

THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVE: THE NORTH-WEST FEDERAL DISTRICT

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Background to the region

The North West Federal District (SZFO) consists of eleven units: the city of St. Petersburg; the oblasts of Leningrad, Vologda, Murmansk, Kaliningrad, Novgorod, Pskov and Arkhangel'sk; the republics of Komi and Kareliya; and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. It comprises 10% of the territory of the Russian Federation, and its 14.4 million inhabitants make up 10% of the population of the Russia.¹

Since the founding of St. Petersburg 300 years ago, the region has served as Russia's principal gateway to the outside world: "the window on the West" or, as cynics would have it, the "spy hole on the West."² This gateway role is perhaps the chief characteristic governing the priorities set before SZFO head Viktor Cherkesov. It has both a security and an economic dimension. While the security factor is paramount in two other frontier federal districts – the Southern and Far Eastern – in the Northwest both security and economic dimensions are important.

From the economic point of view the region's proximity and ease of access to Europe mean that it is an important entrepot for exports and imports. It is also second only to Moscow as a favored destination for foreign investors.

From the security point of view, the region has 3,250 km of border with 7 states, 65 border crossing points, and 22 million visitors annually.³ The SZFO abuts NATO member Norway in the far north, and is home to the troubled Northern Fleet. It shares a long border with EU member Finland. Russia seized a large chunk of territory from Finland, the bulk of present-day Kareliya, at the end of World War Two, but Finland does not harbor a claim to the territory (unlike Japan, who still claim the Kurile Islands, seized in 1945). The SZFO region also abuts Estonia and Latvia, two countries whose relations with Russia are tense because of the presence of large Russian minorities who have not been granted citizenship. The region also has a frontier and active cross-border trade with Belarus.

The region includes the exclave of Kaliningrad, precariously located between Lithuania and Poland and physically separated from "mainland" Russia. The geographic isolation of Kaliningrad, together with the preponderance of military facilities in that province, has made it prone to economic dislocation, crime and corruption. The question of transit for Russian citizens to and from Kaliningrad has emerged as a major bone of contention between Russia and the European Union. In preparation for Polish and Lithuanian entry to the EU, both countries are being pressed to end visa-free travel for Russians to and from Kaliningrad. Security Council Secretary Sergei Ivanov has said that Kaliningrad should not become a "besieged fortress" after the expansion of the European Union in 2003, and warned apropos of demilitarization of the region that "Russia has no obligations not to have tactical nuclear weapons in the Kaliningrad Region."⁴

For these reasons, the Northwest region plays a direct and important role whenever discussion in Moscow turns to questions of border regimes, customs procedures, immigration controls and the like. Such

¹ "O nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh pokazatelyakh Severo-zapadnogo regiona," *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 18 June 2001, no. 11.

² Vyacheslav Morozov, "The discourses of St. Petersburg and the shaping of a wider Europe," Copenhagen Peace Research Institute paper no 13, 2002, on web at www.copri.dk

³ *Chas Pik*, 24 April 2001.

⁴ Itar-Tass, 24 March 2001.

factors are increasingly important to Russian foreign policy as it seeks entry to the World Trade Organization and closer ties with the European Union. These issues are of direct concern to the federal center, and one can hypothesize that they are too important to be left to the vagaries of the governors of border regions.

When the plans for the creation of the federal districts were being prepared, the second war in Chechnya was in full swing, and the threat of separatism was taken seriously by the new Russian president. Kaliningrad, obviously, is near the top of the list of regions that could conceivably break off from Russia, simply because of its geographical isolation.⁵ Hence on 13 July 2002 Putin appointed Dmitrii Rogozin as his special envoy to deal with negotiations with the EU over Kaliningrad. (Chechnya is the only other Russian region to merit a special presidential representative.) There was discussion in spring of 2001 of turning Kaliningrad into a separate, eighth, federal okrug, but this was declined by the Security Council meeting on 26 July 2001. Instead it was decided to launch a special federal program for the region, to be supervised by a deputy of the presidential representative (polpred).⁶

