

YURI PIVOVAROV

POWER INSTITUTIONS IN POST-COMMUNIST RUSSIA: OFFICIAL FORMS AND HIDDEN TRANSCRIPTS

I. POWER IN RUSSIA: OFFICIAL FORMS

The Constitution of 1993 has created a legal framework for the functioning of various political institutions. Unfortunately, the knowledge of the constitutional legal pattern doesn't imply the knowledge and understanding of how these institutions are functioning in real life and what are the actual political developments in Russia. Certainly, the formal legal model of political life in Western countries also considerably differs from the real course of life. Nevertheless, this difference isn't of principal nature in the West, and the political process there can be analyzed on the basis of and proceeding from the legal institutional design of society. But in Russia the gap between the political system envisaged by the Constitution and the actual political system is tremendous: there is a principal difference between them.

In other words, the Russian official institutional system is a masking cover of the real system of power. This isn't, however, a characteristic feature only of today's post-communist Russia.

It was the same way in the USSR and the autocratic era. The events of the last years have shown how stable and unvarying this tradition is. The new Constitution was adopted in 1993. In many respects it repeated and continued the first Russian Constitution by Nikolai II in 1906. And that established historical and legal continuity of two Russias: pre- and post-communist. At the same time, the adoption of the 1993 Constitution meant a drastic break with the political regime of the Soviet Union.

Indeed, the legal-constitutional and institutional system in present-day Russia is strikingly different from the one that dominated in our country throughout the most part of the 20th century. However, the 1993 Constitution based on the principles of the rule of Law, human

rights and division of power and the last Soviet Constitution of 1977 have one surprising similarity. And from a certain point of view, this similarity is much more important than all tremendous differences between the communist and post-communist constitutional orders.

The fact is that the both Constitutions (of 1977 and 1993) have practically nothing to say about those government bodies that play a decisive role in the government system. Under the Soviet power that was the CPSU Central Committee, nowadays this is the President Administration. There is, however, one microscopic distinction. While the 1977 Constitution didn't even mention the CPSU Central Committee, the Constitution now in force makes reference to the Administration of President. But what kind of reference it is! The article says: The President... forms his Administration.... And that is all which is said about the institution that governs in today's Russia. And this is not occasional. The absence of the legal constitutional status gives possibility for Russia's rulers to use this body most efficiently for their own benefit. This body is the main instrument used to govern the country by the person who personifies the power in Russia in the given period. And with the help of this instrument this person manages to overcome juridical limitations imposed on him by the Constitution.

In is also necessary to note that the formation of such a body is not a political innovation of the 20th century. For many centuries there have always been special organs attached to persons in power in Russia: the Tsar Court — the Emperor's Office — the CPSU Central Committee — the Administration of President. This is an approximate historical series of institutions of this kind. An analysis of their activities and an adequate understanding of their nature are a necessary condition for studying the system of government in Russia since, I'd like to repeat it once again, the most vital for the country decisions are considered and adopted by these institutions.

Analysing Russia's political system, prominent American historian and politologist G.V. Hamburg pointed out two main types of political decision-making. First — consultative constitutionalism (or consultative=constitutional political system). Here division of power into legislative, executive and legal is made. Executive power is subordinated to legal, controlled on legal basis and limited through the system of meetings with other government institutions.

Second — consultative bureaucratism (or consultative bureaucratic system). The

principle of division of powers here been made inconsistently and is far from being finished. The system functions in the following way: before declaring its will a law, executive power consults with formal institutions. Consultative bureaucratic bodies, naturally, have no constitutional power to limit executive power; the latter might be limited by public opinion, elite or some influential figures. Thus, executive power, to a certain extent, is forced to find consensus with public opinion. In consultative —bureaucratic system political power is practically divided between executive bodies and other, often informal, institutions.

II. POWER IN RUSSIA: HIDDEN TRANSCRIPTS

1) THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESIDENT

A.Chubais should be considered creator of the Administration in its present form. In 1996 he formulated its main goals: control over executive power bodies (government, first and foremost), regional policy, creating and keeping an attractive image of the president and power in general. The goal, formulated by A.Chubais, was: to counterbalance an amorphous and create a dynamic structure capable of immediate reacting in critical situations.

The Administration is sometimes called a shadow cabinet. But it is not fact. It is< as has already been noted a second edition of the CPSU Central Committee (CC). The Administration, like of Central Committee, controls everything but it is not responsible for anything at all. As compared to other influential Russian institutions, the Administration has a rather limited and indirect access to financial sources (including the presidential reserve fund, that is practically in the hands of the Administration officials). However, this weakness is more than compensated by the possibility of using real power presidential potentialities for its aims.

Michail Komissar, being the Deputy Head of the Administration for rather a long time, points out: We exercise political guidance of the government. And what is especially important, this body determines cadre policy in many aspects. Thus, the Administration presents to the president nominees for vice-premiers and ministers. No matter that Art.112 of the Constitution gives this right to the Chairman of the Government. Besides, all the official papers, issued by the

government, are vised in the Administration. In this sense the CC of the CPSU practice has been completely preserved. It is noteworthy that the work on the preparation of the budget has been lately supervised by the Administration.

2) THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The Security Council (headed by the Council Secretary who is practically subordinated to the head of the Administration of President) is another very important government body, working in close contact with the Administration of President. From the constitutional and legal point of view the Security Council has a higher status than the Administration of President (in reality it is vice versa, of course). It is stated in the Constitution: President forms and heads the Security Council of the Russian Federation, whose status is determined by the federal law (art.83). However, it is not this high legal level that makes the Security Council one of the most influential centers in decision-making. Closeness to the President and his Administration — these are the main trump cards of the Security Council. The main activities of this Institute are its apparatus's work (experts and official), but not its members' rare meetings (the chairman of the governments, chairmen of both houses of the Federal Meeting et al. are embers of the Council).

The Council worked most actively in 1998, when it was headed by a well-known and experienced administrator A.Kokoshin. Under his leadership the Council has started turning into constantly operating headquarters managing crisis situations in the country. Its task is to coordinate power and force structures.

For instance, the fact that events in the Northern Caucasus do not develop (at least, till now) according to Chechen variant is the Council's great merit. Russia's break down in Chechnya conflict (I don't take ethical aspects of this conflict) is to a great extent connected with the fact that the actions of force, legal, and other departments lacked not only coordination, but they often acted in opposite directions. In 1998 Daghestan conflict A.Kokoshin managed to differentiate the zones of responsibility of each department and work out the scheme of their effective the command over all the force structures, it had also to take necessary measures in

stabilizing the situation in the region; the army has to provide for transport operations and communications).

Besides, the Security Council is gradually becoming a body coordinating all the analytical work on forecasting possible crises. As the crisis is an immanent quality of the present situation in Russia, the Council is doomed to become one of the most influential power structures in the Country. This will be also favoured by the fact that lately there has been refuilt the Commission on Military Construction (read: the formation of new Russian army). Though the Commission is formally headed by the Chairman of the Government, all the organizational and analytical work is given to the Security Council apparatus.

3) THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN POLICY

This Council was created by president B.Yeltsin's decree on foreign policy issues in late December 1995. The Council is headed by the president; the very existence of the Council, as it is noted in the decree, is the realization of the Russian Federation president's authorities in foreign policy. The members of the Council are ministers of foreign affairs, defense, finance, heads of the Federal Security Service (FSB), the Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS), the Federal Border Service and the Adviser of the President on Foreign Policy. The Council's meetings are presided by the president; meetings should take place once in two months. Decisions are taken by simple majority on condition minimum half the members is present. These decisions do not have legitimate force, and are recommendations for the president. The Council's apparatus forms a part of the President Administration.

According to the decree, the Council should fulfil the following functions: to work out recommendations on principal issues of foreign policy; to promote coordination of federal government bodies' activities in the field of foreign policy; to inform the president on foreign political issues of federal government bodies' activities; to analyze and forecast the trends in development of the world situation; to study Russian public opinion in foreign policy; to promote the development of normative acts in foreign policy.

4) THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL

The Council was created in 1993 by the Decree of the President B.Yeltsin and became a successor of the Presidential Consultative Council that acted in 1992.

The main tasks of the Council are as following: elaboration of the strategic overtures in internal and foreign policy; creation of mechanisms for an effective realization of national development strategy; preparation of proposals on improving the operation of executive power bodies; shaping of President's position on political parties, public movements and organizations.

The Council consists of the chairman — the RF President, the deputy chairman and 23 members, among them top state official, scientists and president's assistants. The Council is to hold meeting not less rare than once a month. Its meetings are organized by the Administration of President.

4) LOBBIESTS

Personal connections, "acquaintances" with decision-makers play a great role in Russian political process. It's common knowledge that in the West lobbyist groups are exceedingly powerful and play a noticeable role in politics. However, if in Western countries these groups, first and foremost, try to realize their goals through various channels of influence on governmental and parliamentary structures, in Russia lobbyists and representatives of government bodies are often the same people. The most important index of lobbyist groups' influence is the level of their representation in executive power.

To a great extent the political process in contemporary Russia is the process of struggle and rivalry among different lobbyist groups. The struggle for gaining access to material and financial resources, for adopting the laws which would put in preferential position those spheres of economy that are protected by this particular lobbyist group, the struggle for privileged positions under privatization of these or those economic establishments. Besides, and this should

be particularly stressed, power structures seek financial support of the lobbyist groups. So to say, they compete for possibility of becoming an object of lobbyism.

In the Soviet Union the lobbyist groups protecting interests of the military-industrial complex (MIC) and heavy industry in general traditionally enjoyed the greatest influence). Nowadays, under conditions of collapse and disintegration of Russia's economy, the influence of these groups has drastically decreased. The only serious achievement of these forces in the 1990s was that in 1996 Avto VAZ (the largest Russian automobile concern) general director Vladimir Kadannikov was appointed, the first vice-premier of the Russian government. But he did not occupy this post long.

The 1997 liquidation of the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Defence Industry and Armaments testified to falling influence of MIC generals and of heavy industry.

On the contrary, lobbyist groups, representing interests of raw materials branches of the Russian economy, have recently become much stronger, first and foremost, those of the oil-gas complex, giving the country about half of hard currency and 40 percent of tax receipts.. Gas lobbies' position is especially strong. And it is no mere chance. Russia possesses 36 per cent of explored world gas reserves. It makes the owners of Russian gas a powerful political grouping. The elite of gas industry is the most disciplined and hierarchical. The peak of its influence is the period of Victor Chernomyrdin's premiership (December 1992-March 1998).

