

**POLITICAL PARTIES
&
SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION
IN
RUSSIA**

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DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation entitled 'Political Parties and Social Transformation in Russia' submitted by Shri. Pankaj Kumar in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) of this University; is his original work and may be placed before the examinees for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for award of any other degree of this University or of any other University.

(SHAMS - UD - DIN)
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Dedicated

To My Parents

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PREFACE

Political parties form the fulcrum of a democratic political system. Russia since 1991 has attempted to evolve a democratic political system based on capitalism. This has meant the total transformation of the Soviet heritage, which was based on a socialist command style economy and one party authoritarian rule. However, the present state of development of the political parties in Russia, is still a long way from what is commonly meant by a multi - party democratic system. It is more appropriate to speak of an unsystematic plethora of parties , often holding radically opposing views. Moreover the well entrenched right and left flank of the political spectrum make no attempt to conceal its' hostility towards the existing constitution and its penchant for employing extra-legal methods to resolve problems.

The reform of Russian social economic and political life, has been under way now for almost a decade. The democratization of political relations and the development of free market - has started a process of social transformation. New ideas of freedom and liberty are making inroads in the Russian society. While these new developments have led to the spiritual revival of the society, but at the same time it has led to serious social dislocations and economic chaos.

The present work on **Political Parties and Social Transformation** does an intensive analysis of social and political processes in Russia since the disintegration of Soviet Union. The study relies on the fact that, political process and social transformation are involved in a 'give and take' relationship. The research work traces the rise and growth of multi-party system, with the gradual dismantling of the one party dominance of the CPSU. Each party, their support bases and their aims and objectives has been dealt separately.

Besides studying the political process, the research work simultaneously undertake an overview of social changes, emergence and growth of civil society, democratic and authorities elements in the Russian society and the overall impact of the socio-political changes on social values during the period under the study.

Chapter 1, is a brief note on the **Historical Background** of the present socio-political process. It compares the present scenario with similar situations in the past.

The **Second Chapter on Political Parties In Russia**, deals with each party and their social bases in detail. Party performances in elections has been also mentioned.

Chapter III dealing with **Extremes In Russian Politics** is a detailed work on both the left and right extremes in Russian politics. Their growth, their present status and their future standing has also been discussed.

The Fourth Chapter can be considered as the base of the present research work. 'Political Parties and Social Transformation' tends to study the process of social transformation by analyzing electoral performances of various parties in Russia. Projected social model of different parties and their acceptability or non-acceptability in subsequent elections, forms the basis of this study on social transformation.

'Whither Russia' is a chapter, futuristic in nature. By attempting to study democracy. By attempting to study democracy, civil society and capitalism in present Russia the author attempts to imagine Russia in the coming millenium.

Finally, Chapter VI is the 'Conclusion' of the research work.

This study on 'Political Parties and Social Transformation', has served to bring out that Russia's transition to democracy and liberalism is real, inspite of some contradictory signals. A multi-party system is slowly taking roots in Russia. Authoritarian tendencies are bound to take a backseat. A mature multi-party system and a vibrant democracy will mark the future of Russia.

PANKAJ KUMAR

CHAPTER - I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The purpose of a historical analysis here is not to force parallels from history. But to get valuable insights into larger enduring socio-political realities that influence both policy formations and policy outcomes.

If Peter the Great, was not the first of Russia's monarch to reach out for western ideas, the urgency of his mission to open a window to the west was unmatched until the twentieth century. Alexander Herzen wrote 'Peter taught us to make seven mile steps – to step from the first month of pregnancy right into the ninth one.'¹ Peter's eighteenth century drive to westernize Russia produced conflicts and dislocation that was repeated with fierce intensity under Lenin and Yelstin. James Bellington characterizes the 17th and 18th century as "a period of continuous violence of increasing borrowing from, yet rebelling against the west."² A somewhat similar situation prevails in present day Russia.

More than a century after Peter's death the "great reform" of Tsar Alexander II, which included the emancipation of Serfs, triggered massive social and economic upheavals, a trend that continued during the reactionary period that followed.

It is worthy of note, for example when Russian provincial government leaders embraced a radical shift to democracy in 1917, they carried it to the excess³, as Historian Robert Daniel observes,

¹ Quoted in "Nezavisimaya Gazeta", no 29 (15 Feb. 1994) p. 5.

² James Bellington – "The Icon and the axe" pg. 114.

³ Daniel. Robert.V. – "Russia. the roots of confrontation (Cambridge, 1985) p. 89

“they extended it to areas where liberal regimes did not dare to venture.”⁴ Factory committees and military committees were created to bring democracy into areas where it had not been there before. The initial path of radical economic reforms under Yelstin was in some way similar-thrusting enterprises and there management into an economic environment for which they were not prepared either organizationally or individually.

The Bolshevik take over, the turbulence of the civil war followed by the dictatorial⁵ reign of Stalin, cold war and the competition with the west kept the Russian society at its heels.

Autocratic and hierarchic tendencies have blended in Russia's socio-political life since time immemorial. Teodor Shanin observes, “All the major changes in the political structure of the tasrdom of the Rumanov's were to be neither from below nor from the outside but from its very top.”⁶ Russian history illustrates the tenacious hold of these tendencies. Russia was little affected by social and cultural ferment of the Protestant reformation or the French Revolution. There was no conflict between the church and state in Russia, where the church was officially subordinated to the state. When revolutionary reversals finally began and Russia was forced to submit to the erratic visions of a new class of autocrats, Russia's hierarchical tradition found even more decisive expression under Lenin and Stalin. Lenin doctrine of Democratic Centralism and Stalin's “Socialism is one country” and his primitive accumulation served their ambitious agenda. Moreover the perpetual projection of the Western threat helped in their misadventures.

⁴ Ibid, p. 106.

⁵ Kruschev called Stalin's last year as a nightmare (20th congress of CPSU).

⁶ Teodar Shanin – Russia as a developing society pg. 18.

The constitutional history of Russia, is yet another strong of hierarchical and authoritarian misadventures. The Soviet past presents a gloomy background. Successive communist party chiefs framed and re-framed the constitution according to their whims and fancies. Yelstin is only following his Soviet predecessors. Draconian powers to the President makes the present Russian constitution defunct and undemocratic. The manner in which the present 1993 constitution was enforced and its utter disregard by the ruling regime reflect a chain in the constitutional history of Russia.

An unique feature of Russia is the interruptory nature of her history. On its historical road, she has passed through several stages of social and political development. Each successive historical stage denounced in a revolutionary way, the preceding one and – at great sacrifices – it rejected not only some or other forms of political and social organisations, but also the formers' rules and values. It is only natural that it was not only shortcomings and organic defects that were rejected, but also some achievements gained in the preceding period. The present crises in Russia is the product of this shock therapy model of overnight transformation from a predominantly socialist system, into an open market capitalist system.⁷ The rejection of all structures of the old order without subsequent growth of complimentary structures have created a chaotic situation. The strength of the Soviet system was effectively dismantled, before the roots of capitalism could germinate.

The process of systemic transformation started in early 1960's. the process was augmented with Gorbochev's perestroika in the 80's;

⁷ For details see, A.M. Chenoy The Russian transition to capitalism (PPH, New Delhi 1998) pp. 4-8. Also see, Boris Kagarlitsky "Restoration in Russia: Why capitalism failed (London, 1995) pp. 83-88.

but the sudden turn of events and the instant collapse of Soviet Union a house of cards, gave an open field to pro-revolutionary leadership to carry out reforms (or revolutionary transformations) at breakneck speed. By the shock therapy model of transition, industry was disinvested into vouchers to be distributed to workers; rouble was made fully convertible and thus soviet economy was integrated with the world economy. In the political sphere, though considerable civil and political freedom was given by a new constitution, however power remained concentrated. While the pace of reforms towards capitalism was speedened simultaneously all structures of the 'old Soviet order' was dismantled, for an unhindered development of market mechanism. The lack of separation between political and economic authority led to the birth of non-competitive bureaucratic 'monopolistic' capitalism (which seeks rent in exchange for privileges) in contrast to competitive (profit seeking) capitalism.⁸ As a result present post Soviet Russian state lost its ability to perform.

Economic stagnation, corruption and criminalization had its direct impact on Russian society. The rise of extremism with popular support is one of its outcomes. The civil society is the worst hit by this period of transition. Widespread political apathy socio-political withdrawal reign Russian life today. The period of transition which started in early 1990's. seems to be nowhere near completion Russia's transition to another is still at an experimental level, the experiment is yet not completed. History is still to be written.

⁸ Philips Hanson "what sort of capitalism is developing in Russia? Communist Economies and Economic Transformation; 3,1 (March 1997) pp. 31-32.

CHAPTER - II

- 2.1 The constitution
- 2.2 Political parties

POLITICAL PARTIES IN RUSSIA

The advent of political pluralism in the erstwhile Soviet Union was a result of the landmark constitutional amendments of December 1989 and March 1990, sanctioning the multi-party system. Later the suspension of CPSU in August 1991, stimulated the emergence of over 200 parties, most of which did not survive in the successor Russian Federation.

The disintegration of U.S.S.R. and the formation of democratic Russia saw the resurgence of political parties and group activities. New political alignments were directed towards gaining power through elections. In the December 1993 legislative elections some three dozen political formations were active, out of which only ten got representation in the Duma. Thereafter the party scene has been by frequent realignments and new formations, particularly among the pro-market and centrist groupings.

In the year 1995, numerous political parties and movements were formed in anticipation of the legislative elections to the state Duma in December of that year, out of which the central election commission approved a list of 43 electoral associations and blocs. The launching in May 1995, of the centre – rightest “our home is Russia” (NDR) formation as the government party¹ and the concurrent moves to form a center – left opposition bloc was seen as an attempt by political formations to create a two-party system, that would exclude from power the ultra – nationalist on the far right and the reactionary left. However both these ends retained a sizable chunk of popular support in the complex Russian political settings.

¹ See The Phantom of Government party Moscow Trud (18 October 1995) p.2.; FBIS – Sov – 95 , 19 Oct. 1995, p. 11.

Meanwhile the turbulent political scenario after the fall of Soviet Union was fueled by a collapsing economy. The increasing confrontation between President Yeltsin and the legislature brought governmental work to a standstill. The unveiling of a new constitution by Yeltsin in 1993 gave him an upper hand in relation to the parliament, however the legislature remained a source of obstruction. Matters came to head in September 1993 when both the President and the legislature dismissed each other. Only after armed clashes at the cost of 140 lives and the sealing off of the house of Soviets² that Yelstin claimed victory. Yelstin announced December 12 legislative balloting, which was to include a referendum on the new constitution. In the ensuing elections, Yelstin and his agenda was approved, however the most starting success was that of the ultra – rightist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) led by Vladimir Zhirnovsky. LDPR came overall second in the elections. The new constitution was approved by 58.4% of the participating voters.³ Yelstin attempted to strengthen his position by concluding in April 1994, a two year treaty on civil accord with 245 parties and social groups. The accord specified that all controversial aspects would be ignored for developmental objectives.

The invasion of Chechnaya, dominated Russian politics in the first half of 1995⁴ Elections to the state Duma, in December 1995 brought significant victory to the KPRF (communist Party of the Russian Federation), it's tally almost triple (3 times) the NDR score. The LDPR came third while the Boldyrev – Lukin bloc (Yabloko) with 45 seats was the only other party to cross 5% threshold for the allocation of the proportional seats. The 1995 election results saw a clear-cut communist resurgence and threatened President Yelstin's position

² The famous White House

³ Only 54.8% of voters turnout was recorded

⁴ For Details in Chechnayan crisis see Rossiskiy Vestnik, (5 Jan. 1994) FBIS – Sov. 95 (23 Jan. 1995), p. 27-29.

The following June 1996 President balloting saw Yelstin in a neck to neck fight with Zyuganov. However, with his timely alliance with Gen (Rd.) Alexander Lebed, a Chechnayan War hero, Yelstin came out victorious in the crucial second round; Grigori Yavlinsky of Yabloko and Zhirinovskiy of LDPR gave a poor show.

2.1 THE CONSTITUTION

Before analyzing, individual political parties in detail, it would be worthwhile to have a brief look at the constitution of the Russian Federation.

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) adopted a constitution of its own in April 1978. In June 1980 pending the promulgation of a new constitution, it adopted a declaration of republican sovereignty. RSFSR became a founding member of CIS in December 1991 and adopted the name 'Russian Federation. The present Russian constitution came into effect from 24 December 1993.

According to the 1993 constitution Russian Federation is a democratic federal legally based state with a republican form of government. A central role is accorded to the President, who determines the guidelines for the domestic and foreign policy of the state. Directly elected for no more than two consecutive four-year terms he nominates the Chairman of the government (i.e. the Prime Minister) as well as high court judges. In addition he serves as commander-in-chief of the armed force. He may reject an initial vote of non-confidence by the legislature and upon the repassage of such a measure within three months may call for the dissolution of the legislative itself and new election. The President's main advisory body on security related issues is the National Security Council.