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The other salient fact to bear in mind about the Northwest region is that it is the home territory of President Vladimir Putin. He spent the bulk of his career in the region, first in the KGB, then as an aide to democratic mayor Anatolii Sobchak. Putin only served in Moscow for three years, those immediately prior to his appointment as prime minister in 1999. Putin himself continues to visit Petersburg frequently, and has arranged many visits by foreign heads of state to the “northern capital.” It has now become a standard stop in either the official and unofficial parts of visits by foreign presidents and prime ministers. This was never the practice under previous Russian and Soviet leaders. Cherkesov has even spoken out cautiously in favor of transferring some capital functions to Petersburg on a permanent basis.⁷

The renewed national and international visibility of St. Petersburg has a significance beyond mere nostalgia. In Russia’s patronage-based politics, Putin has relied heavily on the drafting of personnel from St. Petersburg to staff his administration in Moscow.⁸ This implies that the region should enjoy privileged access to Putin’s ear, and correspondingly favorable treatment from the federal center. This “special relationship” was underlined by the fact that Putin appointed a close colleague and ally from the Federal Security Service (FSB), Viktor Cherkesov, to head the North-West district.

Who is Viktor Cherkesov?

The man chosen as presidential representative (polpred) in the SZFO district was Viktor Vasil’evich Cherkesov, a KGB veteran whose career closely parallels that of President Putin. Of all the federal district heads, Cherkesov is the man closest to Putin, personally and professionally. One of his nicknames is that he is the “second Putin.”⁹ Dmitrii Oreshkin argues that “Cherkesov is, without doubt, the most closely associated with the president among the [polpred] appointees. His fate was apparently

⁵ Oleg Odnokolenko, “Oborona Kaliningrada,” *Itogi*, 25 May 2001.

⁶ E. Ozerova, “Massivnoe polpredstvo spaset Kaliningrad,” *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 1 August 2001, no. 31; S. Chernova, “Kontroleram ne ponravilsya Kaliningrad,” *Kommersant*, 18 July 2001, no. 125; “Vos’mogo federal’nogo okruga ne budet,” *Vesti SPB*, 28 July 2001, no. 85; V. Abramov, “Kaliningradskaia oblast,” *Konstitutsionnoe pravo: Vostochnoevropeiskoe obozrenie*, 2001, no. 3, pp. 191-93; E. Krom, “Slyshkom malo initsiativ,” (Interview with deputy polpred A. Steanov), *Ekspert Sevov-Zapad*, 14 January 2002, no. 1-2.

⁷ *Smena*, 15 August 2000.

⁸ Konstantin Simonov, “Belyi dom na tri sem’I” [Three families in the White House] *Kommersant-Vlast’*, 16 March 2000; Ivan Trefilov, “Muscovites swell the ranks of the people from St. Petersburg,” *Vedomosti*, no. 45, July 2-4, 2001.

⁹ Dmitrii Pinsker, “Vtorichno legitimnyi,” *Itogi*, 14 November 2000.

predetermined by the years spent together with Vladimir Putin at the Leningrad University School of Law.”¹⁰

Cherkesov was born on 13 July 1950.¹¹ He finished the law faculty of Leningrad State University (as did Putin) in 1975, and after a brief spell in the procuracy he went into the KGB.¹² From 1992-98 he headed the Petersburg district of the KGB (which was renamed MB, FSK and then FSB – Federal Security Service). In the 1980s Cherkesov was actively involved in the persecution of political dissidents, and in 1996 he led the case against Captain Aleksandr Nikitin, accused of espionage for his work with the Norwegian environmentalist group Belona. Nikitin was found innocent in the fall of 1999. On 26 August 1998 Cherkesov became first deputy director of the FSB with the rank of lieutenant-general, later promoted to colonel-general.¹³ His final job was coordinating work with the regions: one can speculate that he may have been involved with the design of the federal district reform itself.¹⁴ He is married with two daughters: his wife Natalya Chaplina is editor-in-chief of *Chas Psk*, a leading Petersburg newspaper.

Back in spring 2000, when Putin was running for the presidency, Cherkesov took a couple of week’s formal leave from the FSB in order to campaign for Putin.¹⁵ An interview with Igor Chernyak was revealing of the awkwardness of the shift from KGB to campaigning:

“Question: You are known as ‘Putin’s man,’ one of his closest confidants. How do you feel about this role?