III. DIVISION OF POWERS IN RUSSIA

The principle of division of powers is constitutive for contemporary democracy. Metaphorically speaking, it is so indisputable today as the God's existence was indisputable in the Middle Ages. At the same time, we cannot but agree with the opinion of A.Valenzuela, famous American scholar and professor of Georgetown University, who writes that many people believe that all democratic laws and procedures are built according to one and the same pattern, independent of where they are realized, that all structural characteristics of representative power are constants and their realization leads to the same (equal) results in all communities. These assumptions merely have no right to existence. Ways of formal and informal political organizing of democratic regimes are various, as well as those conditions in which these regimes are functioning. And farther he adds: Various modes of institutional organization of society are not neutral: they may correspond to different social conditions to a greater or less degree, increasing or diminishing probability of democratic consolidation and manageability of society.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation has clearly and precisely fixed the principle of power division. Art.1 says: The Russian Federation — Russia is a democratic federal law — governed state with a republican form of government. Art.10 reads as follows: State power in the Russian Federation is exercised on the basis of its division into legislative executive, and judicial authority. Leading Russian jurists (it seems!) also understand the essence of the principle clearly and precisely. Thus, the authors of the Commentaries to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, prepared by the influential and authoritative (competent) Institute of Legislation and Comparative Jurisprudence at the Russian Federation Government, write: Democratic political regime can be established in a state if functions of state power are divided among independent government bodies. Since there are three main functions of state power — legislative, executive, and judicial, each of these functions should be exercised independently by an appropriate government body. The combining of legislative, executive, and judicial functions in the work of a single government body leads, however, to the excessive concentration of power which creates a breeding-ground for establishing a dictatorial political regime in a country.

However, everything is not so simple, both in the theory (developed by Russian lawyers and politologists) and in Russian practice (political and legal). We can read in the above-mentioned Commentary to the Constitution the following: The President of the Russian Federation is outside the system of the power division. Specialists from the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Jurisprudence (and their opinion in fact represents the viewpoint of the Russian leaders, only presented in the legal form) assert that the institute of presidency, being outside or over the system of power division, ensures necessary coordination of various branches of authority enabling an unceasing operation of the whole government apparatus.

It stands to reason that it is a gross violation of the principle of the power division. It is worth mentioning James Madison's words (Federalist, N 18, February 1, 1788) who is one of the pillars of contemporary constitutionalism: To maintain in practice the degree of power division which is required to preserve free governing, it will be necessary to combine and mix these departments in such a way so that each of them has a constitutional control over others

Powers befitting one department should not be directly and in full volume exercised by one of other departments. It is equally evident that no government department should have overwhelming influence, either direct or indirect, on other departments in exercising powers relevant to each of them Authority is inclined, by its very nature, to interfere into alien spheres, and, to keep it from overstepping its established limits, grave methods and measures are required. It is evident that within the system of power division, not a single official (or personified by him authority, or simply authority) cannot stand outside or over this system.

We can state that the Constitution of the Russian Federation includes and fixes two power systems: the division of power and super-presidency, the last one being over all the authorities, so to say a super-authority personified by one person and supported by special institutions created, in most cases, ad hominem. Undoubtedly, such a structure cannot but be a constant source for instability of the political regime. And of course leading Russian scholars cannot but understand this fact which is illustrated by the following example: Art.90 of the Constitution indicates that the president's lawmaking is, so to say, of by-law character. Obviously, it is far from being so in practice. That is why the authors of the already cited Commentary cautiously acknowledge that the constitutional formulation of the given requirement

and the lack in the Constitution of an enumeration of issues liable to be regulated only by the law allow to give a rather wide interpretation of the president's lawmaking.

A group of lawyers from the State and Law Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences that is also a competent and influential establishment and many of its staff have been recruited to big policy, who are authors of another Commentary to the Constitution, write: Now the president appears not a component part, peak, or personification of the executive power, but as a strong, influential, and endowed with wide powers head of the state. At the same time, they believe that this is an inevitable necessity predetermined by the recognition of the principle of division of power so to say, keeping in balance the entire State mechanism. The president realizes this destination without substituting and moving aside other authorities, without infringing upon their independence and interfering into their Constitutional powers.

However, the political reality contradicts this assertion. By outstripping in issuing normative acts, the president shoves aside the legislature. And by issuing decrees on questions pertaining to the government's competence, in many respects he performs the duties of the executive power.

Political system, with the institute of presidency excluded from the division of power is called delegative democracy by contemporary science. This system is adequately described by famous politologist, Professor of Notre Dame University (U.S.A.) G.O'Donell. Delegative democracies are based on the premise that the victory at presidential elections gives the right to the winner to govern the country to his own discretion. And in doing so he is limited only by conditions of the existing power relations and the term of office by the Constitution. The president is looked upon as an embodiment of the nation, the main custodian and connoisseur of its interests. It is supposed that this figure takes paternal care of the entire nation, and a political basis for the president should be such a movement that can overcome factionalism and reconcile political parties. As a rule, in countries of delegative democracy a candidate for the presidency assures that he is above political parties and group interests. Can it be otherwise for the one who is an embodiment of the entire Nation? From this standpoint, other institutions — the judiciary and legislature — are only a hindrance, a load to the advantages given by the status of

a democratically elected president on the internal and international arenas. Accountability to such institutions seems to be an obstacle to a full execution of power delegated to the president.