There is to be total 450 deputies in the state Duma. Half of the deputies were to be elected by a party list system and half by a simple majority system (single member constituency). The 225 party seats are to be distributed among those parties, which obtained 5% of votes in simple majority voting results.⁵

There is to be a 19 member constitutional court, besides Supreme Court; a Supreme arbitration court and lesser federal entities.

2.2 POLITICAL PARTIES

A variety of political parties with various orientations exist in post-Soviet Russia. Their sheer numbers and weak-organisational structures make the Russian political scenario unclear and fluid. Various attempts have been made to classify these parties. The 'All Russian center for the study of public opinion' have classified the political parties in Russia into 'personality parties' and 'collective parties'⁶ Personality parties are those who do not have an ideology, they are built solely on their leader's personality; while collective parties have an ideology, supporters of these parties vote primarily for an idea and not for a specific politician.

Colton makes a much more comprehensive classification of parties in Russia. He grouped the political parties into, socialist, nationalist, liberal, opposition centrist, and government parties.⁷ On the face of, parties in Russia can be classified as pro-reform and anti-reform formations. Economy not ideology seems to be the guiding element behind all parties. Economic ups and downs have kept on defining their redefining other priorities.

⁵ This particular paragraph was added to the constitution through a presidential decree of 8th October 1993.

⁶ Moscow Trud (18 Oct. 1995) p.2, FBIS SOV. 95 (19 Oct. 1995) p.5.

⁷ Timothy J. Colton, "Economics and voting in Russia"; *Post Soviet Affairs*; 12,4 (1996) p. 295.

The following is a brief update of the leading parliamentary parties of the Russian federation.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (KPRF)

KPRF is a revived version of the communist party of Soviet Union (CPSU), after the latter was banned in Nov. 1991. The party is the largest constituent of the new left wing. It's chairman Gennadi Zyuganov is also the Chairman of the left wing opposition alliance called the 'Popular Patriotic Union of Russia (NPSR). The NISR constituents with their majority votes in the Duma are capable of obstructing any government move in the house.

The KPRF has its popular base among the old die-hard supporters of the former communist U.S.S.R. The estrangement created by the economic reforms has also increased its support base.

The KPRF follows a moderate left ideology with the highest priority on the economic agenda. Its' leader Zyuganov is the leading contender for Russian Presidency.

OUR HOME IS RUSSIA (NDR)

The 'party in power', the center – rightist NDR was launched in May 1995 to provide a support base for the economic reforms pursued by the government. Former Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin and Antoli Chubais⁴ are key leaders of the NDR.

Accused to receive large funding from abroad and Russian tycoons, NDR lost badly in the Dec. '95 elections, trailing badly behind KPRF (it got 55 seats while KPRF got 157). NDR is blamed for economic mismanagement and the current economic crises in Russia. However NDR continues to be a vital support base for President Yelstin.

⁴ Antoli Chubais later shifted his allegiance to Russia's democratic Choice (DVR).

NDR's draws its support largely from the 'new-rich'; sections of middle class, Western – looking elites and the new generation.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF RUSSIA (LDPR)

The far-right LDPR is largely recognized by its' xenophobic leader Vladimir Zhirinovksy. Zhirinovsky's west bashing, his Vague promises and undue utterances, gave him considerable following in the initial troubled phase of post-Soviet Russia. In the 1993 legislative polls LDPR ran second to Russia's overall choice, while heading the party list returns with 22.8% of national votes. However, recent poll outcomes, both in the legislature election (1995) and Presidential elections (1996) has shown that Zhirinovsky's support is dwindling.

LDPR being an ultra-rightist party has its' support base in Russian youth and lumpen elements within the Russian society. The melting of Soviet world power status and economic hardships helped Zhrinovsky to create a national fervour. Whatever may be his shortcomings Zhirinovsky continue to be a key player in Russian political arena.

AGRARIAN PARTY OF RUSSIA (APR)

Founded in February 1992, as a political arm of several conservative organisations, APR is a representative organisation of collective and state farmers, agro-industrial workers and countryside managers. APR has aligned itself to the KPRF after the 1993 legislative elections. The party backed KPRF leader in the mid 1996 Presidential elections and have also joined the new KPRF led NPSR alliance.

Ideologically, APR was formed to serve rural interest and to oppose the privatization of land, however dwindling support base (Dec.'93-7.7%;

Dec.'95-3.8%) have forced it to drop its opposition to the privatization of state owned land.

BOLDYREV – LUKIN BOLC (YABLOKO)

The centrist Yabloko was formed in October 1993 by Grigori Yavlinsky, Yuri Boldyrev and Vladimir Lukin. The party was one of the few Duma factions which refused to sign the civil accord in April '94, with Yelstin. Yabloko though supports the government however it remains the most critical supporter of the economic reforms followed by the government. Yabloko came fourth in the December'95 legislative balloting. In the following years' presidential election, Yavlinsky, who came fourth in the first round gave qualified endorsement to President Yelstin for the runoff balloting.

Yabloko being a centrist party depends on its leader and the shifting electorate for its' support base.

CONGRESS OF RUSSIAN COMMUNITIES (KRO)

The moderately nationalist KRO believes in the unity of Russian nation and the revival of great Russia. The controversial but popular military commander Gen (Ret.) Alexander Lebed joined the party and stood as its' candidate in the mid – 1996 presidential election. Lebed secured the third place (14.5% of vote) in the first round after which Yelstin appointed him as the Secretary of National Security Council. Lebed dismissal four months later led to his forming of RNRP (Russia's People Republican Party).

The KRO has considerable support in Russian military. The liberal moderate nationalist agenda of KRO have attracted both the reformers & conservative alike.

POWER OF THE PEOPLE (VN)

Headed politically by former Soviet Premier Nikoloi Ryzhkov and sergai Baburin, VN, aspires to revive the great and indivisible Russia. Being rightist in approach, its aspiration of great Russia has brought it closer to KPRF. Infact Ryzhkov was a founding member of KPRF led NPSR front. The performance of VN in December 95 legislative balloting however has not been forthcoming (1.6%).

The VN due to its' nationalist objectives and the Soviet background of its leaders not only attract endorsements from rightist groups, but also from some latter day communist, nostalgic of the certainties of the communist past.

RUSSIA'S DEMOCRATIC CHOICE (DVR)

The DVR has its origin in Democratic Russia (DR), the movement/party which brought Yelstin to power. The DVR was organized initially as 'Russia's choice (VR) in Nov. '93. A number of reformists parties including the "free democratic party of Russia". "Free labour party", "Party of constitutional democrats" and "the party of democratic initiative" joined in the formation of DVR. In June'95 DVR helped to launch a block called the "United Democrats " (OD). Though 'Russia's choice' has performed well in the Dec.'93 balloting the DVR/OD made negligible impact in the Dec.'95 legislative elections winning on 3.9% of the proportional seats.

DVR being center-rightist is a bloc of radical reformist radical reformists Yegor Gaider and Anatli Chubais⁵ were some of its founder members. Largely seen as pro-Yelstin party the DVR has been severely criticized for siding with the government in the worst of its' misadventures.

DVR support base is now divided with NDR and Yabloko. Identified with the coming of democracy in Russia, the DVR is still among the contenders.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF RUSSIA (SPR)

The SPR founded by former state Duma chairman Ivan Rybkin in December '96, is an alliance of several party and organisation with rural followings. Having backed President Yelstin in mid - 1996 presidential elections, Rybkin was appointed as the Secretary of National Security Council after the dismissal of Alexander Lebed.

Largely a party representing farmers and rural interests, the SPR aims to widen its base in the countryside.

POWER (DERZHAVA)

Power originated in May 1994 when a dissident group of six state Duma deputies decided to back the presidential bid of Alexander Rutskoi. In December '96 Rutskoi supporters registered the popular patriotic infront a movement different from Gennadi Zyuganov's 'popular patriotic union' of Russia (NPSR), with Rutskoi as honorary chairman.

⁵ Yegor Gaider resigned later to form his own alliance. Anatoli Chubais too left DVR and is now aligned with NDR.

A rightist oriented party 'power' aspires to embark a separate line of economic reforms in contrary to Yelstin's. Alexander Rutskoi the central figure in 'power' have considerable support base.

FORWARD RUSSIA (VR)

Led by former finance minister Boris Fedorov, VR was formed in 1995.

Launched as an electoral front VR wishes to give a human face to the economic reforms. Dissidents within 'Russia's choice not happy with the reform process and wishing to revive traditional values with radical reforms, came together and formed VR.

WOMEN OF RUSSIA (ZR)

A party dedicated to take up the cause of the women, ZR believes in social and political equality of women. It endorses the reform process however basic social amenities should be provided by the state.

ZR, after winning 5 constituency seats and 4.6% of proportional votes in December '95 legislative elections, backed President Yelstin re-election effort in 1996.

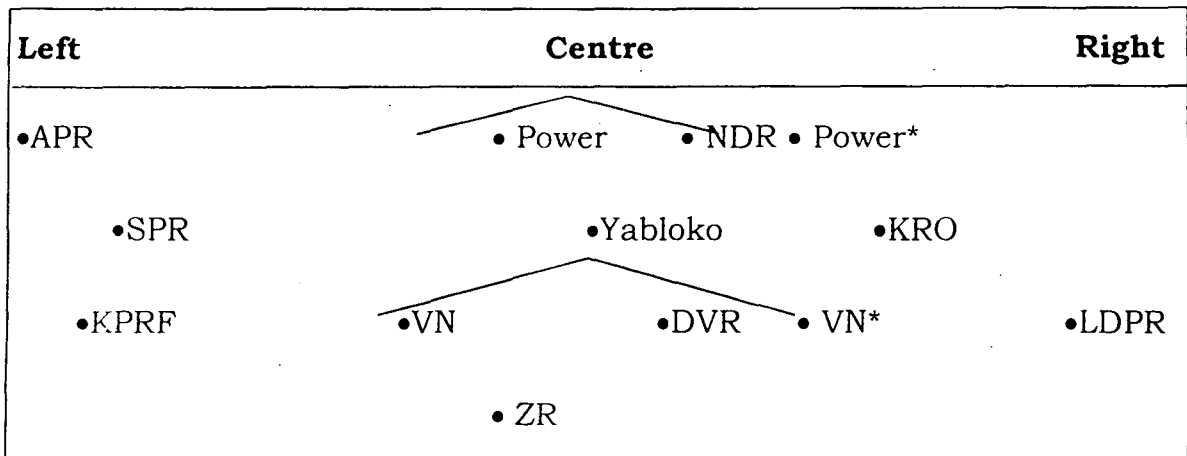
Parties in Russia do not represent clear-cut ideological formations. Even their organizational set up, methods of mobilization and interest articulation are very much similar. However to make a broad distinction we may divide the parties mentioned in this chapter from their ideological and socio - economic orientation, it should be remembered while making this

distinction that the following division is on the basis of official rhetoric of the respected parties only, realities may present an altogether different picture. It may also be stated that parties in Russia tend to adopt issue – based viewpoints, thus not adhering to a particular line of thinking alone.

Dividing the parliamentary parties already mentioned in this chapter into the categories of; left, centre-right, and far-right, the following picture emerges.

Left	Centre-right	Far – right
KPRF	NDR	LDPR
APR	Yabloko	
SPR	DVR	
	VN	
	KRO	
	ZR	
	Power	

To get a further idea on the apparent ideological status of the above mentioned three broad group, the parties can be positioned on a scale denoting left and right as its two extremes;



* VN and Power can be placed at equidistance either side of the scale.

It would be interesting here, to note the strength of leftist , centre – rightist and (far right) rightist deputies in the 1993 Duma and 1995 Duma.

The 1993 Duma had the majority of centre right deputies, widely divided and a confused lot the centre – rightist grouping did manage to carry forward their liberal agenda in the house. The following break – up makes positions clear :

The left – 112 deputies (24.8%)

The Centre-right-238 deputies (52.8%)

The Right (far-right)-70 deputies (15.5%)

Independents-30 deputies (6%).

The 1995 Duma presents a somewhat changed picture as given below:

The left – 180 deputies (40%)

The centre-right-138 deputies (30.6%)

The right (far-right) – 55 deputies (12%)

Independents-77 deputies (17%)

Thus, the 1995 Duma configuration if compared to the 1993 Duma, shows that the left has gained at the cost of the center – right and the far

right. The 1995 Duma positions indicates the growing dependence of the government on the far right for passing its legislatures in the house. Besides it is evident that the left has been in a positions to obstruct any government move in the house. Growing confrontation in the house has forced Yeltsin and his cabinet to bypass the legislature through presidential edicts and decrees.

One more important feature of the 1995 Duma is its increased number of independents (i.e. 77) the 1993 Duma in comparison had a figure of 30. The constitutional provision that independents cannot fight the party list seats, and that their number is out of the 225 constituency seats make their figure look impressive. It also cannotes the growing apathy of the Russian electorates towards party politics.

To end this chapter it is worth mentioning the strange status of the centre rights or centrist parties, which identifies themselves with Democracy in Russia. Infact the present state of Russian Democracy is due to the failure of these centrist or centre rightist political formations to create a space of their own "Russian Centrism is devoid of ideology of its own and for that reason contrary to the left and right, is hardly capable of forming an efficient political organisation of its own."⁶

⁶ Vitte Oleg "Centrism in Russian Politics" (Social Science Quarterly Review Vol XXVI NO.2 (1995), P. 63.

