragmentation. While there was an improvement in the aggregation index from 1.7 in 1993, to 4.7 in 1995, parties in the Russian Duma are still having problems aggregating along ideological lines. Party organizations remain personalistic, and the electoral blocs emerging to contest the elections continue to be little more than vehicles for the well-known personalities that formed them. In the 1995 State Duma elections, the democrats were expected to enjoy the support of twenty-five percent of the electorate. Instead they suffered as a result of the liberal Western vote being split among several parties, not all of which cleared the five percent legal threshold needed to enter the Duma.

Fragmentation persists with parties sharing ideological tendencies finding it difficult to make common cause in the legislature. As a result, parties and deputies in the Russian Duma tend to vote on an issue to issue basis regardless of where they lie on the ideological spectrum. This is the result of a general lack in party discipline in the Russian political system. To become a faction in the State Duma one must only have thirty-five deputies. These deputy groups are not required to have a coherent ideological line or voting whip, but at the same time are still subject to the all of the benefits and privileges that other parties enjoy, such as committee chairmanships. This absence of constituency party structures means that there is no collective party

responsibility for the conduct of deputies. Though elected by the people, deputies enter the legislature representing ultimately no one but themselves.

It will take many years and a series of elections before the lessons and logic of electoral systems are fully internalized by the Russian electorate and party leaders. Hopefully Russia's democratic institutions can take root enough to offset the destabilizing forces that wish to turn back the liberal-democratic reforms.

Despite the fact that the Russian electoral system has not yet lived up to the expectations of creating a party system as the literature may have predicted, the fact that elections went off with few hitches is a promising sign. The process has to some extent helped to consolidate the idea of free and fair elections, and can be hailed as proof that democracy has finally arrived in a land where Tsars and dictators have long ruled. As well, the fact that the June 1996 Presidential election, which came within a hair's breadth of being canceled, was held on time and without violence marks a further entrenchment of democratic methods and institutions in Russian political life.

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Appendix A

Excerpts from the Constitution of the Russian Federation

Ratified
December 12, 1993

Chapter 1. The Fundamentals of the Constitutional System

Article 10.
State power in the Russian Federation shall be exercised on the basis of the separation of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches. The bodies of legislative, executive and judiciary powers shall be independent.

Chapter 4. President of the Russian Federation

Article 83.
The President of the Russian Federation shall: a) appoint Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation subject to consent of the State Duma; b) have the right to preside over meetings of the Government of the Russian Federation; c) decide on resignation of the Government of the Russian Federation; d) introduce to the State Duma a candidature for appointment to the office of the Chairman of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation; submit to the State Duma for proposal on relieving the Chairman of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation of his duties; e) appoint and dismiss deputy chairmen of the Government of the Russian Federation and federal ministers as proposed by the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation; f) submit to the Federation Council candidates for appointment to the office of judges of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation as well as the candidate for Prosecutor-General of the Russian Federation; submit to the Federation Council the proposal on relieving the Prosecutor-General of the Russian Federation of his duties; appoint the judges of other federal courts. g) form and head the Security Council of the Russian Federation, the status of which is determined by federal law; h) endorse the military doctrine of the Russian Federation; i) form the staff of the President of the Russian Federation; j) appoint and dismiss the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation; l) appoint and recall, after consultations with the respective committees or commissions of the Federal Assembly, diplomatic representatives of the Russian Federation to foreign states and international organizations.

Article 90.

1. The President of the Russian Federation shall issue decrees and executive orders.
2. The decrees and orders of the President of the Russian Federation shall be binding throughout the territory of the Russian Federation.
3. The decrees and orders of the President of the Russian Federation may not contravene the Constitution of the Russian Federation or federal laws.

Article 93.
1. The President of the Russian Federation may be impeached by the Federation Council only on the basis of charges put forward against him of high treason or some other grave crime, confirmed by a ruling of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation on the presence of indicia of crime in the President's actions and by a ruling of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation confirming that the procedure of bringing charges has been observed.
2. The ruling of the State Duma on putting forward charges and the decision of the Federation Council on impeachment of the President shall be passed by the votes of two-thirds of the total number in each of the chambers at the initiative of a t least one-third of the deputies of the State Duma.
3. The decision of the Federation Council on impeaching the President of the Russian Federation shall be passed within three months of the charges being brought against the President by the State Duma. The charges against the President shall be considered to be rejected if the decision of the Federation Council shall not be passed.

Chapter 5. The Federal Assembly

Article 97.
1. Any citizen of the Russian Federation aged 21 and older who has the right to take part in elections may be elected deputy to the State Duma.
2. One and the same person may not concurrently be a deputy to the Federation Council and to the State Duma. A deputy to the State Duma may not be a deputy to any other representative body of state power or bodies of local self-government.
3. The deputies to the State Duma shall work on a permanent professional basis. Deputies to the State Duma may not be employed in the civil service or engage in any activities for remuneration other than teaching, research or other creative activities.

Chapter 6. The Government of the Russian Federation

Article 111.
1. The Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation shall be appointed by the President of the Russian Federation with consent of the State Duma.
2. The proposal on the candidacy of the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation shall be made no later than two weeks after the inauguration of the newly-elected President of the Russian Federation or after the resignation of the Government of the Russian Federation or within one week after the rejection of the candidate by the State Duma. The State Duma shall consider the candidacy of the Chairman of the

Government of the Russian Federation submitted by the President of the Russian Federation within one week after the nomination.
3. After the State Duma thrice rejects for Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation nominated by the President of the Russian Federation, the President of the Russian Federation shall appoint a Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation, dissolve the State Duma and call a new election.

Article 112.
1. The Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation shall, not later than one week after appointment, submit to the President of the Russian Federation proposals on the structures of the federal bodies of executive power.
2. The Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation shall propose to the President of the Russian Federation candidates for the office of Deputy Chairmen of the Government of the Russian Federation and federal ministers.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation can be obtained in its entirety at: http://www. bucknell.edu/...ssian/const/constit.html (June 21, 1996)