The delegative democracy in Russian is, undoubtedly, very different from the dominating in the West representative democracy or institutionalized democracy. The different nature of delegative and representative — institutionalized democracies reveals itself especially clearly in two different types of accountability of executive power bodies. According to G.O'Donnell's words, under institutionalized democracy, accountability is realized not only vertically — to the electorate, but also horizontally — in the system of relatively autonomous authorities (other institutions) which can pose a question about a proper fulfillment of duties by a particular official and even punish him. Representativity and accountability create an additional, republican dimension of democracy: existence and careful maintenance of a boundary between public and private interests of those who are in power. Vertical accountability, alongside with the right to form parties and influence public opinion, exists both in representative and delegative democracies. But horizontal accountability, characteristic of representative democracy, is extremely weak or absent in delegative democracy. Furthermore, institutions ensuring horizontal accountability are considered by delegative presidents as an unnecessary hindrance to their mission, so they block the development of such institutions by all means.

Blocking of horizontal accountability, which presupposes legislative supervision over executive power bodies, is justified, as a rule, by effectiveness of decision-making. Nevertheless, delegative democracy is hardly effective for solving social, political, and economic tasks facing society. And the Russia's example fully confirms this conclusion. There is a curious combination of the government's might and powerlessness, writes G.O'Donnell about the Russian situation. The might begins with the introduction of the first economic programs, continuing as a wave of decisions aimed at their realization and unavoidable correction of their negative consequences. This very brightly characterizes an anti-institutional direction of delegative democracy, consolidating the custom of distinctly marked personalization of powers and their concentration in the hands of executive authorities. The seamy side of this is an extreme ineffectiveness of implementing these decisions as efficient and long-lasting foundations of public life. It is known that under institutionalized democracy decisions are taken slowly. But having

been taken, they are implemented rather quickly. Contrary to this, under delegative democracy we can watch feverish decision-making. Implementation of these hastily one-sided decrees is hardly probable since they affect important politically organized interests. In the context of a severe crisis and growing discontent, they resort to a new series of decisions which are even more unlikely to be realized since in the various strata of society there is already an experience of counter-acting the previous decisions. At the same time, most of political, social, and economic subjects can declare their declining all responsibility for the mode of this decision-making.

The principal difference in the functioning of representative and delegative systems can be easily illustrated by the work of parliament's committees (that have in addition, control over executive power bodies and government bureaucracy). In Russia (with its delegative democracy) these committees formally have wide, but extremely amorphous powers and cannot count on receiving effective support from the government's bureaucracy. In contrast to this, in the U.S.A. the committees of supreme legislative bodies have close links with top officials of the government departments which are under their jurisdiction. American politologist M. Meddy called the parliament's committees of his country small quasi governments.

They limit the president's omnipotence strengthen business ties between the officials and lawmakers. As far as Russia is concerned, the civil Bureaucracy relies mainly on the president, at the same time ignoring the representative power bodies.

Basing on the above — said, one can name political regime of Russia as the mass plebiscit leader democracy. If we are going to characterize the Russian power system using Max Weber's notions, we can say that the present regime is an intermediate one between the rational, law-governed and charismatic regimes. The main role here belongs to the president; the legal source of his power is plebiscit in its essence (i.e. the nation-wide yes of no voting, vote or lose, vote with heart, etc.). Ideology (I put this word in commas because formally in the given context there is no ideology in contemporary Russia) of such a regime means that during the transition period such a president can ensure national integration, supreme control over the state administrative machine and realization of reforms in the system itself. He is entitled to adopt

personally (in practice under the pressure of his surrounding), without representative democratic institutions and norms, significant decisions of national scale appealing to people's will.

The regime is inwardly unstable being a hybrid mixture of institutions hardly combined with each other (charismatic and bureaucratic ones), thus reflecting their weakest sides. The desire of the plebiscit president to play the role of a charismatic leader leads to that his administration staff is formed (first of all) on the principles of personal devotion, while their technical training is of secondary importance. The regime rejects the system of formal rules (abstract legal principles), as well as rational law-making based on the mentioned principles. Generally, this regime it is suspicious to legal thinking.

The grounds for the shaping and transformation of the given regime are connected with material and status interests of president's surrounding, his administrative staff, favorites, party functionaries, etc. The modern Russian regime uses the so-called tactics of oriented corruption. The phenomenon of oriented corruption serves as technical means to consolidate power in hands of the clique that has won (the term clique is used in the neutral and scientific meaning), and not only distributes the posts in reward for fidelity, but also stimulates the just desire of its adherents to be doing well in their new places.

IV. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CENTER AND THE REGIONS.

The problem of the relations between the Center and the regions is of crucial importance for the contemporary political process in Russia. It is precisely through the prysm of these relations one can adequately understand the transformation of the nature of Russian power in the 1990s.

In fact during the last years their occurred several microrevolutions in the course of which the relations between the Center and the subjects of federation changed substantially. Within the framework of the regional policies (and politics) one can fix several periods connected with these microrevolutions and their consequences. In each of these periods there was established a certain balance in relations between the centers of power in the regions, a redistribution of

powers between the regions and the Center, took place and the way of legitimization of the regional power changed.