CHAPTER - III

3.1 Statist- Socialists

3.2 Nationalists

3.3 National fundamentalists

EXTREMES IN RUSSIAN POLITICS

Extremes in Russian politics has its roots in Soviet totalitarianism, which has always been a Russian version of fascism. It is no wonder that the grains of evil proved to be exceedingly fertile, bearing abundant fruit. Today the fascist forces comprising of neo-communists, fascists, monarchists, pseudo-constitutional democrats and pseudo Christian democrats, have largely completed their ideological preparations and have entered the phase of consolidation.

Fascism has always been a theatre of masks and patriotism has always been it's favourite mask. Fascism wishes to be synonymous to patriotism but it is a false substitution. While patriotism is a positive quality, extremism derives from a purely negative soil. Nationalism is an extension of fascism. Ethnic phobias are one of the distinct component of national culture. The idea about, oneself, and the 'social others' is the most important component of ethnonational identification.¹ Nationalism intends to evoke the feeling of nation among a section of the population. Infact it creates nations where they don't exist.²

No doubt then that both extremes (Right and left) in Russian politics aspire to revive the great Russia fatherland. The notion of "blood kinship and common soil" has been evolved. Appeals to instincts, "the image of the enemy" and "the concept of world conspiracy" form their political tool. Speculation of economic difficulties; the fanning of hatred, malice, racial enmity; cynical and offensive language and all sort of xenophobia, glorification serve their nationalistic purpose. Though they tend to have a reformist economic agenda, however one cannot be a democrat in the economic field and a non-democrat nationally.

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1. Led. D. Gudkov, "Ethnic phobias in the structure of national identification" *Russian Social Science Review* 39, 1 (Jan – Feb 1998) pp.94.-96.
 2. Ernest Gellener.

It would be naïve to blame the democrats for the disintegration of the Soviet Union.³ Events like this have immanent causes and it is an accomplished fact. The disintegration of the Soviet empire did not however bring about the disintegration of imperial consciousness. On the contrary it grew even more active. Many considered what had happened as an existentialist catastrophe, as a ruin of fundamental pillar and a loss of their self-identity. In their mind the end of the totalitarian superpower was identified with the end of Russia.⁴ This caused a sharp neurotic reaction among those who felt nostalgic for their soviet part, in which they tried to find anew their lost identity and psychological protection.⁵ Economic hardship and political chaos in early 90's provided a fertile ground for the extremist elements to spread their venom. The ultras urged those whom they had succeeded incorporating, to follow the path of chauvinistic confrontation and xenophobia.

Russian nationalism ranges from simple patriotism, to ethnic and ultra-nationalism. Ultra nationalism is expressed in various forms, including the desire to protect Russian nationals both within and beyond Russian territory; opposition to other ethnic religious minorities, belief in white supremacy, pan-slavism and close affinity with the Russian Orthodox Church.⁶ Nationalism is known to increase when institutional vacuum occurs, the post – soviet states provide a breeding ground for its proliferation.⁷ The slow growth of well structured political parties have assisted in the growth of ultra-nationalist formations. “At the same time the weakness of party-system has effectively stopped the ultra-nationalist forces from coming into power.”⁸

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- 3 Philosopher Aleksander Tsipko opined “Russian democrats destroyed the empire that is their own country” *Nezavisimai gazeta* (31 Jan 1995). Also see, Alexander Zinoviev, *Katastroiki*.
- 4 Vera Tolz – “Conflicting homeland myth and national building in Post Communist Russia” *Slavnic review*; 57.2 (Summer 1998), pp. 284-86.
- 5 Ibid, p-284.
- 6 Ibid., pp 274-89.
- 7 A.M. Chenoy, “Variation of Russian nationalism” p.85 in Shams-ud-din (ed) *Nationalism in Russian and Central Asian Republics* (New Delhi, 1999)
- 8 Stephen. E., Hanson & Jebbrey S. Kopstein”, *The Weimar/Russia Comparison*”, *Post-Soviet Affairs* 13, 3 (July – September, 1997) pp. 252-83.

The centrist parties and democratic movement would neither develop a stable base nor a functional structure. Yelstin himself has openly discouraged the growth of strong political parties.⁹ His partyless existence and his recurrent firing of one government after another has given a severe blow to democratic tendencies.¹⁰ His unmindful handling of the Chechnayan crises, regardless of public opinion, further eroded his democratic credibility. With a weak civil society, absence of democratic culture and the principle of law governed state yet to evolve, cultural institutions tended to increase. Cultural institution tended to increase. Cultural nationalism became the agent for political mobilization. The ultra-nationalist and extremist elements found this situation conducive to their growth. Economic chaos further helped them to flourish. Political space was thus left open for both the extreme left wing and right wing parties.

The rise of patriotic (nationalistic) feeling among Russians could be contributed to the many “stab in the back” and conspiracy theories¹¹, linked with the breakdown of the Soviet state. The rapid decline of Russia's great power status, the troublesome question of Russian minorities¹² in newly independent states and the fear that the West is interested in permanently weakening the Russian state as a geopolitical entity are additional factors that have contributed to the attractiveness of nationalist ideas even at the center of the political spectrum. Moreover, the humiliation of Russia at the hand of international financial institutions dominated by Western Allies and the U.S.A., is responsible for the upsurge of nationalist sentiments. Presently, in Russia there is an increasing recognition of the role of Russians in shaping the future of Russia and the existence of the country as a creative power and this is directly linked with self-status of Russians themselves and their

⁹ Vera Tolz “ Conflicting homeland myth and national building in post communist Russia Slavnic review; 57,2 (Summer 1998) pp 286-7.

¹⁰ George Breslauer, “Six years after the Collapse of the U.S.S.R. Presidential leadership and elite stability” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 14, 1 (1998) p.12

¹¹ Conspiracy theories has been supported by Russian Philosophers, political scientists and economists as well.

¹² Russian are the largest minority in Europe due to their presence in 14 states formally part of Soviet Union. In some of these states their population is as high as 40%.

national consciousness. However, in the contemporary Russia, there are different perspectives and perceptions on the question of the problems of the Russians, and their solutions, particularly on national reassertion and evoking Russian consciousness. Extremist thinking in post-Soviet Russians can thus be broadly divided into three categories, namely, statist-socialist, nationalist and national fundamentalist.¹³

3.1 STATIST-SOCIALIST

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The statist-socialist branch of political groupings are a refined version of the former communist party, and are now considered to be the 'new-left'. Nostalgic about their glorious Soviet past, the statist – socialist intends to evoke the passion of Soviet greatness, by sighting the decline of Russia's great power status. The **KPRF** led by Gennadiy Zyuganov can be aptly placed in the category of statist-socialist. Zyuganov, since the very beginning of his political career, was critical of 'selling out of the state' by the central party leadership and the dangerous penetration of "immoral mass culture."¹⁴ Zyuganov consistently campaigned for the unification of all patriotic forces struggling to prevent the disintegration of the Soviet state by developing an ideology of statehood.¹⁵

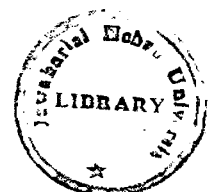
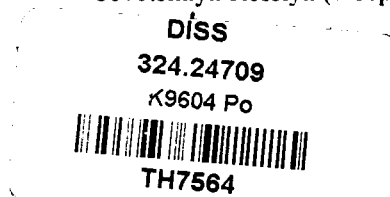
The programmes and policies of KPRF openly come out in defence of spiritual Russian traditions. In a declaration made during late 1993, the KPRF central committee proclaimed that the "awakening of national consciousness and the self awareness of the Russian people as the unifier of all nations and people connected with it through historical fate was the means to the socialist road of development in Russia."¹⁶ It is worthwhile to note at this juncture the fact that in the very same year, the KPRF casted its vote in Duma in favour of making the Russian orthodox church

¹³ A somewhat similar classification could be seen in Andrei Andryeyev's *Politicheskii Spekr Rossii; Struktura, ideologi, oshovnie Subekti* (Moscow, 1997) p.94.

¹⁴ Sovetskaya Rossiya (13 April 1990)

¹⁵ Sovetskaya Rossiya (13 April, 1990)

¹⁶ Sovetskaya Rossiya (7 September, 1993)



prior/superior to all other minority religious organizations.¹⁷ Thus, as far as the issue of opposing Yelstin's policies was concerned, the communists often sided with the nationalists and the national fundamentalists. For instance, instead of voicing criticism against the method of marketization, the KPRF leaders deemed marketization as the West's agenda for the destruction of Russian statehood and culture. In fact, the Communist bloc in the Duma came to be known as the National Patriotic Union with the KPRF forming its largest segment. The tenets of economic nationalism propagated by the KPRF is a blend of nationalism and socialism. It opposes the sale of assets owned by the State and demands protection for native entrepreneurs and industries.

Another notable political group of the statist-socialist category is the **"Labouring Russia Communists"** led by the neo-stalinist demagogue, Victor Anpilov, the charismatic leader of the Moscow lumpens of the **Trudovaya Rossiya Movement**.¹⁸ 'My motherland' formed in March '95 and **'All Union Communist party of Bolshheviks'** by Nina Andreyeva are some other minor statist-socialist factions.

The Statist-Socialist represented by KPRF and 'Labouring Russia communists' by projecting a nationalist stance, managed to eat up the votes of nationalist and national fundamentalists in the 1995 elections. The KPRF got 21% of the total votes, which indicated an increase of 11% with respect to the 1993 parliamentary elections. The other group which came of some significance was Victor Anpilov's 'Labouring Russia Communists' which got 4.5% of the votes. The biggest loser was the LDPR, whose number of votes declined to 11.18% from 22.7% received in the 1993 elections. Rest of the political parties and movements of the nationalists and the national – fundamentalist variety led by Sergei Babur, Nikoloi Ryzhkov,

¹⁷ The KPRF voted along with the Nationalists for a legislation making the Russian Orthodox Church prior to all other minority religious institution. This legislation passed by Duma with 337 to 5 votes was vetoed by Yelstin.

¹⁸ Anpilov and his party believe in class struggles and proletarian revolution. KPRF is considered by them as a deviation from leftist ideology.

Nikoloi Travkin, S. Glazyev, A. Rutskoï, A. Sterligov and A. Barkashov could not even manage to cross the 5% threshold.

The point to be noted here is that nationalist overtones of the statist-socialist parties have helped in pulling out votes from the nationalist and national – fundamentalist's camp. Veljko Vujacic warns that this newfound nationalism of the Russian left can lead to dictatorial tendencies.¹⁹ He cites example from the European History to substantiate his point. However since nationalism and communism both share a commitment to heroic political action and a warrior mentality in stark opposition to bourgeois and reformist pacifism, this new tilt of Russian left should not be taken as an aberration.

3.2 NATIONALISTS

The collapse of the soviet state and the gradual evaporation of its super power status have made Russians apprehensive and defensive of their cultural and ethnic identity. In such a scenario political parties of all colours tend to capitulate on the feelings and sentiments of the electorate. Even Yelstin and his ministers have made use of nationalism in speeches, articles and policy statements. Yelstin has himself often spoken of the special status of Russia in the world and that "Russia will never agree to be on the sidelines of civilization."²⁰

The formation of **ROS (Rossiskaya obshchenarodnogo Soyuza)** in late 1991 was the first step towards bringing all the nationalist minded individuals and fractions under one banner. Its' leader S.N. Baburin believes that Russia is the former Soviet Union and hopes to regain Russia's lost territories.²¹ Baburin blames the Yelstin government for leading the country to socio-economic and geographical catastrophe. ROS calls for civil patriotic unity to prevent this catastrophe and help in the rebirth of

¹⁹ Veljko Vujacic "Gennady Zyugapov and the third road" *Post-Soviet Affair: 12, 2: (1996)* pp 120-21.

²⁰ Boris Yelstin, Address to Duma, 11 Jan 1994, FBIS/ Sov/94 (11 Jan, 1994).

²¹ Babur, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (9 Jan 1992).

Russia. ROS also supports the Russian cause in Russia's near abroad. In March 1995, ROS transformed into a political party and contested elections as a part of '**Vlast Narodu**' (VN) led by former premier of U.S.S.R. Ryzhkov. However this electoral block managed to receive only 1.6% of the votes. 'V.N', like its constituents hopes to revive the great and indivisible Russia.

Power (Derzhava) started as a movement by A.V. Rutsкои in 1994. Having firm belief in the unity of Slavs and the Russian orthodox church, power aims to establish the frontiers of former U.S.S.R. As a first step 'power' intends to bring together the slave nation of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. However the poor performance of Power (See Appendix-II) in the 1995 parliamentary elections have put a question mark on the future of the organization.

The **KRO (Congress of Russian Communities)** led by Aleksander Lebed has considerable following among the Russian army, police and other nationalist sections in the Russian society. Aiming to restore the military might of Soviet Russia, the K.R.O., believes in an active foreign policy. The K.R.O. managed to get only 4.3% of proportional votes and five constituency seats in 1995 elections, however the performance of Aleksander Lebed was impressive in the 1996 Presidential elections. He secured 14.5% of votes in the first round coming third after Yelstin and Zyganov. Lebed remains a strong Presidential Candidate from the nationalist camp.