Cherkesov: I do not feel anything about it.

Question: You must know him very well indeed, after all these years...

Cherkesov: As I see it, Putin's style is contrary to the labels that some circles are trying to apply to him... So all these speculations about him being a mystery man are rubbish.

Question: You are playing a key part in the ‘St. Petersburg team.’ At the same time, this team is gaining dominance in the top power structures. Do you think this state of affairs is appropriate?

Cherkesov: I would not say that there are very many people from St. Petersburg near Putin, in the government....Of course, he prefers to work with people he knows, and what is wrong with that?”

Commentators differ about the effectiveness of Cherkesov in his new role. Some say he is clever, others that he will never overcome his KGB background and proclivity for shadowy “analysis and control.”¹⁶ A February 2001 comparative analysis of the seven polpredy rated their performance in terms of influence on governor elections, volume of regional laws changed, and mentions in regional press.¹⁷ Cherkesov finished in fourth place overall. For example, he had managed to changed 180 out of 280 regional laws that violated federal legislation (64% compared to Kazantsev 78%). Similarly, a February 2001 opinion poll found Cherkesov’s name was known by only 20% of respondents in his region, behind Pulikovskii (49%), Kirienko (46%), and Kazantsev (35%), but ahead of Drachevskii (10%) and

¹⁰ “Vladimir Putin and the topography of power,” *Moscow News*, 24 May 2000.

¹¹ *Rossiiskii kto est’ kto*, 25 August 2000.

¹² Among his victims were Vladimir Poresh (arrested in 1979), Vyacheslav Dolinin (1982), Rostislav Yevdokimov (1982), Geli Donskoi (1983), and Dmitrii Akselrod (1984), all of whom were amnestied in 1991. *Russian Regional Report*, vol. 5, no. 20, 24 May 2000. See the profile of Cherkesov by Robert Orttung, *Russian Regional Report*, (RRR) Vol. 6, No. 16, 2 May 2001, and the interview in *Vek*, 16 February 2001; Vladimir Voronov, “Former KGB officials now in power,” *Sobesednik*, no. 23, June 2000.

¹³ *Tsentr politicheskoi informatsii*, 7 March 2001.

¹⁴ *Russky telegraf*, 29 August 1998.

¹⁵ Interview with Igor Chernyak, *Komsomol’skaya pravda*, 2 March 2000.

¹⁶ Aleksandr Chernyi, “Polpred reshil vse zadachi,” *Obshchaya gazeta*, 24 May 2001.

¹⁷ “Chempionat sredi polpredov,” *Kommersant’-Vlast’*, 6 February 2001.

Poltavchenko (3%).¹⁸ Surveys of elite assessment of Cherkesov's role within Petersburg see him as politically influential, second only to Governor Yakovlev, but marginal in economic terms – variously estimated at 9th to 15th in rank according to polls conducted in mid- to late 2001.¹⁹

Initially there was much speculation that Cherkesov's job performance was not all that important, since he was being groomed for a Moscow position – perhaps procurator general. Cherkesov was reportedly openly critical of procurator Vladimir Ustinov, saying for example “If we look at the future, Ustinov is defending ideas that are on their way out.”²⁰ But two years on, Cherkesov has not moved up.

The most striking characteristic of Cherkesov is his secretive style. He has not tried to establish a very visible presence in the local political landscape. This presumably has something to do with his background in the KGB/FSB, and a penchant for discretion and indirect influence. But it makes it rather difficult for him to do his job as a public official in what is a more-or-less open and democratic society.

In his public comments Cherkesov talks of the role of presidential representative in expansive terms. He argues that back in 2000 the “the threat of collapse of the country was real and high,”²¹ and this existential challenge was the fundamental reason for the introduction of the new agency. Cherkesov told an interviewer that the polpredy “were not introduced out of the goodness of life. The power vertical had practically disappeared.... The country was becoming less and less governable.”²² He continued “But in order to change this situation a strengthening of power structures is not enough. There must be a change in the moral climate of society... Development of such a dialog between state and society I consider one of the most important tasks of the polpred. I take this to mean making transparent for residents the work of all state structures.”