The first revolution took place in 1990. It was connected with the elections in the new soviets on the alternative basis and with the strengthening of the power of the soviets at the expense of power of CPSU in the regions. The revolution of 1991 (a second one) demolished communist power as such; instead of this one there was established power of the Head of Administration appointed by Moscow. But this led in the regions to the «two powers» situation of, because the soviets as the legislative power had much power. There emerged a contradiction and a conflict between the soviets and executive power (Heads of Administration), which was an element of the power Presidential vertical (in the republics-subjects of the Russian Federation step by step Presidential form of rule was being introduced).

As a result of the third revolution, that of 1993, the Soviet power was destroyed and changed by a new legislative power which had less rights than the soviet did. New center of power became a governor appointed by the President.

In 1996 a new revolution - a «quite» one took place in the regions. In Moscow a new Soviet of Federation was convoked. Soviet of Federation is an upper chamber of the Russian Parliament. According the Constitution it's members are the highest representatives of legislative and executive power of the subjects of federation. This event became a stimulus for the transformation of the regional elite into autonomous and consolidated subject of political process. After this event in the majority of the regions new elections of the heads of executive power took place. Thus the governors were transformed from Yeltzin's appointees into "minipresidents". It was a serious change of their political quality; more than that from the point of view of legitimacy of power the provinces (oblast) and territories (kraj) caught up with the republics. It was a beginning of a new period of regional political process, the main agents of it were from now on were governors elected by all population of their respective regions. Among such governors there were many came to power being in opposition to Yeltzin and supported by the Communist party and its allies.

Direct elections of the heads of executive power in the regions created absolutely new conditions for the further development of relations between the Center and the subjects of

federation. Today's governors feel themselves much more free in the relations with Moscow. Their legitimacy is confirmed by the fact of their election "by all people", and that is why they are "responsible" before the voters. Real life makes the governors to pursue autonomous social and economic policy and defend their «territories» from Moscow's interference.

During the last three years the Russian regional elite changed its character also on the level of personalities, there appeared many new figures. Injection of "a fresh blood" made regional groups more dynamic.

There is a significant change in the political-ideological structure of the governors' corps. As I said earlier the majority of the new governors were supported by communists and nationalists. It is also should be noted that many «acting» governors, who won the new elections, and kept their office did this by «appropriating» the slogans the Left. That is why the weakening of the liberals' positions in the Russian regional elite characterizes not only those regions where the elections were won by the candidates nominated by the Communist party. In some cases elite more dynamic and oriented onto defence of their own interests. More than fifty out of eighty eight of the regional leaders took their positions after the elections of 1999. The renovation of the regional leaders was especially pronounced in the «Russian» regions of federation (forty out of fifty five). The real problem of the relations between the Center and the new governors is that, first, the last ones are not under the control of Moscovian groups and groupings, and, second, the majority of the governors do not take part in any of the largest - on and of the federal level - political and economic groups of interest; the governors have no obligations to these the victors had to take in their administrations the representatives of the opposition as a payment for their support.

As a result extremely swiftly the regional elite transformed itself into real subject of the Russian political process. Having acquired such a new quality it began to look for a uniting platform to present itself as an autonomous force. Of special importance is the fact that the «growth of selfconsciousness» of the regional power elite is developing from below. Earlier the attempts of integration of regional elite were made from above to strengthen the federal power in the eve of the elections and in the interests of certain Moscovian groups.

One of the major factors of strengthening of the unity of regional elite is «governors' solidarity» which it demonstrates. One can remember consensus type decisions of the Soviet of Federation taken to spite federal authorities (the questions of restitution, confirmation of the judges of the Constitutional Court, raise of minimal level of pensions etc.). A new feature of time is the development of horizontal ties between the subjects of federation. Until now regional leaders could not organize effectively working horizontal ties. Moscow successfully blocked their aspirations to unite forces, pushed one regions against the others using their egoistic aims. But the instability of political situation in the Center and the inadequacy of the federal policy to the regional interests made regions to seek rapprochement. Now the regions more and more often conclude bilateral agreements; interregional associations function more and more actively.

And what about the Center? What were and are his reactions onto substantial transformation in its relations with the regions and onto the strengthening of regional elites' autonomy? It will not be a great exaggeration to say that the Center has no effective regional policy. More than that different representatives of federal authorities have different views on the model of relations between the Center and the regions.

“Liberal” approach to the solution of this problem is personified by the ex-premier Victor Chernomyrdin. According to this approach regional leaders are recognized as equal partners of federal power; balance of interests is established between the Center and the regions and the central role is to be played by the relations of consensus type, by looking for mutually beneficial solutions both in political and economic spheres. Great attention is paid onto the establishment of good and friendly relations between the Premier and regional leaders. All this means neither fundamental change in the existing state model nor limitation of power ambitions of provincial elite (the struggle against so called «new feudalism»). The liberal approach is based on the search for an elite consensus within the framework of loose and asymmetrical federation. This type of policy was more or less successfully realized until 1996.

“Microrevolution” of 1996 led to the need of other type of regional policy of the Center (from the point of view of interests of the Center itself). The reaction onto the growth of autonomy of the regional leaders came as a policy of recentralization. It is connected with Anatoly Chubais. Recentralization policy means construction of such a political mechanism

which limits regional power, in other words it is the mechanism of checks and balances in the system «The Center - the regions».

The essence of the «centralist» regional policy is the establishment of real control over the process of privatization in the subjects of federation.