3.3 NATIONAL - FUNDAMENTALIST

The first few years following the break up of Soviet Union were the golden years for the national – fundamentalist formations. Even political groups which started as a liberal front embarked upon the path of ultra-nationalism, gauging the mood of the public. For example, when asked about **LDPR** programme in its formative days, Zhirinovskiy replied, "My programme it is like everybody else. Perestroika free market and democracy."²² The same organization at the end of 1993

²² Zhirinovskiy, Quoted in Dictionary of Political Parties ed/by by Pribylovskiy p:ix

was comparable to Nazis. Quoting V. Akhimov, an LDPR youth leader, “Our party arose in troubled times and won its supporters by sure steps, just as Hitler’s party arose in its time. Secondly Hitler came to power by constitutional means by elections, our party also intends to come to power legally and by constituted means. Thirdly Hitler pursued a firm ethnic policy, he favoured the German race within Germany, we pursue the same policy, we want the Russians to feel good in Russia.

The drastic change in the ideas and programmes of political formations like LDPR was not due to a sudden policy – shift, rather it was the immense discontent prevalent in the society in the years following the break-up, which led parties to adopt nationalistic overtones. Opportunist like Zhirinovskiy managed to channel the anti-establishment discontent in his favour. The massive success of LDPR in the 1993 legislative balloting was the result of this kind of opportunistic politics.

The LDPR then though initially had a liberal democratic agenda as its very name suggests, it could be included in the category of the nationalist fundamentalist parties of Russia. Formed in March 1990 as an all Union party, the LDPR came to be identified by its Xenophobic leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. His extravagant promises, vicious campaign and undue utterances made him popular as “The Russian Hitler.”²³ Zhirinovskiy argues that “Russians are those who speak and think in Russian” and the “borders of former U.S.S.R.” are the borders of the Russian state in as much as Russia has become the successor of the former U.S.S.R.²⁴ Zhirinovskiy’s imperialist agenda has worried Russia’s immediate neighbours. The success of LDPR in 1993 elections raised the fear of Russia following the Weimar Way.²⁵ A national fundamentalist take-over seemed to be a near possibility. But to the relief of the world community, Zhirinovskiy’s popularity proved to be transitional. LDPR slipped to the third position in 1995 legislative polls, Zhirinovskiy himself came a poor fifth in the Presidential

²³ Kozyrev; Ostankino Channel 1 T.V. (Moscow 15 Dec. 1993), SWB, SU/ 1874 (17 Dec. ’93).

²⁴ Zhirinovskiy; Ostankino Channel 1 T.V. (Moscow 25, Nov. 23); SWB, SU/1859 (30th Nov. ’93).

²⁵ Gaider, ‘Russia’ T.V. Channel (Moscow 12th Dec. ’93)

Also see Stephon D. Shenfield “The Weimar / Russia Comparison: Reflection on Hanson and Kopstein” *Post Soviet Affairs*, 14, 4; Oct-Nov. 1998, pp. 355-68.

elections held is the following year. The LDPR continues to fair poorly in the regional elections (1996-97) and has been reduced to a minor force.²⁶

FNS (National Salvation Front), organised by a group of neo-communists and Russian nationalists, believes in violent overthrow of the anti-national Yelostin's regime. Initially banned, the FNS opposes further marketization and Western cultural invasion.

'Russian National Unity' (RNE) is regarded as the largest cadre based national-fundamentalist organization in Russia. Openly anti-Semitic, it claims over 10,000 hardcore members. It's leader Barkashov himself has been arrested for violence on several occasions. RNE volunteers serve as mercenaries in other countries to protect Russian interest Barkashov wrote in his book, 'The ABC of Russian Nationalism' that, "in spirit we are not politicians but warriors."²⁷ The fact that is alarming of RNE. is that it doesn't believe in the current Russian constitution or Democracy and that it concentrates upon creating military-patriotic clubs for building up a disciplined hierarchy of combat units. Their aim is to penetrate state and social structures to bring about a gradual fascistization of Russia.²⁸

The National Republican Party of Russia (NRPR) led by N. Lysenko wants Russia to reemerge as a superpower in the 21st century. The party intends to develop the nation through private property and technological breakthrough. It wants Russia to stay aloof from the Central Asian Republics as the latter only cause financial burden NRPR highlights the threat of Iran and Turkey to Russia and wants Russia to extend its influence in this region.

Besides the above mentioned organizations, several other national fundamentalist formations like **'Party of National Unity'**, **'Movement for Russia's**

²⁶ Steven. L. Solnick, "Gubernatorial elections in Russia 1996-97" *Post Soviet Affairs*, 14, 1; (1998), pp. 48-80.

²⁷ Barkashov; Quoted in "The Weimar/ Russia Comparison; Reflection on Hanson and Kopstein" w/b Stepen D. Shenfield; *Post Soviet Affairs*, 14;4 (Oct.-Nov. 1995) pp.360.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.361.

National Revival', **'Pamyat'** etc., are busy propagating their own brand of Nationalism. Except LDPR none of the national – fundamentalist organizations have an all – union presence.

To end this chapter on extreme in Russian politics, all the nationalist groupings in Russia are surrounded by three main myth of homeland. Firstly they equate Russia with the territory of former U.S.S.R., secondly they consider Russia as the land of eastern Slavs and last they identify Russia as the land of Russian speakers.²⁹

It is evident from the electoral verdicts and opinion polls that Xenophobic nationalism and ethnic phobias are son the decline in Russia.³⁰ However through the base and popularity of national fundamentalist have declined in the last election, they continue to occupy a place in Russian politics. Given the unstable political and economic conditions and weakness of the democratic and centrist forces, nationalism continue to be a potential force.³¹ National fundamentalism is directly proportional to the discontent in the society. It has to be seen that how well the current political regime could manage the political and economic affairs of the country. Any furth socio-economic tension in the society my exerbate ultra-nationalist tendencies. The strengthening of the civil and democratic institutions is the only check on fundamentalist forces. Prosperity and abundance through economic management would bury these forces for times to come.

²⁹ Vera Tolz – “Conflicting homeland myth and national building in post communist Russia” Slavnic review; 57,2 (Summer 1998), p. 289

³⁰ Led. D. Gudikov, “Ethnic phobias in the structure of National Identification” RSSR , 39,1; (Jan-Feb. 1998), pp. 89-103.

³¹ Oleg Vitte, “Centrism in Russian politics” SSQR, XXVI, 2; (1995), pp. 56-66.

CHAPTER - IV

- 4.1 Political Parties and Social Transformation**
- 4.2 The 1993 Legislation Elections**
- 4.3 The 1995 Legislative Elections**
- 4.4 The 1996 Presidential Elections**

POLITICAL PARTIES AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Russia is at the stage of transition from post-totalitarianism to political plurism and democracy, from the state administrated-distributive economy towards private property-based market economy. These transitions of the institutes of Russian society have told seriously on its social structure.¹ The relationship between property and power has changed and continues to change. The mechanism of social stratification has realigned² and the intense changes in elites is still going on. New social groups have come forth to the social scene, mass strata has become marginalised, the “social bottom”³ tend to expand, and the economic relations become more criminilized. Thus the system of group interests, ways of behaviour and social interaction are undergoing changes. These events which seems to be fragmentary at the first glance are in fact different sides of the process of social transformation in Russia.

Profound socio-political changes have taken, place in the process of political reform and the transition to a market economy. Among the preconditions for the transformation of the system; the emergence of truly diverse form of property, the creation of multi-sectoral economy and change in the structure of employment; are worth mentioning. The result of the reform on society and the economy in this direction is quite obvious and one of these is the

¹ Tatiana. Zaslavskaya, “ Social structure of Russia society today”, Social Sciences Quarterly review, XXVIII, 3 (1997); pp. 6-28.

² Ibid, pp. 10-13.

³ Ibid, p. 12

increased differentiation in the distribution of material goods. The increase in social stratification is manifest on one hand in the ostentatious display of wealth by the “new rich” and on other hand in the formation of the group of “new poor”. Social gap is increasing. The difference between the top 10 percent and bottom 10 per cent of the population as regards income level is 20:1.⁴ The rich in present day Russia are comparable to the highest paid segment of the West. But how has this vast difference emerged. Daniel Treisman⁵ has given a detailed account of the deep nexus between the neo rich and the political rulers. He has tried to establish through a number of statistical details that campaign funds, political support and the impending economic crises have made it increasingly difficult for the present Russian ‘centre – right’ rulers to curtail the privileges of the neo-rich.

4.1 Political parties and social transformation

How does political Parties via elections act as a tool as well as an indicator of social transformation? In an election in which voters confront scores of candidates for public offices about whom they know little or nothing, the essential commodity posed by the candidate for judge is their party label and the fact that this label is linked with a particular method, aim and obligation.⁶ An electoral performance of a particular party shows the approval rating of its policies and objectives. Above all it signifies the percentage public approval of its projected social model of the intended society. Every political party has a social picture or attempts to portray a social model through its

⁴ Nikolai Shmelev “ What do we want to disappear from the World Map?”, Russian Social Science Quarterly Review ; 39,2 (March – April 1998) p. 41.

⁵ Daniel Treisman Dollar and Democratization: the role of power of money in Russia’s transitional election”, Comparative Politics , 31,1 (Oct. 1998) ; pp. 1-22.

⁶ Stephen White, Matthew Wyman and Olga Kryshтанouskaya, “Parties and Politics in Post Communist Russia,” communist and Post communist studies, 28,2 (1995) pp. 188-198.

programme and policies⁷ before elections. Its programme and policies are established by its manifesto and mobilization propaganda. The percentage vote the party receives is an indication of the percentage public approval of its projected social model. Social transformation in post-communist Russia can be studied by analyzing various political parties in Russia; their origin; their programmes and policies; their idea of the society (or the projected social model of the intended society); elections; election-results; percentage approval of the social model of individual parties and thus can be assessed changing priorities of the Russian society; shifting attitudes and values; emerging and diluting social stratification; labour values; family; social relations and similar elements of society and its transformation.

For 70 years the U.S.S.R. was dominated by "the party". Although the law placed no restriction upon their number, only a single political organization—the communist party of the Soviet Union — had a legitimate existence and was the leading and guiding force of the Soviet Society.⁸ Elections in the Soviet Union did take place but it gave no choice as the electorate were supposed to only endorse the candidates of the CPSU. The official Leninism – Marxism ideology had a definite 'social model' to which the Russian society was supposed to adhere to. "The party" itself enjoyed a monopoly of political initiatives, and it was felt that "the party would win most of the votes if there was a genuinely contested election."⁹ The oncoming of political plurality unfolded an altogether different picture. The March 1990 republican elections saw the democrats gaining hold in large cities.¹⁰ The 1991 Presidential elections in Russia gave a clear indication of communist

⁷ Maurice Duverger, Political Parties: their organisation and activity in the modern state (London 1954) pp. 24-85.

⁸ Soviet constitution, 1977.

⁹ Boris Shargin (1977) Quoted in, Stephen white and others, "Parties and politics in post-communist Russia" Communist and post communist studies, 28,2 (1995) pp. 183-4.

¹⁰ See, Thomas Remington, The March 1990 RSFSR elections ed/ by Darrell Slider, Elections and political changes in Soviet Republic (Durham, 1991)

unpopularity. Yeltsin the candidate of the democratic alliance¹¹ won with 57.3% of the votes. The communist candidates fared poorly. The best of their result was a low 16.9%.¹² The third place was captured by Zhirnovsky's Liberal Democratic party, with 7.8% of the votes.¹³ As a result of the election Russia apparently entered into a new phase of socio-political development. Two potentially important but inconclusive consequences followed with the largest of the former republic of U.S.S.R. controlled by the pro-democratic President. Firstly the credibility of the communists as the ruling party greatly declined. While on the other hand the elections established that the majority Russian population have rejected the socialist 'social model' imposed upon them from the last 70 years. The Russian in the 1991 Presidential election had voted for a social transformation from a socialist 'social model' to a democratic 'social model'. They had by a deciding vote approved the social agenda of the political parties from the democratic alliance. The year following the RSFSR Presidential election saw the multiplication of political parties in Russia. However party formation by early 1990's was still at a rudimentary stage. Membership figure was difficult to establish with all of them exaggerating their own number considerably. By early 1991 just a few months after the adoption of a law that had given them the right to legal existence, some 2000 applications came from parties seeking registration, out of which in late November '91 only a dozen had completed all the necessary formalities. About 25 parties formally registered themselves by the summer of 1992.¹⁴ The earliest parties were varied and sometimes even obscure from the Western sense. There was no clear association between a candidate's personal values,

¹¹ The democratic alliance still in its incumbent stage consisted of Democratic Russia, the Democratic party of Russia, the Social Democrats, the Republican party of Russian Federation, Christian Democrats and Constitutional Democrats.

¹² The communists produced as many as four candidates representing different line of communist thinking.

¹³ Rossiiskaya Gazeta (20 June, 1991) p. 1.