Cherkesov is confident that the polpredy have accomplished their primary mission. “Today we can say with certainty that the collapse of the Russian state has been halted.”²³ He sees nothing sinister in a prominent role for military and security figures in the political process, including some who have won elections. “Perhaps they were elected because the electors have lost faith in the ability of classic democrats to provide order and stability.”

THE WORK OF THE PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVE

The main tasks of the polpredy are supervising the implementation of federal laws and programs, and gathering information and making analysis to assist the president with future policy formation.²⁴ The staff of the presidential representative is fairly modest, about 100 persons.²⁵ Cherkesov has ten deputies, some drawn from the ranks of the military and FSB, others from the local political establishment. (See Table One.) There is an office of 6-8 people in each region, headed by a federal inspector.²⁶ These inspectors replaced the former system of presidential representatives created by Boris Yeltsin in 1991. New men were chosen for this task: only two of 11 federal inspectors in the SZFO were formerly presidential representatives. (See Table Two.)

At the end of 2001 Cherkesov saw his two top deputies leave to higher positions. Kuznetsov became first deputy rail minister, and V'yunov was appointed head of the Northwest Customs

¹⁸ *Profil*, 19 February 2001. Poll by Fond Obshchestvennogo Mneniya.

¹⁹ T. Protasenko, “Vliyatel'nye luidi Peterburga,” *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 27 June 2001; “Peterburg: elitnoe izmerenie,” (9Barometr mnenii liderov Peterburga), AMK Marko, 2001.

²⁰ Vlad Kovalyev, “Is Cherkesov headed for Moscow?,” *Moscow Times*, 14 May 2001.

²¹ Interview on ORT Vremya, 7 May 2001.

²² Yana Yur'evna, “Interv'yu Cherkesova,” *Pravda Severa* (Arkhangel'sk), 2 January 2001.

²³ Ya. Yur'eva, “V 'igre bez pravil' pobedit' nevozmoshno,” *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 6 February 2001.

²⁴ Interview on Radio Mayak 12 May 2001.

²⁵ Konstantin Zborovskii, “Novye rabochie mesta na Severo-Zapade,” *Profil*, 7 August 2001; “Pis'mo na stol prezidentu,” *Vechernii Murmansk*, 30 August 2000.

²⁶ Up until May 2001, first deputy Bol'shakov was simultaneously main federal inspector for Petersburg.

Administration in December 2001. V'yunov was replaced as first deputy polpred by Mikhail Motsak, former head of northern fleet.²⁷ (Another ex-admiral was named as the Murmansk representative in the Federation Council.) Motsak was among those reprimanded “for serious errors in the daily and preparatory work of the fleet” in the wake of the Kursk tragedy.

The office's departments include: monitoring regional laws to ensure compliance with federal legislation; economic and financial control; cadres and awards; social, economic and political monitoring; the okrug inspectorate of the president's Main Control Administration; and military and security coordination.²⁸

Cherkesov also created three advisory councils: Economy and Investment (including federal agencies, regional authorities, business people, and foreign investors); Law Enforcement Agencies and Security; and a Social Council (to study public opinion).²⁹ The social council has 33 representatives of social movements, and has created 11 working groups.³⁰

The expectation was that the federal okrugs would become power links in a vertical chain of command, super-regions that would restore Kremlin control over the multitude of independent governors. Officials inside the apparatus of the polpred explained the rationale for the institution in more straightforward terms.³¹ Prior to the polpredy, presidential power was effectively confined to Moscow, it was not felt at regional level in concrete terms. All that the former presidential representatives could do was report back, passively, on what was happening. “Previously, presidential power resided only in Moscow. The presidential representative of that time could do almost nothing, even in the event of serious violations. The new polpred would create an institutional structure which would bring the presidency closer to the ground and would in principle create an instrument that could be used to intervene in local abuses.” As Cherkesov himself put it: “Now presidential power has been brought to earth, to the territory of Russia.”