Chubais understands it very well that the fact who - Moscow or local authorities - controls the process of privatization, determines the distribution of the best «pieces» of property. It is very easy for the «young reformers» headed by Chubais to pursue such a course. In contrast to Chernomyrdin they have no special personal relations (often for many years) with the governors. Correspondingly they have no moral limitations. That is why they very easily became the leaders of «counterrevolution», aimed to minimize the consequences of «the regional revolution» of 1996.

Centralizing plans of the Chubais's group had to do not only with the territories (kraj) or provinces; in fact it was a beginning of an attack directed against national republics which had privileges according to the Constitution. It is not coincidence that when the attack began influential Moscow daily "Izvestiya" published an article (a comment on a visit of Chubais to Yakutiya) "Chubais, gatherer of the Russian lands". Of course there was the irony and the joke in this title, but there is a measure of truth in every joke.

The "liberals" realized that they would not be able to control the privatization process in a decentralized state. That is why they immediately transformed themselves into the "statiers" ("gosudarstvenniki"). Thus the doctrine of "the new Russian centralism" (or of "the centralism of the new Russians") was born. At the basis of this doctrine there lies a policy of containment of regional executive power by development and support of some other regional power institutions. For example, support of the mayor of the city and making him quarrel with the governor. In fact this is a course directed at the containment of powers of the subjects of federation from below, through and by the organs of local selfgovernment.

Another variant of containment policy is the creation of a power body parallel to that of governor's power. There were attempts to activate the institute of the President's representative in the subjects of federation.

As for the president Boris Yeltzin, he, as always, occupied a position “above the fight”. In the last months he in fact confirmed, first, his strategic course aiming at the creation of a contractual federation, and, second, priority of his relations with the governors and with the presidents of republics. In spite of all evident weaknesses of such a policy one should admit: in the context of existing political relations such a course enabled the federal center to prolong maximally the process of “federal building”. This course also enabled the Center to make a treaty on delimitation of authorities a kind of cake given to this or that regional leader as a gratitude for the service or as a form of political advance. President Yeltzin began to fulfil the role of political arbiter who regulates the relations between the Center and the regions. That means that the President now is above not only the regions, but also above the Center!

It is no doubt that the position of B.Yeltzin is different from both «liberal approach» of V.Chernomyrdin and “centralizing approach” of A.Chubais. At the same time elements of both approaches are present in the Yeltzin’s position. Yet Yeltzin’s policy is much more skillful and has many nuances. It presupposes construction of complex political combinations (both of personal and institutional character). Here we can see an orientation towards consensus, towards personal ties; the use of method of “containment”, limitation of the power of “regional barons” through and by organization of some kind of “antipower” bodies (organs).

V. ANALYTICAL EXPERT CENTERS

Analytical expert centers exert definite and even considerable influence on the process of elaborating and making political decisions. It is connected with the fact that, first the leaders of such centers have as a rule personal close links with the representatives of the supreme power. Second, the centers are created in order to prepare and adopt the major political decisions in the shade, far from public. Third, such analytical and expert centers really accumulate the best intellectual forces of the country and fourth, not always but rather often, the centers were founded simply to provide jobs to those politicians who for some reasons had resigned from official top posts of the country at that time.

1) THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

(INBSP)

The Institute was founded in 1991 (its legal status public organization). The INBSP President is Prof. Serguei Blagovolin, member of the Presidential Council, ex-general director of the Ist Program of the Russian TV (ORT). The main research directions are political, economic, military, and social aspects of national security and strategic studies. INBSP performs orders of leading Russian ministries and departments and elaborates military reforms, national security concepts and conversion programs.

2) INTERNATIONAL FUND OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REFORMS

The Fund was set up in 1990 on the initiative of the USSR Council of Ministers. Its research field is the strategy of socio-economic and political reforms in Russia. It has a legal status of a public organization. Its president is Martin Shakkum. The Fund's administration includes such well-known politicians as Vadim Bakatin, Victor Mishin, Leonid Abalkin, Andranik Migranyan, Sergei Glaziev, Boris Gromov, Yuri Maslyukov, Nikolai Ryzhkov, Stepan Sitaryan, Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, and Nikolai Shmelev.

The Fund has a wide network of branches in large Russian cities and abroad (in the USA, Great Britain, Germany and so forth).

The Reform takes a critical stand on the political and economic course carried out in our country in the 1990s. At the same time, the Fund keeps on offering economic programs for overcoming the crisis to the Russian leaders. The Fund had a considerable influence in the period of Yevgeny Prymakov's premiership.

3) INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES (INOBS)

The Institute was founded in 1992. It is a private establishment and its research field is defence issues. Its general director is Victor Surikov. The Institute consists of four centers engaged in atomic research, defence studies, cosmic research, and studies in the field of defence industry.

INOBS performs orders of the RJ Defence Ministry, RF State Committee of Defence Industry, RF Atomic Industry Ministry, and Russian Cosmic Agency.

4) INSTITUTE FOR TRANSITION PERIOD ECONOMY (IEPP)

The Institute was founded in 1992 and has a legal status of a public organization. It is headed by Yegor Gaidar. Its research field is tendencies and prospects of economic, socio-economic and political-economic processes in today's Russia.

IEPP's tasks include analytical and methodological provision of the government and other government bodies and economic consulting of local authorities. IEPP makes examination of draft government's resolutions and legislative acts, and its experts participate in elaborating government's programs. Annually IEPP prepares over 100 analytical commentaries scientific reports, draft documents and other types of materials for the President's Administration, the government, and committees of the State Duma and the Federation Council. It also holds up to one hundred consultation annually for these bodies and major banks and international organizations (the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development).