¹⁴ Izvestia, (11 June 1992) p. 2

his, political programme his organizational affiliations and his subsequent behaviour in the legislature. Democracy in itself was little understood and practised at this stage. "Potentially only the Parliament and President were democratic and their discussions are not reaching those to whom they are addressed – the population."¹⁵

The new parties formed at that time grouped into 'vanguard parties, or 'movement parties', depending upon their organisational set up. The former constitute of parties which has adopted some of the organisational forms of the CPSU and were in some cases successors to it, while the movement parties emerged in the course of democratic movement and was flexible in organisational set up.¹⁶ A similar categorization has been done by Grigorii V. Golosov, he has classified the emergent parties into, 'communities of fate' and 'communities of fortune' depending on the collective or selective reason for joining the party by its members.¹⁷ These parties that came into existence in early 1990, constituted a recognizable spectrum of interest. They portrayed their individual notion of social objectives for which they asked public support. On the right were promoters of capital and private interest. Their objective was to remove all symbols of communism and promote capitalism and democracy. Most significant among the new grouping were the Association of parties known as the democratic alliance formed originally to contest the 1990 Russian elections. It is to be noted here that LDP too was initially dedicated to the idea of state based on law and market economy. In practice however it became later identified with the extremist views of its leader Vladimir Zhirnovsky. It was this emergent right which backed Yeltsin in his initial political overtures.

¹⁵ Sergey Shakhrai ; Russia' T.V. channel (Moscow, 4 July 1992)

¹⁶ Stephen White and others, " Parties and politics in post communist Russia", Communist and post communist studies; 28,2 (1995) p. 185.

¹⁷ Grigorii V. Golosov , " Who survives? Party origins, organisational development, and electoral performance in post – communist Russia". Political studies XLVI (1998), pp. 513-24.

At the centre of the spectrum consisted about 20 different political parties. The centrist parties believed in the decentralization of state power to create a society of equal opportunities. The political parties at the center aspired for a reformist society with no restriction on socio-economic development.. A society where both freedom and equality was prevalent.

Finally there were new left groupings of socialists, social democrats and archo-syndacalists. These were political groupings, which claimed the political legacy of the former CPSU. The communist party of Russian Federation (KPRF) revived in February 1993, became a key faction of the left groupings. The left or the new left related its social ideals to the Soviet past.¹⁸

However the new left related its social ideals with the good elements of a democratic society. The social model projected by the new left grouping definitely emphasized on equality but with the notion of freedom.

The formation of political parties started a new era in Russian Socio-political history. However it should be kept in mind that these parties (except may be the new left parties) were still in the incumbent stage. Neither of them attracted a particularly large following, but their organisational residue did survive into the next phase of the country's political development. The democratic elections that followed were a true test of their socio-political standing.

4.2 The 1993 legislative elections

¹⁸ Stephen White and others, "Parties and politics in post – Communist and post – Communist Russia" 28,2, (1995) p. 188.

The socio-political climate leading towards the 1993 legislative elections was chaotic and sometimes aggressive¹⁸. Economic miseries fuelled political apathy and deliberate ignorance. A survey carried out in twelve urban areas of Russian federation in December 1992 by the Institute of Applied politics suggests that, parties are widely believed to be playing a role of little significance in Russian politics, the outcome is a party system without parties, with an electorate divided socially and attitudinally, but those differences not get reflected in a stable pattern of attachments to the political parties that have so far been established.¹⁹

The 1993-elections²⁰ were unusual in many respects. It was held after Yeltsin had forcefully dismissed the Congress of people deputies. The election rules formalized were almost imposed.²¹ In order to run a party, a bloc required at least 100,000 nomination with no more than 15,000 signatures drawn from any one of Russia's 89 territorial units. Overall as many as 35 electoral associations collected signatures for official registration, but only 13 succeeded. Those, which failed, were mostly small interest groups and remnants of the informal groups, including the largest of the groups originating from PAMYAT.²² The groups which failed complained of state terror and fraud.²³ In the elections six electoral districts in Tartarstan and Chechnaya boycotted the polls. An analysis of the candidates for the election showed that 14% were businessmen, most of whom ran as independents. The other were lawyers and social scientists. A few

¹⁸ Liliya Shevtsova, "Dilemmas of post communist society" Social services quarters review XXVIII, 4 (1997) pp. 50-56.

¹⁹ Stephen White and others parties and politics in post – communist Russia", Communist and post communist studies; 28, 2 (1995), pp. 183-202.

²⁰ Also see Stephen Whitefield and Geoffrey Evam, "The Russian Elections of 1993: Public opinion and the transition experience" Post Soviet Affairs 10 (1994) pp. 38-60.

²¹ Michael Urban, " December 1993 as a application of late Soviet electoral practices", Post Soviet Affairs 10 (1994) pp. 127-58.

²² Pamyat an ultra – right national – patriotic front was started by A.P. Barkazhov, the extremist leader of " Russian natural unity (RNE)

²³ Grigori V. Golsove, " Who survive? Party pp. 352-533.

workers were also on the party list of candidates.²⁴ A voter turnout of 54.8% was recorded in the 1993 legislative balloting. The results²⁵ (see Appendix) showed that Zhirnovsky's poorly organized LDPR with 22.9% of the votes was sell ahead of the well - organised KPRF (12.4%), while the corporatist and interest groups like Women of Russia and the Agrarians (8.1% and 8.0% respectively) fared better than the Democratic party of Russia (5.5%). Of the two parties of power Russia's choice (15.5%) fared better than the PRUC²⁶ (6.8%), but this could be attributed to the formers better hold on government apparatus. Yabloko with 7.9% vote, emerged as a major party of democratic alternative. The results, especially the success of LDP surprised even the close viewers²⁷. The 1993 election results also shows a strong trend in regional voting.²⁸ For example, LDPR performed well in central Russia, gaining in Somlensks, Tambov, Orlov and Ryazan, while Russia's choice received a high percentage of votes in the northern region such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, Perm, Severdlovsk and Arkhangelsk. The Communists received the highest number of votes in republics like Dagestan, Kabarda, Balkaria, Bashkortastan, and Burgata. Interestingly, a telling fact of the election results is that the largest number of directly elected deputies from single member constituencies were independents (12.6) while only three political parties could manage to rescure a significant number of seats - Russia's choice (16), the Communists (16), the Agrarians (11). Though LDP received 22.29% of federal votes, only 5 of its candidates got directly elected. Party leaders accounted for only 5%

²⁴ ITAR - TASS (12 Dec. 1993); SWB SU / 1871.

²⁵ Rossiskaya Gazeta (28 Dec. 1993).

²⁶ Party of Russian Unity and accord (PRUC) founded by Sergey Shakhray, Head of State Committee of Nationalism on the eve of 1993 elections. The party continued to exist on a minor parliamentary faction after 1993 elections.

²⁷ Russia TV Channel (Moscow 13 Dec. '93) SWB, SU / 1871 B / 4.

²⁸ Anuradha. M. Chenoy, " Regional Politics in Russia, Economic and Political Weekly (2 July 1994), pp. 1647-51.

(22) and regional party leaders 7.2% (32) of the directly elected deputies.²⁹

An analysis of the 1993 election results in itself and in relation to the 1991 presidential elections, can give us some idea of the emerging social scenario. In this regard we may relate to the survey³⁰ conducted by Institute of Applied Politics in December '92. The survey indicated that the communist were likely to be older, poorer, less well educated and more working class than the supporters of other parties; Yeltsin supporters by contrast were richer, better educated and younger. To account for the unexpected gains of LDPR in 1993 elections, some political analyst view that "LDPR vote cannot be considered entirely and positive vote for Zhirnovsky and his policies, but a negative or opposition vote against Yeltsin."³¹ This fact can be well seen in the voting pattern. While LDPR received 22.29% of party – list votes, it managed to win only 5 seats in the single member constituency. Thus the people in general preferred non-party affiliated candidates, wherever they had choice.

Basing our study on election results a broad analysis of social transformation since the presidential elections (1991), can be done. As seen in the election results of 1991 and 1993, the biggest gainer was the extreme – right (represented by the LDPR), its percentage rose from 7.8% to 29%) while the Democratic formation (as represented by Yeltsin) climbed down from 57.3% to about 41% of popular support. The left whose position was ambiguous³² in the 1991 Presidential elections gained ground with about 30% of votes; Going by the social angle the acceptability of the social model projected by the extreme right seems to gain acceptability between the period 1991 to 1993.

²⁹ Rossiskaya Vesti, (Jan 10, 1994)

³⁰ Stephen White and others, " Parties 2.

³¹ A.M. Chenoy, " Regional politics in Russia Economic and Political Weekly (July 2, 1994) p. 1647-51.

³² Grigorii V. Golosev, "who survive _____" p. 523

Primordial values of class, race religious, region etc gained ground. Economic woes gave rise to identities. Need to control economic and political crises, asked for a strong and authoritarian leadership. Social climate reflected an urgency. Zhirnovsky capitalized this atmosphere in his favour through his xenophobic ideas and irrational talks.³³ The reasons for LDPR gains lies somewhere else, the economic crisis during the initial post disintegration period created chaotic conditions. Moreover the civil society in itself was in a transitional flux and in a confused state. Besides the votes in the favour of LDPR were largely anti-establishment in nature.

The democrats view of society still seemed to be acceptable to the popular in this period. Aspects of freedom and democracy still new, ruled the senses of large section of the people. The social agenda of the democrats had high endorsement rating throughout the period between 1991 to 1993. People may be questioning the leadership capabilities of the democrat however the democrats, ideas and objectives were largely accepted and incorporated in the Russian society. With the removal of the protectionist state policies, competitive and liberal value started taking root in the society. Another aspect was the increase in consumer expenditure, Russian imports grew multifold, further intensifying the economic crisis.³⁴ Thus Russians in large numbers viewed the Western society as an ideal form of society and started aping its consumerist pattern of living. The centre-right politics and its western tilt found considerable support in these groups of Russians.

The new left social model also had its approval rating among sections of Russian society who felt secure in Soviet state of things. The prevalent economic crisis also strengthened their belief. There

³³ Zhurinovsky: over to the votes, Ostankino channel I T.V. (Moscow, 24 Nov. 1993) SWB SU/1856.

³⁴ A.M. Chenoy Russian transition to capitalism (PPH, New Delhi, 1998) pp. 16-28.

were also sections of people both among the old and the young who felt nostalgic for the Soviet might. The sudden disappearance of Soviet superpower status and the weakness of the Russian state attracted them towards the now left. Besides KPRF's leader Zyuganov moderate rhetoric with nationalist overtones also attracted Russian electorate towards the new left.³⁵ The section of the public which supported the new left, approved, for a society with close links with the state. A state – society interaction, where the state provides all the basic amenities of life and the society replenishes the state with resources. Society had to both equality and liberty but the state and the community was to be given precedence over the individual.

4.3 The 1995 legislative elections

The Duma elected in December 1995 was the second Duma to be elected in post – Soviet Russia, and the first to be elected in relatively normal circumstances. There was tremendous pressure on President Yeltsin to prostrate this elections due to a number of reasons; however, Yeltisn's bold decision to carry forward with the elections strengthened his democratic credentials.³⁶ Chechnayan crisis loomed large over the election scene, and acted as a major election issue. The 1995 elections took place in itself proves a further entrenchment of democracy in Russian political life.

This legislative elections assumed significance as it was being held just 6 months before the coming Presidential elections – a much more important event in terms of the power attached with the office of the President.³⁷

³⁵ Zyuganov; ITAR – TASS (Moscow 14 Dec. '93) SWB Su / 1873.

³⁶ Izvetiya (28 Jan. 1995) FBIS/ Sov. 95 – 014-5 p. 7.

³⁷ See, Robert Cottrell, " Russia", parliamentary and presidential elections," Government and opposition 31,2 (1996) pp. 160-174.

The 1993 legislative elections, proved that the 'social model' projected by the parties of power namely PRUC and Russia's choice was largely rejected by the electorate. Both Gaider and Shakhray resigned from the government. PRUC continued to exist only as a minor parliamentary party, while 'Russia's choice' renamed itself as 'Russia's , Democratic choice'. This move alienated the leaders of 'Democratic Russia'. The developments, left behind many democratic celebrities and state officials who didn't want to subject themselves to any party discipline. This led to fragmentation of the democratic part of Russia's political spectrum. As a result a huge variety of democratic alternative emerged. In April'95, Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin announced the formation of a new center - right electoral bloc 'Our home is Russia' (NDR). Now identified as the party of power, the NDR effectively combined state administration with private capital.

The LDPR and its' leader Zhirinovsky, upbeat with the highest approval rating in 1993 party-list balloting, aspired to gain heavily in the 1995 elections. LDPR made vigorous efforts at establishing party branches in virtually all regions of Russia. Infact LDPR proved to be the only electoral association capable of nominating its candidate in all single member constituencies in the 1995 election.³⁸

The KPRF leadership continued to consolidate the support base of erstwhile CPSU. A visible trend of the party leadership in 1994-95 was its gradual rejection, of Marxist orthodoxy accompanied by a shift towards a more nationalist stance. Acceptance of private property and reforms made the communists more acceptable to the electorate.³⁹

³⁸ Nikolai Petrov, " Analiz Rezul Tatov Vybobrov 1985" Quoted in Grigori V. Golosov, "Party" p. 537.