Outside observers were expecting a massive centralization of power, like in Soviet times. This has not occurred. Moreover, the fact that the tasks assigned them, and the powers granted to realize these goals, are rather limited suggests that President Putin never intended the polpredy to become the Leviathan that some commentators suggested.

Their task was more simple: to prevent the break-up of the Russian Federation, to control the governors and presidents who were openly flouting the legal authority of Moscow. The reassertion of Russian state sovereignty required the creation a unified legal and economic space.³² A secondary goal was to be the eyes and ears of the president in the regions. (Cherkesov once referred to himself as “Glaz tsarya.”³³) Both of these were more political-propaganda goals than administrative goals. But now that this first goal has been accomplished, it is not clear what follows next.

The polpredy were not given a clear position in the chain of command. Their legal and constitutional status is ill-defined.³⁴ They have small staffs and no direct responsibility for the spending of federal funds or for the implementation of the laws. There are already separate organizations responsible for this, such as the Finance Ministry, the Justice Ministry and the Procuracy. In August 2001 Sergei Kirienko

²⁷ *Versiya*, 11 March 2002; K. Zborovskii, “Na smenu nachal'nika tamozhni dali ‘dobro’,” *Profil*, 14 January 2002.

²⁸ E. Ragozina, “General Cherkesov stanovitsya publichnym politikom,” *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 12-18 July 2000.

²⁹ *Vremya novostei*, 3 April 2001.

³⁰ A. Rabkovskii, “Obshchestvennaya palata okruga nachala raboty,” *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, 31 March 2001.

³¹ Based on personal interviews.

³² Interview with Cherkesov by S. Shelin “Ya vernu gosudarstvu gosudarstvennoe,” *Delo*, 18 September 2000.

³³ Marat Khairulin, “Lyubit prezidenta,” *Novye izvestiya*, 7 February 2002.

³⁴ The relevant government decree is “Skhema vzaimodeistviya federal'nykh organov ispolnitel'noi vlasti s polnomochnym predstaviteleyami Prezidenta RF v federal'nykh okrugakh I rameshcheniya territorial'nykh organov federal'nykh organov ispolnitel'noi vlasti,” issued on 12 August 2000, in *Sobranie zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, no. 34, 200, art. 3473.

requested that polpredy be given direct control over the disbursement of some federal funds, but Sergei Samoilov, head of presidential territorial administration, beat back this challenge to his authority, persuading Putin that control systems for monitoring spending were already in place.³⁵ The polpredy have not found a clear and recognized niche within the organizational chart of Russian public administration. Rather they are seen as an additional and somewhat superfluous layer of central control.

The main role of the polpredy was to gather information and report back to the Kremlin, and to liaise with the governors. It is also clear that not only the staffing but also the functions of the polpredy that they are to some extent an extension of the FSB – not so much in its repressive functions, but in its intelligence-gathering and public opinion influencing functions.

The role of polpredy in the central government seems less than many had anticipated. Their monthly meetings give them direct access to Putin, but they have not displaced the presidential administration's responsibility for regional policy. To an extent as individuals they have become players in the national political game, with them often being cited as candidates for federal office and their staffs being tapped for federal positions.

To get some idea of at least the formal facade of the presidential representative's duties, one can examine the official pronouncements of Cherkesov's meetings and events recorded on the official website of the SZFO press office.³⁶ (See Table Four) Scrutiny of the 245 activities reported during the 14 months August 2000 to September 2001 reveals that a substantial 34% of meetings were devoted to the economy and 15% to legal affairs. A surprising 13% was devoted to diplomatic activity, such as a three-day trip to Finland in March 2001.³⁷ This was about the same as his involvement in security matters (12%), which attracted such close attention in the press. These economic and diplomatic activities were not a prominent feature of the initial rationale for the creation of the polpredy, nor is there much evidence that these activities have produced much in the way of concrete results, as we shall see below. They are perhaps evidence of the sort of "mission creep" often found in bureaucratic agencies.

Based on the experience of SZFO one can identify the main political tasks of the presidential representative as: insisting on rewriting regional laws to conform to federal law; supervision of security institutions; battling corruption; monitoring elections and using elections to try to remove objectionable governors; monitoring the mass media; and helping economic development.