The Institute works on orders of RF republics and regions: makes an all-round evaluation of their export-import potentials, elaborates programs for regions' development makes examination of and prepares innovations projects, and also prepares necessary documents for creating free economic zones.

5) THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRE FOR PUBLIC OPINION STUDIES (VTSIOM)

Sphere of studies — public opinion and marketing. The center was created in 1988 and has a legal status of public organization. It is the largest organization in Russia systematic ally studying public opinion by mass polls. It is also a basic sociological center of the President's administration. Its President is academician Tatyana Zaslavskaya, and its Directors — Prof. Yuri Levada.

6) HUMANITARIAN AND POLITOLOGICAL CENTER STRATEGY

The center was founded in 1993. Its President is deputy of the State Duma Gennadi Burbulis. In the early 1990s he was Boris Yeltsin's favorite. In spite of the loss of the former influence, he preserved definite ties and possibilities to exert influence on political process (the centre's legal status — public organization). The main attention is paid to an analysis and forecasting of political situation, interaction of engaged in reforms parties and movements, civil society's strata and authorities; ensuring of non-formal contacts elites. By G.Burbulis's words, strategy tries to work out civilized ways of influencing authorities and their decision-making, by of society.

Members of the strategy administration are such well-known liberal politicians and scientists as Sergei Krasavchenko, Yakov Urinson, Egor Gaidar, Sergei Kovalev, Nikolai Shmelev, Vladislav Starkov, Valeri Tishkov, and others.

7) THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMANITARIAN AND POLITICAL STUDIES (IGPI)

The Institute was founded in 1990 (its legal status — an international public organization). It is a successor of the Moscow Public Bureau for information exchange (M-BIO) — the first in the USSR independent (non-governmental) coordination and information center for public movements. The main accent is put on the analysis of ethno-political processes. The chairman of the IGPT Council is Vyacheslav Igrunov, one of the leaders of Yabloko political movements

(the Apple) and the fraction of the same name in the State Duma. IGPI is one of the most important political and ideological, scientific and information centers supporting Grigori Yavlinski.

8) THE RUSSIAN INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES (RISS)

Its research fields are general problems of national security, Russia's relations with foreign countries, the character and trends of various global and regional military-political and economic processes, and an analysis and prediction of crisis situations in individual countries and regions of the world.

RISS was set up by Yeltsin's decree in February 1992 as a State research institution. The object of its creation was to provide Russian supreme governmental bodies with relevant information and analytical materials. The RISS Director is Yevgeni Kozhokin, an ex-deputy of the former RF Supreme Soviet. As a deputy, Yevgeni Kozhokin held high posts at the Supreme Soviet: he was the Chairman of the Subcommittee for Foreign Affairs at the Committee for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations and then the Chairman of the Subcommittee for International Security and Intelligence at the Defence and Security Committee.

9) THE WORKING CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC REFORMS AT THE RF GOVERNMENT (WCER).

Its research fields are microeconomics, social problems, corporate management and financing, and regional economy. It was founded in November 1991 by a Government's order and has a juridical status of a State body.

WCER is actively participating in the elaboration of the Russian Government's economic course and fulfils orders of the President Administration and some ministries.

10) "RUSSIAN INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE OF THE STUDY OF SOCIAL AND NATIONAL PROBLEMS

The institute was organized in 1991 on the basis of The Institute of Marxism-Leninism. The sphere of its research - political science, sociology, economic history of Russia, and the analysis of conflicts. General director of the institute - Mikhail Gorshkov. Having legal status of public organization the Institute works the state and nonstate organizations; among the last ones there are large Russian and foreign companies and banks. The institute has its own all-Russian monitoring network; it also has at its disposal a data base of all-Russian monitoring of public opinion since 1992.

11) PUBLIC OPINION STUDY SERVICE "VOX POPULI"

"Vox populi" was founded in 1989 and has a legal status of private organization. Its president, founder, and owner is professor Boris Grushin. The sphere of research - sociological analysis of electoral behavior, of social and economic problems, of national relations and mass communication. "Vox populi" works for The Administration of President of Russian Federation, federal organs of legislative and executive power, political parties, mass media, banks, commercial structures. Analytical production of this service is mainly of exclusive character and represented in the form of the information reports prepared according to monitoring of public opinion.

"Vox populi" is a constant participant of the seminars organized by Analytical Department of The Administration of President. As a rule the Kremlin use the service while preparing for the most important elections (Duma, presidential).

12) THE COUNCIL FOR FOREIGN AND DEFENCE POLICY (SVOP).

The Council was founded as a nongovernmental organ of the most influential politicians, state officials, representatives of mass media, and scholars. Its aim is to participate and help

actively in the elaboration and realization of strategic approaches to foreign and defence policies of Russia. Legal status - public organization; chairman - Sergey Karaganov, member of Presidential Council, deputy director of the Institute of European studies (Russian Academy of Sciences). Among the members SVOP there are also such influential figures of the Russian politics as Yuri Boldyrev, Alexander Vladislavlev, Arkady Volsky, Konstantin Zatulin, Andrei Kokoshin, Alexander Kotenkov, Vladimir Lukin, Igor Malashenko, Sergey Stepashin, Vitaly Tretyakov, Sergey Shahray, Grigori Yavlinsky and others.