³⁹ A.N. Chenoy, " Test of reforms: Russians to elect a new parliament" Frontline (19 Dec. ' 95) p. 43.

This trend was however constrained by the unwillingness of the regional branches to follow this line.

The 1995 legislative elections saw a highly fragmented voting pattern, due to the proliferation of many small parties. Forty three electoral blocs registered to party list balloting, up from 13 in 1993. Many of three parties has a mere handful of members. The results (Appendix II) showed that only four parties out of the competing parties, managed to cross the 5% threshold. The widespread communist support became evident as seen in the wide gap between the KPRF and the remaining parties. The KPRF got 22.3% of the national votes with 99 of party seats and 58 constituency seats. The LDPR gained 11.2% of votes with 50 party seats and a sole constituency seat. The party of power managed 10.1% of national votes with 45 party seats and only 10 constituency seats. Yabloko came fourth with 6.9% of party-list votes, it got 31 party seats and 14 constituency seats. The results of other parties were disappointing. Women of Russia received 4.6% of votes : workers party (RCWP) of Victor Anpilov with 4.5% divided the left votes : the CRC got 4.3%; Russia Democratic choice 3.9%, APR 3.8%; Derzhava 2.6% ; forward Russia 1.9%. The block of Ivan Rybkin received slightly more than 1% of list votes. Other parties fared even worse.

The new Duma saw some modifications at the hand of the deputies themselves. Three deputy group⁴⁰ were formed by the independent deputies themselves or by one party lending its' deputies to another. In this way three deputy groups, were formed. The KPRF lended its deputics to APR and power to the people (VN) to able to reach the 35 mark. While a new faction 'Russia regions' was created

⁴⁰ A reorganized 'deputy group' or 'faction in the Duma should have atleast 35 deputies. A recognized deputy group need not have a coherent ideological line or voting whips; but may have the perks and privileges of the house.

by independents and small party leaders who were generally favourable to economic reforms and the decentralization of power.

An analysis of Duma results bring out some interesting facts. It comes to one, notice that the protest votes that had gone to the right in 1993, went to the left in 1995. The biggest surprise came with the results of the single-member constituency seats, where candidates with strong government links were expected to do better. Here the KPRF won 58 constituency seats, while NDR and Yabloko won 10 and 14 seats respectively. LDPR tally declined further from 5 (1993) to 1 constituency seat. Another important development was the rise of hard-line communist party –“Russia labouring communist” (RCWP) with 4.5% of national votes. Again as in the election results of 1993, the legislative balloting of 1995 too indicate the apathy of electorate toward party-politics, if given an option. Thus in the constituency seats independent candidates got a majority hold. On the democratic front, the fragmentation of parties led to the dividing of their individual support bases. Only NDR and Yabloko could manage to cross the 5% threshold, other democratic parties lagged for behind. The biggest loser in the 1995 legislative elections was the LDPR, its percentage party list votes declined from 22.3% to 11.4%.

Having analyzed the 1995 legislative election results we can now try to understand the undergoing process of social transformation, since the 1993 legislative elections; The support which KPRF got in 1995 legislative elections shows that the acceptability of liberal principal have increased within the society, infact it has slowly become a part of Russian social life, but the people still miss the securities of soviet era. The society at the end of 1995 aspired for the benefits of both the liberal and communist systems, which was projected by the new-left Russian political parties. Thus unlike the protest votes received by LDPR in 1993 elections, the votes received by

KPRF was protest-cum-positive votes. The centre and centre - right factions, due to their failure to form a common platform, evoked little response from the public. The second option (i.e. the communists) was preferred by the Russian electorate, due to its liberal-collectivist approach. The decline of women's party of Russia in 1995 elections, shows Russian women concern for wider issues. Most of the liberal pro-reform parties in Russia performed poorly as they were splintered and divided, NDR inspite of its money-power and government backing could muster only 10.13% of votes. Russian society definitely moved towards democracy and capitalism but because of the severity of economic crises, non-payment of pensions and wages for months and the loss of livelihood by many, the pro-reform parties lost out to forces who put forward a stable and secure social model. Thus as seen within the larger process of social transformation, the 1995 election results indicate the gradual movement of Russian society towards liberal ideals and democratic principles. Another aspect has been the significant increase in elite partisan affiliation between Russia's first and second parliamentary elections.⁴² The preference of liberal looking parties, the anti-establishment factor fueled by an insatiable economy has increased the popularity of the new left. People in Russia at this juncture are ready to support anyone who is ready to preserve their new found freedom. Be it left or right.

4.4 The 1996 – Presidential elections

The results of the 1995 Legislative elections were thought its to have a direct impact on the presidential elections in the following year.

⁴² Robert. G. Moser, "Independents and party formations: elite partnership as an intervening variable in Russian politics" *Comparative parties*; 31, 2 (Jan 199) pp 161. Also see; David lanc, " Transformation of Russia : the role of political elite" *Europe Asia studies*; 48, 4 (June 1994) pp 535- 49

Communist party leader Zyuganov was considered the front runner for the part of the President, while Yelstin seemed to be lagging far behind. Early opinion polls predicted a communist resurgence to the topmost post, however, as the election day approached. Yelstin managed to improve his position considerably through aggressive campaigning and real politics.⁴³

The Presidential elections in Russia, unlike the legislative elections was based on the French model by which any number of candidates could take part in the first round of voting, and if no candidate receives a simple majority in the first round, two highest scoring candidates go through a second round-off held not more than a fortnight later. The Russia's presidential electoral law structured the vote in 1996 differently from the rules that guided parliamentary election in 1995. Thus while proportional representation system of voting (in legislative elections) encouraged the proliferation of political parties and provided few incentives for political consolidation, the Presidential elections tend to produce a two party system, majoritarianism and polarization, as elections in which only one candidate can win create incentives to consolidate alliances and narrow the field before the voting pushing political system towards bipolarity and majoritarianism.⁴⁴ The polarization in the 1996 presidential election, as in the past elections centered around two broad categories, pro-reform and anti-reform. This crystallized divide impeded interest based party development or the emergence of a third candidate, and even subsumed among itself all ideological differences, class divisions and ethnic identities. The whole focus of Yelstin's, campaign strategy was to project him as the sole crusader of the pro-reform front and to pin-point Zguganov as a hindrance to the

⁴³ Michael Mcfaul, "Russia's, 1996 Presidential elections" Post-Soviet Affairs : 12, 4 (1996) pp 326-34

⁴⁴ Ibid pp. 323-24

progressive reforms. Yelstin and his campaign intended to make this vote, yet another referendum on communism, i.e. voters had to understand that they were choosing between two systems and not two candidates. The alienation of the Russian public towards the Yelstin regime was obvious. Prolonged and painful economic reform; the attack on Russian parliament in 1993, and a full fledged war in Chechnaya for now five years agitated Russian society; however, when it came to the question of reverting to past soviet regime, a majority of the Russian electorate made choices based on expectation about the future and not merely short term calculations about past events, economies or otherwise. The Pro-Yelstin campaign-manages capitalized on this bent of Russian mind. They projected Yelstin as a lesser evil ; as it was the question of the Russian towards the Yeltsin regime was obvious. Prolonged and painful economic reform the attack on Russian parliament in 1993, and a full fledged war in chechnaya for now few years alienated Russian society; however, when if one to the question of reverting to past soviet regime, a majority of the Russian electorate made choices based on expectation about the future and not merely short term calculations about part events, economies or otherwise. The pro-Yelstin campaign manages capitalized on this bent of Russian mind. They projected Yelstin as a lesser Civil; as it was the question of selecting the lesser of two evils. The most popular slogan was "vote Mr. Yelstin in and at least you can get a chance to vote him out again. Vote Mr. Zyuganov in, and you may never vote again."⁴⁵

Zyuganov campaign strategy was to portray Yelstin and his regime as a storage of U.S. interest and Western capitalism. Attacking Yelstin's Chechnaya policy and economic misadventures, Zyuganov tried to offer his candidacy as a more stable alternative to the Yelstin

⁴⁵ Robert Cottrell - "Russia, parlamentay presidential election" Govt. & opposition; 31,2, (1996) p. 320.

regime. Zyuganov, infact, towed the nationalistic line throughout his campaign period.

The KPRF think-tank believed that Russian voters consisted of three types in relatively equal proportions : democratic, commuists and nationalist. While the communist votes safely in had, Zyuganav was all set to capture the nationalist votes. As Zyuganov proclaimed "Two third of Russian voters support the idea of national patriotism and social equality."⁴⁶

Zhirnivoky at the start of the 1996 presidential elections was considered to be a spent force, with his electoral votebank encroached upon both by Zyuganov and Gen Alexander Lebed of KRO. Zhirinovsky was expected to two the line of Yelstin once the first round of elections wasover. Other candidates in the fray Yavlinsky of Yabloko, Fyodorov of third front Gorbachov etc. were not expected the cross the first round.

The first round of balloting held on June 16, 1996 resulted in Yelstin heading the field of ten candidates with 35.28% of votes, but only narrowly ahead of Zyuganow with 32.03% of voted on the third place came Alexander lebel with 14.52% of votes; Rest of the candidates could not even reach the double digit mark. Thus the first round of balloting proved that Zyuganov was not able to widen his electoral base after the 1995 legislative elections inspite of six months of compaigning. Momentum had shifted to the Yelstin camp. Meanwhile Yelstin, campaign managers reasoned that the close margin would help re-mobilize pro-reformist forces and especially the till date apathetic pro-reform centres of Russian population. Yelstin acted swiftly and forged a winning alliance with labeled, who was appointed president's advisor on defence matters and also secretary to

⁴⁶ Segodnya, June 14, 1996, Pg-1, (quoted in Michael Mcfaul-Russia, 1996 Presidential elections, Post - Soviet Affairs; 12,4; 11996)

the National security council . With Lebel endorsement in the runoff ballot on July 3, 1996, Yelstin's, campaigners got the desired results. Yelstin won a decisive victory by 53.82 /to 40.31% for Zyuganov. A total of 4.83% i.e. 3.6 million votes were cast against both the candidates.

What did change between December 1995 and June 1996? Did a social transformation occur in this short period as apparent in the results of the two elections ? The answer lies in the kind of elections that was at stake during the two elections, and the difference in voting patterns. If Russia's, mixed electoral system (of proportional representation system & single mandate constituency) in 1993 and 1995 legislative elections encouraged party proliferation and fragmentation, the 1996 presidential elections provided incentives, for polarization and consolidation. Thus pro-reform factions backing Yelstin presidency especially in the second round, brought imminent victory to the liberal forces, while their fragmented existence only 6 months back brought defeat in the December 1995 legislature elections. As evident from the 1996. Presidential victory of Yelstin as mentioned time and again in various chapters of the present work, democratic elements and liberal principles have slowly and steadily struck roots in the Russian Society. In spite of severe odds of the transformation period, a majority of Russian were still prepared to vote prospectively for a constitution of the democratic and liberal course of reforms. An another aspect of considerable importance to be noted here is that the 1996 presidential elections' results indicates the majority support for reforms among the Russian electorate, and that the Yelstin factor should not be overstressed. Yelstin in fact was a 'forced choice'⁴⁷ rather than a popularly elected candidate. Yelstin actually has himself encouraged fragmentation among his own

⁴⁷ Richard Rose and Evgeny Tikhomirov Russia's forced choice Presidential elections – Post – Soviet Affairs, 12, 4, (1996) , pp 351 – 376.

supporters. By impeding the formation of a strong liberal political party and by discrediting potential presidential candidates.⁴⁸ Yelstin projected himself and remained the lone viable candidate of the pro-reformist front.

Another factor for Yelstin success was the tremendous resource advantage he enjoyed over his rivals. Western support to him from the very beginning⁴⁹ made him the sole link between Russia and world lending bodies like IMF and the World Bank. All major businessman, bankers and industrialists contributed generously for Yelstin campaign budget giving his comparing an unlimited budget⁵⁰ Yelstin had monopolistic control over all major national television stations i.e. ORT, RTR, & NTV; moreover eight out of the eleven Russian national newspapers supported and highlighted his views. Besides the media, the Russia orthodox church backed Yelstin's campaign.

To conclude the present chapter on political parties and social transformation, the results of 1996 presidential election doesn't indicate a radical shift in the Russian society, but the result is the indication of the process that started with the demise of the Soviet Union. The results of the 1993 and 1995 legislative elections and the 1996 presidential elections, unfolded the deeper inner transformation going on within the Russian society. The transition from post-totalitarianism towards political pluralism and democracy. The roots of democracy and liberalism are penetrating slowly but steadily within the Russian society, in spite of the political and economic turmoil on the ground. "The Russian political parties have played an

⁴⁸ Michael Mefaul, "Russia, 1996 Presidential elections" *Post – Soviet Affairs* 12,4, (1996) pp 324-25

⁴⁹ Anjali Mody. "Western prop : to sustain the economic myth" *Frontline* (April 1993) PP 109-110.

⁵⁰ Daniel Treisman, "Dollars and democratization : The role of power and money in Russia's, transitional election" *comparative politics* 31.1 (1998) pp 1-22

important role in elections and the post communist transition to Democracy.⁵¹

Tatina. I. Zaslavskai,⁵² the leading Russian academician studying the process of politics and social transformation, summarises the objective results of the transformation as follows : First, the process of the formation of social structure has been democratized and liberalized. The repressive authority of the CPSU and the KGB, which held together and stabilized the social structure in the former U.S.S.R is now part of the past. The emergence of multi party system and the freedom of personal choice have made the social structure less rigid. But the other side of the change, the cost of expanded freedom, has been the weakening of the rule of law and social order.

Second, the structure of society has been more mobile and diversified and the kind of social status have become more varied.

Third the openness of the elite and of sub-elite group has increased considerably. The social status, living conditions and lifestyle of the elite group in Russia have acquired greater legality and accordingly are more open. For example the state summer houses of the 'new rich' are therefor all to see. But the healthy trends towards removing the shroud of secrecy is unfortunately hounded by the growth of social differentiation. The status gap between the elite and the bulk of the society have increased. As a result instead of expected partnership, between democratic government and the people, the antagonism between the 'top' and bottom level of the society have intensified further.

⁵¹ Robert G. Moser, "Independents and party formations :Elite partnership as an intervening variable in Russian politics" comparative politics ; 31, 2 (Jan 1999) p. 166.

⁵² Tatiana. I. Zaslavskai "Excerpt from interview" Russian social review quarterly review. 38, 5 (Sep- out 1997) pp 91-92 .

Fourth, the liberalization of the society have given rise to a new element of business owners and managers. This stratum is potentially capable of contributing effectively to the evolution of reforms, however, the conditions under which it functions presently cannot be called favourable.

Lastly, social status in present day Russia has become more dependent on economic factors.

Zaslavskia visualizes the general situation in post soviet Russia as contradictory as, though the general trend in the transformation process is progressive, but the positive changes must fight their way through the negative ones. The social cost of the reforms and the political mismanagement has been extremely high and the task now is to make the maximum use of positive results achieved and to neutralize the negative ones. The most important issue is to resolve the problems of different population groups adaptation to the new social realities. The social structure in Russia is for the time being more and more imbalanced, since the bulk of the population consists of the basic stratum which is in a very unfavourable situation. If this situation is not checked the situation may deteriorate and threaten social stability.⁵³

⁵³

Ibid; P.92.

CHAPTER - V

- 5.1 The Prospects for Democracy in Russia**
- 5.2 Civil Society in Russia**
- 5.3 Capitalism in Russia**

WHITHER RUSSIA ?

The transition of Russian socio-economic and political life has been underway now for almost a decade. The time for introspection has come. What criteria should be used to assess the results of these reform ? The relative size of privatized economy; the rouble dollar exchange rate; the amount of budget defic; number of political parties evolved – none of these parameters seems to be sufficient. Might it not be more appropriate to assess the extent to which the goal of the reforms set at the beginning of these changes have been achieved or not. We should recall that at that time the reformer goals involved arresting the obvious process of disintegration, caused by the backwardness of social relations, the dynamic development of economy and the spiritual revival of the society. This was the basis for making the life of the Russians more comfortable and freer. But the principle source of society's renewal was expected to be through the democratization of political relations and development of free market.

5.1 The Prospects for democracy in Russia

Russia since early 1990's started the process of transition from an authoritarian centralized state dominated system to a liberal democracy. But has Russia moved beyond the transitional stage of democratization, towards democratic consolidation? What are the major challenges for the further development of Russian democracy in the coming year?

The democratic progress of the post soviet states can be evaluated according to the extent to which they have established liberal democracy. This means that they should have a political system in which elected

officials are chosen and peacefully removed in relatively free and fair elections, in which practically all adults are eligible to participate.¹ The elected officials should have constitutionally vested control over government policies. Citizens should have political and civil liberty.

If one applies these criterias of representative liberal democracy, Russia has certainly embarked over democratic transition. Relatively free elections have been held on a number of occasions. Opposition and criticism do prevail. The 1995 parliamentary and 1996 presidential elections did take place, both the government and opposition have made concessions to each other with alternate period of defiance. Thus an attempt for co-operation and healthy criticism has replaced the extreme confrontation as was seen in 1993.² Thus it seems that procedural democracy however flawed it may be, has been institutionalized in Russia. Nevertheless Russia has yet not achieved democratic consolidation, confrontist politics predominate in Russia. Mass participation has given way to widespread apathy³ opinion polls predict that the public have little trust on the political process.⁴ A further came of public disenchantment is that the government faces immense difficulty in collecting taxes and often has little revenue to pay its' suppliers, employees or state pensioners. The government seems to be in able to look after law and order, crime and corruption have risen unprecident

¹ Stephan shenfield and Geoffery Evans, "Support for democracy and political opposition in Russia (1993-1995) " *Post – Soviet Affairs*" ; 12,3; (July – Sept. 1996) pp. 218-242.

² The 1993 standoff between the legislature and President Yelstin, led to bloody confrontation. Finally Yelstin came out victorious. For details see; Russian academy of services, " Russian Society in 1994", *Social Science Quarterly Review* XXVI, 4 (1995) pp. 52-53.

³ Vladimir E. Boikov " Socio-political factor in the development of Russian society " *RSSR* 38, 1 (Jan. – Feb. '97) pp. 12-14.

⁴ See, Rozalina V. Rgvkina " social roots of the criminalization of Russian society" *RSSR*, 39,4 (July – August 1998) pp. 29-30.

level in Russia.⁵ To apply Huntington's two turnover tests⁶, according to which democratic consolidation is considered to be achieved in new democracies, if the incumbent loses the first election and give up power peacefully and their successors also lose the second election and voluntarily relinquish power. Yeltsin's reelection and his super-presidential constitutional status proves that though Russia may have institutionalized procedural democracy but its democratic consolidation is yet not assured. Besides Russian policy making process is highly erratic, adhoc and personalized, many features of which were amply evident not only in handling the Chechnyan crisis but in many sphere of domestic and foreign policy.⁷ Decision-making lacks co-operation and consensus.

The prospect of democracy in Russia, depends on the way various challenges to democratic consolidation is dealt with. The civil society in Russia too would have to adjust itself. This process is bound to take considerable time and would be problematic considering the long communist rule.⁸ However, though halting, incomplete and inconsistent, Russia's evolution towards Democracy has been real. For those who have insisted that Russians were not culturally or historically prepared to understand, assimilate or practice democracy, the events of recent past have provided sobering correctives. In a country having as vast a land, as heterogeneous a population, as catastrophic an economy and as authoritarian a tradition; as Russia, the transition to democracy is far

⁵ Ibid, pp. 13-17.

⁶ Samuel p. Huntington, The third wave democratization in late twentieth century" (London, 1991) p. 267

⁷ Gail Lapidus, "Russia policymaking; Six years after the collapse of the U.S.S.R." *Post Soviet Affairs* 14, 1 (1998) pp. 10-12.

⁸ Lenoid A. Gordan and Edward. V. Klopov "contemporary socio – political transformation within the bounds of social time" *RSSR* (March – April '98) 40, 2 pp. 9-10.

more complex. The coming years would be the deciding ones in Russia's democratic history.

5.2. Civil – Society in Russia

The period between 1991 to 1997 have seen numerous elite group asserting themselves. There is a trend towards stronger groups which do not need a strong leader. In Russia elite corporatism has taken the place of developed social pluralism. However, elite stability is maintained through concentration of power at the presidential level and its' dispersal at the lower levels.⁹ All sorts of informal connections, decision – making centres and political clubs where positions are harmonized stand in place of under-developed political institutions. An absent system of institutional balancing is made by a system of informal harmonization. Thus all kind of semi-constitutional bodies like security council, defence council, the presidential administration etc. have erupted for the fulfillment of elite aspirations. To summarise in present day Russia, elite appeasement at the cost of civil society is the general trend.

Civil society in Russia today is weak and fragmented. Wide gulf exist between different stratum of population.¹⁰ Dissatisfaction with life has engulfed almost all strata of the pupulation. Infact dissatisfaction is on the increase.¹¹ The marginal segment is the most dissatisfied one and can produce social conflict¹² The closed nature of decision-making process is breeding corruption and criminalisation of politics.

⁹ Geprge Breslauer “ Six years after the collapse of the USSR: Presidential leadership and elite stability”, *Post Soviet Affairs* 14,1 (1998) pp. 10-16.

¹⁰ See Interview with Tatina I. Zalavskaia “ social disequilibrium in the transtional society “*Russian Social Science Review* (Sept. – Oct. 97) 38,5: pp. 72-77.

¹¹ See Table 1, Leonid A Gordan and Edward V. Kilopov “ contemporary socio – political transformation within the bounds of social time”, *Russian Social Science Review* (March – April 99); 40,2' p.

¹² Zinaidi T. Golenka and others, “ The Marginal Stratum” *Russian Social Science Review* (July – August 97) 38,4 pp. 57-61

The stability in civil society in Russia is however maintained through a number of checks and balances and by the carrot and stick policy of the government. Besides the fear of the army and the security services siding with the society (as seen in the past), forces the key actors of the political scene to behave more or less reasonably. Social passivity, political apathy and a desire to keep what they have and avoid risk guarantees stability in a situation that lacks it.

The civil society in Russia though largely weak and un-institutionalized, still is a vital stabilizing force in Russia's socio-political reality. The balancing act of the civil society have made, either a sharp turn from the top, or a revolution from below, hardly possible in the near future. At the same time the fact that Russia's stability is based on social passivity, weakness of leaders and no alternate to ruling elite; does not add optimism, as it can lead to stagnation rather than advancement.

5.3 Capitalism in Russia

Russia's Transition to capitalism is now not a new phenomenon. Infact considerable time has elapsed since the process of economic liberalisation had started. "What sort of Capitalism is developing in Russia"¹³ after this critical period of economic rearrangements. Did Russia gained anything or has lost in the process? What the future holds for? Are some typical questions which comes to our minds.

A brief look at economic statistic portrays a ghastly picture. The real GDP of Russia has fallen by perhaps 48% from 1985 to mid 1996.¹⁴ It is calculated that it will take the Russian economy 17 years to reach

¹³ Philip Hanson, "What sort of capitalism is developing in Russia"? Communist Economics and economic transformation; 5,1 (1997) pp. 27-42.

¹⁴ Reuters (15 July, 1996).

its 1989 level with an average growth rate of 3.3% per year.¹⁵ Rate of inflation remains considerably high, as a matter of arithmetic thus real wages are shrinking. Foreign debt is as high as \$ 123 bn making Russia one of the highest indebted countries of the world.

Then where is this brand of capitalism leading to. The proponents of shock therapy model, argue that the privatization programme remains incomplete, and that the pace of reforms is slow. However, Russian public seems to be fed up with their methods. Mounting economic problems led to recurrent political reshuffling. Lately, it has been realized that the very model of capitalism followed by Russia and inspired by IMF –WB was flawed. This model proposed by the IMF-WB was based on a mythological history of advanced capitalist countries and was not even used in the development of early capitalism in these western states.¹⁶ The insistence on this particular variety of capitalism by WB-IMF and their western patrons, it seems had some ulterior motives and a hidden agenda.

A thoughtful programme and a well laid out policy can work towards institution building and help Russia recover from its' initial shocks. Prospect for economic recovery depends on policy factors especially those affecting flow of saving and investments.¹⁷ The need is to increase investment of domestic and foreign money for production purposes rather than wasting them on consumption and non-generative sectors.¹⁸ Creation of favourable business climate including anti-monopoly policies, building the property and labour market and

¹⁵ The Current growth rate of USA is 3.3%.

¹⁶ A.M. Chenoy The Russian Transition to capitalism (PPH, New Delhi 1998) p.6.

¹⁷ Vladimir Popov – “ Will Russia achieve fast economic growth? Communist economic and economic transformation” 10,4; (1998) pp. 446-447.

¹⁸ Peter Kirkov “ Foreign trade arrangements in Russia and its region: “relying on foreign capital to generate growth” CE & ET 11,1 (1999) pp. 79-95.

improving the security situation would remove the obstacles to efficiency and give inputs to economic growth.¹⁹

Already signs of improvement are visible by late 1997. Inflation is at a reasonable level for a transitional economy; GDP has stopped plummeting promoting, real consumption is holding on. A strange stability²⁰ has come over Russian transitional economy. But for regaining economic vitality a long-term policy has to be evolved. A change in policy is essential. "A change in policy at this stage can mean yet another upheaval for Russian people. But if Russia is to survive a change in policy appears imperative."²¹

The question then remains to be answered is, where Russia is heading? What would be Russia like after a decade or so? The Answer seems to be as many as there are different points of views. Pessimists compare the present Russian scenario to Weimar Germany and argue that the coming up of a dictatorial regime seems to be imperative.²² The prevailing economic and political chaos and the emergence of ultra-nationalist leaders supports this view. However the outcome of the presidential election and recent regional elections discredits the near possibility of a fascist take over. The popularity of ultra-rightist forces is on the decline. The initial triumph of ultra-nationalists have proved to be transitory. But at the same time there is a possibility of extreme right and left political forces joining hands and forming a national socialist

¹⁹ Noding & T Vlasova, "Obstacles to efficiency" CE & ET 10,1 (1998) pp. 20-1 .