SVOP works in cooperation with State Duma, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Defence Ministry, Ministry of Atomic Energy.

13) “PUBLIC OPINION” FOUNDATION.

“Public opinion” was founded in 1991 for social and marketing research based on mass selective questioning of different groups of population in Russia and CIS. Legal status of the foundation - public organization. General director - Alexander Oslon, director of the Analytical center - Igor Klyamkin.

Twice per month the foundation organizes all-Russian questioning of population. «Public opinion» works in cooperation with The Administration of President, with one of the most influential Russian TV channel NTV, and with The State committee of the properties.

14) “RUSSIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CENTER” (ROPTS) FOUNDATION.

This foundation was established as a state organization by the order of the President of the Russian Federation in 1991. Now it is a public foundation; its President is Alexey Salmin, member of Presidential council. ROPTs has its filials in the largest Russian cities and works in cooperation of The Administration of the President of the Russian Federation. Playing a significant role in the elaboration of the policy, the Foundation is one of the most important intellectual and political centers of Russia; very often it functions as a kind of «playground» for the analysis of different political scenarios.

15) “THE CENTER OF POLITICAL TECHNOLOGIES” FOUNDATION.

This “Center” has a legal status of public foundation. General director - Igor Bunin. The foundation realizes several constant programs:

1. Monitoring of current political, social, and economic situation (this one includes preparation of information-analytical materials on the most acute problems of Russia; short-term and long-term prognostications in political, social, and economic development; expertise of social, political, and regional conflicts which affect strongly interior and foreign situation of Russia).

2. The study of the development of party-political system of Russia, including the study of the party's electorates and the analysis of the moods and preferences of different groups of voters.

3. The study of the new Russian elites-political, economic, intellectual.

The foundation takes the most active participation in the political process. It works for all branches of federal power, for the Government, for the political parties and movements (especially for «Nash Dom - Rossia»). The foundation organizes constant training for the plenipotentiary representatives of the President in the regions and (when ordered) prepares election programs.

16) “RAU-CORPORATION” (RUSSIAN-AMERICAN UNIVERSITY).

The corporation is founded in 1990 as an international nongovernmental organization. In 1992 it was transformed into private organization with the legal status of joint stock company of closed type. The same year it was recognized as an associated member of UNO. The sphere of research - foreign and interior policies, military cooperation and security, business, education. The president is Alexey Podberyozkin, who also functions as the chairman of the subcommittee for intelligence in the state Duma (Podberyozkin was elected to Duma according to the list of the Communist Party, but he is not its member).

RAU has close ties with the organs of representative power, it constantly works over different bills. At the same time RAU realizes the research orders of the Administration of President, of regional authorities, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the Defence Ministry, of The Federal Security Service.

Now the foundation is rather political organization of moderate nationalist type than a “think tank”.

17) “THE CENTER OF THE APPLIED POLITICAL STUDIES INDEM (INFORMATICS FOR DEMOCRACY)”

“The Center” was founded in 1990 and functions as a public organization. Its director is Georgy Satarov, ex-aid of the President. “The Center” is engaged in mathematical modelling of the Russian political development, in the sociological analysis of mass political consciousness. «The Center» has close ties with The Administration of President and plays active role during elections.

18) “THE CENTER OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STUDIES” (EPICENTER).

EPIcenter is founded in 1990 as a public organization. The Chairman of its Council is Grigory Yavlinsky - the leader of the liberal faction “Yabloko” («The Apple») of the State Duma and Chairman of the All-Russian public union with the same name. Among the leaders of EPIcenter are Mikhail Zadornov (vice-premier of the government of the Russian Federation), Tatyana Yarygina (ex-minister), Alexey Mikhailov (deputy of Duma). EPIcenter has its filials in several largest cities of Russia.

The main task of EPIcenter is to provide scholar and analytical basis for the political activities of “Yabloko”. At the same time expertize of EPIcenter is used by different state structures of Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, regional authorities in Russia, big corporations.

19) “THE CENTER OF ETHNIC-POLITICAL AND REGIONAL STUDIES” (TSEPRI).

The Center is established in 1991 with the help of E.Shevardnadze. Since 1993 it functions as a joint stock company of the closed type. The sphere of research-ethnic-political, regional, ethnic and some other group interactions, social and political monitoring. The director of TsEPRI is Emil Pain, councilor of the President and member of the Presidential Council.

“The Center” realizes following programs:

1. State policy of Russia in the zones of ethnic-political and regional conflicts on the territory of ex-Soviet Union: analysis of long-term aims and of possible changes in the state policy of the Russian leadership towards conflicts in Russia and between the states-members of CIS.

2. Refugees as a factor of nonstability: the study of the adaptation of refugees from different macroregions of post-USSR and of potential hearths (hotbeds) of social tension in the regions of the refugees' concentration.

3. Demographic situation in Russia in the 1990s (ethnic-political aspects): the study of the influence onto changes into ethnic and demographic situation in the country of the factors connected with social and economic reforms, migrations, and long-term shifts in the reproduction of population.

4. Political stability and oil problems in the Caspean region: analysis of the connections between different variants of the development of geopolitical situation in Caucasus and the Central Asia, on the one hand, and the prospects of exploitation of oil and gas resources in the Caspean region, on the other hand.

“The Center” cooperates actively with The Administration of the President of the Russian Federation.

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