²⁰ Richard Ericson, "Six years after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. : The Russian Economy" Post Soviet Affairs; 14,1 (1998) p.4.

²¹ Anuradha Chenoy Russian transition to capitalism (pph. 1998) p. 33.

²² Yegor Gaider, "Russia" T.V Channel (Moscow 12 Dec. '93) also see Stephen D. Shenfield, "The Weimar / Russia comparison : Reflection on Hanson and Kopstein", Post Soviet Affairs 14,4 (Oct. - Nov. '98) pp. 355-68.

coalition.²³ Such a coalition may be equally dictatorial as some other of a purely fascist variety.

An optimist spectrum of political thinkers hope that Russia with the passage of time would be gradually integrated with European capitalism and further with world capitalism.²⁴ They predict that prosperity and abundance would mark the Russian fatherland once democracy and capitalism take its roots in Russia.

Still others point towards the possibility of a communist resurgence economic nationalism and a new wave of statism and collectivism in Russia.

Whither Russia? Thus have many answers. All these answers/predictions are based on a particular approach of the existing state of things in Russia. It is very much possible that the existing state of affairs may itself change drastically leading to an altogether different outcome. The passage of time would make the picture more clear.

²³ Veljko Vujacic "Gennadiy Zyuganov and the third road" Post Sovirt Affairs 12,2 (1996) p. 120

²⁴ Mostly proponents of capitalism (IMF, WB) and economists of Harvard school of economics support this view.

CHAPTER - VI

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

The problem of stability or rather instability has come to the fore ground in many post - socialist countries. The route from totalitarianism to democracy has been full of spikes rather than roses. Yugoslavia disintegrated and is going through a civil war. Former chekoslovakia disintegrated too but on conditions of a civilized divorce. The post-communist development in Romania has become equally prove to conflict. A civil war was the fate of Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and to a certain extent Armenia. The civil war in Tajikistan has not subsided. The developments in Baltic States cannot be called as harmonic either.

Sovereign democratic Russia has been passing through troubled times. Democracy still has to establish its' roots in Russia. Emerging party system is unstable and fragmented, political parties are loosely structured coalitions of groups with little experience of mass mobilization. Disenchantment with reforms, political apathy and economic woes, of the masses have led to the emergence of extremist and fundamentalist forces within the society. Disintegrative tendencies have increased, due to excess concentration of power. Confusion and chaos prevails.

The economic scenario is the most alarming. Inept handling of reforms has led to catastrophic conditions. There has been an estimated 25% contractions in G. D. P. in 1992-94 with further decline of 6% in 1995 and 5% in 1996. The near collapse of rouble during the currency crises of October 1994 left its value at around 4000 to a U.S. dollar.¹ Another

¹ Compared with an official one to one rate only about 5 years back.

aspect of the economy is its acute criminalization. Almost 55% of capital and 70% of privatized enterprise & banks have some type of criminal connection.² The inability of the government to effectively improve and collect taxes has made the state bankrupt. Infact current taxation system has been identified as the biggest obstacle to efficiency.³ Additional critical problem is the lack of effective property laws.⁴ Corruption and criminalization thus has become the hallmark of transitional Russian economy.

In the social sphere disparities are widening. The worst fear of Marx and Lenin has come to stay in Russia. The gulf between 10% most poorly paid and the 10% most highly paid was 26 times in December 1995.⁵ Poverty has become the new feature in rich Russia. The worst effected are children. By an estimate provided by a professor of Medical services almost 80% of upper grade students in school have disproportion's in body development, 53% have aberrations in weight and 1/3 of school students suffer from near sightedness. 85 out of 100 school age girls suffer from abnormal pelvic development.⁶ Lack of funds and continuing woes has created an environment of distrust and antagonism. According to a survey about 50% to 68% of the respondents withheld their trust from institutions of power like the president, state Duma, court, police and the prosecutor's office.⁷ The sharp increase of prices and fees, events accompanying one political crises after another; the rise in the number of people driven to the marginal stratum; decrease

² Izvestia (26 January 1994) side also Delovoi Mir no – 11 (16-24 May '94).

³ N. oding and T. Vlasova – “ obstacles to efficiency” Communist Economies and Economic Transformation ; 10,1 (1998) p. 27

⁴ Richard Ericson – ‘ Six years after the collapse of the U.S.S.R; the Russian Economy” Post – Soviet Affairs, 14,1 (1998) p.2.

⁵ Zinaid . T. Golenka, “Civil Society in Russia” RSSR; 40,1 (Jan – Feb. 1999) p. 13

⁶ Vladimir Andregov, “ What happening to the children's -”Russian Social Science Review, 40,1 (Jan. – Feb. '99)) p. 52.

⁷ Zinaidi . T. Golenka, “Civil Society in Russia “ RSSR ; 40,1 (Jan. – Feb. '99) p. 15

in material living standards; the deterioration of the social sphere coupled with an attempt to impose democracy from the top, has led social scientist to predict an inevitable social explosion.

To stabilize, Russia require new politics. A politics that is a healthy mixture of the old and the new.⁸ The onus lies on the political parties and their leadership to bring Russia out from its current depravity. Infact a data-based study have praised the role of political parties in Russia, for their contributory role in Russia's transition towards democracy.⁹

Democracy has created a certain space for human initiative, the door has been opened to the outside world. There is no room for closed countries in the new millennium. It has been seen that conditions of closed doors, doom a country to stagnation and final degradation. Russia's step towards democratization and liberalization is a positive step in the right direction. The problem lies with Russia's reform strategy. The Russian policy makers lacked clear planning and tact thinking. They failed most fundamentally in not adequately recognizing that radical economic reforms is not just about economics that market transactions take place in political organisation and in a cultural context which are relatively enduring. "Institutional reforms within the public sector must transform the state and simultaneously encourage the growth of a civil society capable of perpetuating and preserving the economic sphere for private enterprise."¹⁰ The over emphasis on

⁸ A.M. Chenoy "Needed new politics: Russia's uncertain future" Frontline (12 Feb. 1993) pp. 53-54.; in a later article Chenoy views that the socio – democratic model of development is the most appropriate path for Russia's development sees. " A.M. Chenoy, " Capitalist transition in Russia : lessons for India" Maistream' (June 3, 1995).

⁹ Robert .G. Moser, " Indepdenents and party formations elite partnership as an intervening variable in Russian politics" Comparative politics; 31,2 (Jan 1999) pp. 147-166.

¹⁰ World Bank "Russian economic reforms: crossing the threshold of structural change (Washington, 1992) p. 5

economic transformation by the reform zealots, without giving time and space for a simultaneous transformation in the social field, created an explosive situation.¹¹ A second fault with the reform strategy was its insistence to built new Russia on the ashes of the old-Soviet system. All symbols of the old system was effectively dismantled without giving time for the new ones to develop, resulting in further erosion of the strength of the state and consequently the civil society. Thus the problem with the reform strategists was the failure to understand the 'social context' of the reforms. Unlike economic changes, prolonged period of time is required for socio-political changes to take place. The acceptability of qualitatively new democratic values by mass consciousness and the resultant establishment and entrenchment of new economic, social and political institutions almost never took place in Russia. Democracy and capitalism were forced from above. All these developments were naturally accompanied by the disillusionment among a considerable segment towards democracy, democratic changes and market economy¹².

Russian economy is poor, it was poor in the years of the soviet power too, but the poverty was somehow camouflaged at that time. Basic minimum needs were fulfilled through state machinaries. The majority of the population was poor and the luxurious life of the nomenklature over the high fences was not visible to them. Democracy has downed these fences, social contrast has come out in the open. Merits of democracy and its game of numbers may ensure a profound revolution in the social structure in favour of the marginal stratum.

¹¹ Nikolai Shmelev, "What do we want to disappear from the world map?" **Russian Social Science Review**, 39, 2 (March – April 98) pp. 39-48.

¹² Leonid A. Gordon and Edward V. Klopov 'contemporary socio-political transformation within the bounds of social time' **Russian Social Science Review** 40,2 (March – April 1999) pp. 16-19.

Political leadership can no longer dare to ignore the masses who are masters in a democracy. Recurrent elections are the key to the responsibility and responsiveness of the regime, to the masses. However, it should be kept in mind that democracy in Russia is still at an experimental level. The democratization of society is a slow-gradual process. Instead of a reckless leap towards democracy, it is necessary to follow the path slowly and gradually, in tune with the country's socio-economic situation and more in line with its state of mass consciousness.¹³ Recent studies have shown that opportunities of democratic development in Russian, political system is quite realistic.¹⁴ The successful holding of parliamentary and presidential elections have illustrated the strengthening of democratic hold in Russia. Elections at regional level and civil bodies, are training the people and making them aware of their rights and duties. The information media is further educating the people, of the importance of their newly found freedom and its utility. The time has come for the political parties and their leadership to act in a more mature way. To keep the interest of the public and the nation above their petty self interest. For Russia's transition from one socio-political formation to another is not a straight road, but a long drawn out painful process. Political parties, being the vehicles of democracy would have to shoulder the burden of the transitory period. Strong and stable parties could easily bear this responsibility while the weak ones will wither away. Russian situation demands such strong political parties so that the transformation process towards democracy and liberalisation could reach its logical conclusion.

¹³ Ibid, p-15

¹⁴ Shestopal – prospects of democracy – p. 29.

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APPENDIX - I

General Elections, 12 Dec. '93

Parties and blocs	Party - List		Total seats*
	% Votes	seats	
Russia's choice	15.38	40	96
Liberal Democratic Party	22.75	59	70
Communist Party of Russian Federation	12.35	32	65
Agrarian Party	7.9	21	47
Yabloko	7.83	20	33
Party of Russian Unity and Concord	6.76	18	27
Women of Russia	8.1	21	25
Democratic Party	5.5	14	21
Civic Union	--	--	18
Russian movement of democratic reforms	--	--	8
Dignity and Charity	--	--	3
Russia's Future	--	--	1
Independents	--	--	30

* Including seats filled by voting in single member constituency.

* Voter Turnout was 54.8%

* Chechnya did not take part in the elections.

APPENDIX – II

General Elections, 17 December 1995

Parties and blocs	Federal party lists			Total♦ Seats
	Votes*	% of votes	Seats	
Communist Party of the Russian Federation	15,432,963	22.73	99	157
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	7,737,431	11.40	50	51
Our Home is Russia	7,009,291	10.33	45	55
Yabloko	4,767,384	7.02	31	45
Women of Russia	3,188,813	4.70	--	3
Communists Working Russia – For the Soviet Union	3,137,406	4.62	--	--
Congress of Russian Communities	2,980,137	4.39	--	5
Party of Working People's Self – government	2,756,954	4.06	--	1
Russia's Democratic Choice – United Democrats	2,674,084	3.94	--	9
Agrarian Party of Russia	2,613,127	3.85	--	20
Derzhava (Power)	1,781,233	2.62	--	--
Forward Russia	1,343,428	1.98	--	3
Power to the People	1,112,873	1.64	--	9
Pamfilova – Gurov – Lysenko	1,106,812	1.63	--	2
Trade Unions and Industrialists of Russia – Union of Labour	1,076,072	1.59	--	--
Ecological Party of Russia	962,195	1.42	--	--
Ivan Rybkin bloc*	769,259	1.13	--	3
Stanislav Govorukhin bloc	688,796	1.01	--	--
My Fatherland	496,276	0.73	--	--
Common Cause	472,615	0.70	--	1
Beer Lovers' Party	428,727	0.63	--	--
Nur	393,513	0.58	--	--
Transformation of the Fatherland	399,654	0.50	--	--
Others‡	2,697,306	3.97	--	9
Independents	--	--	--	77
Total	67,884,200©	100.00*	225	450

* Excluding invalid votes, totaling 1,320,619.

♦ Including seats filled by voting in single-member constituencies, totaling 225.

* Later the Socialist Party of Russia.

‡ There were 20 others groups, of which nine won one seat each in single-member constituencies.

© Including 1,918,151 votes (2.83% of the total) for all federal lists.

APPENDIX – III

Presidential elections, 16 June and 3 July 1996.

Candidate	First ballot	Second ballot
Boris Yeltsin	26,665,495	40,200,000
Gennadii A. Zyuganov	24,211,686	30,110,000
Aleksandr I. Lebed	10,974,736	--
Grigorii A. Yavlinskii	5,550,752	--
Vladimir V. Zhirinovski	4,311,479	--
Svyatoslav N. Fedorov	699,158	--
Mikhail. S Gorbachev	386,069	--
Martin L. Shakkum	277,068	--
Yurii P. Vlasov	151,282	--
Vladimir A. Bryntsalov	123,065	--
Total	73350790	73,900,000*

*Including votes cast against all candidates and (in the first ballot) 308 votes cast for A.G. Tuleyev, who withdrew from the election after early voting had begun.