STRENGTHENING THE "POWER VERTICAL

The first and most pressing duty was to insist that laws in the federation subjects were rewritten to conform to federal legislation. This was done quickly and fairly smoothly – although it is an open question whether implementation of the new laws will differ from past practices. With the air of a Soviet style campaign, there was a push to complete as many as possible of the revisions by December 2000, with regions reporting in what percent of laws had been changed.³⁸ (The justice ministry had already prepared detailed lists of what legal corrections needed to be made in the statutes and laws of each federation subject.) In May 2002 Cherkesov said that enforcing the revision of 600 deviant laws throughout the region was his major achievement.³⁹ This campaign is now proceeding to a second stage – the review of bilateral treaties with the center. As of February 2002 Kaliningrad, Petersburg and Murmansk had not acted yet.⁴⁰

³⁵ Olga Petrova, Elena Tregubova, " Semero po vertikali,: *Kommersant' -Vlast'* , 12 December 2000.

³⁶ <http://falcon.sinaps.ru/polpred/news.html> The site stopped these reports in October 2001.

³⁷ RIA Novosti, 23 March 2001; "Viktor Cherkesov: Nashi partnery v Suomi vidyat, chto situatsiya menyaetsya," *Severnyyi kur'er* (Petrozavodsk), 30 March 2001.

³⁸ See for example the reports on this process from Kareliya Andrei Raev, "Priem v Tronnom zale," *Severnyi Kur'er* (Petrozavodsk), 20 December 2000; Yekaterina Velikhova, "Granitsy igrovogo polya dlya sub"ekta," *Novaya Novgorodskaya gazeta* (Nvelikii Novgorod), 11 November 2001.

³⁹ Cherkesov interview, Radio Mayak, 12 May 2001.

⁴⁰ *Izvestiya*, 19 February 2002.

With more than 750 federal agencies in the region, it is a major challenge to bring about a clear chain of command, to minimize the number of structures with “dual subordination” i.e. accountable to both regional and federal authorities. One important step was the opening of a branch at the federal okrug level by various federal agencies: the justice ministry, the procuracy, tax services, customs services, and interior ministry.⁴¹ This gives Cherkesov a direct access point to the vertical chain of command in these organs. His apparatus also includes a representative of Main Control Administration of the presidency.⁴² In a bid to improve coordination of military units in the region, Cherkesov created a coordinating council of military management units, which periodically meets and discusses issues such as the impact of military reform.⁴³

Gaining control over the appointment of regional police chiefs was clearly a top priority for Putin, who saw a real threat of regional leaders creating their own security networks. This process has apparently gone smoothly in the northwest region under the direction of regional Interior Ministry (MVD) chief Boris Uemlyanin. In December 2001 a criminal case was launched against the chief of criminal police in Murmansk, leading to the prompt resignation of the regional police chief and his first deputy.⁴⁴ The new MVD head was brought from Vologda oblast. In September 2001 the central MVD sent a special five-man team to “decriminalize” Petersburg, which is apparently working in close cooperation with the office of the presidential representative.⁴⁵ A decision over restructuring control of the St. Petersburg police is expected later in 2002.

The presidential representative still has a long way to go to really function as an effective monitor and coordinator of federal agencies in the region. Such a basic function as recommending (or approving) cadres for appointment to federal organs, as was carried out by Communist Party committees in Soviet times, seems beyond their grasp at present, although in his annual address to parliament in April 2002 President Putin seemed to be placing this on the agenda.⁴⁶

CORRUPTION

Battling crime and corruption have featured prominently in the rhetoric of both supporters and critics of the new presidential representative. It is harder to discern what concrete actions have resulted from the institutional innovation. Okrug level agencies for the general procurator and for the MVD’s unit fighting organized crime have been created.⁴⁷ Addressing the federal district’s Coordinating Council for Law Activities, Cherkesov said the main crime problems revolve around alcohol, fuel and ports.⁴⁸

Cherkesov has repeatedly called for tougher action on corruption. He told a March 2001 conference on the subject, pointedly held in Kaliningrad, that there were “no serious blows against corruption in 2000.”⁴⁹ In a closed meeting with local leaders in Kaliningrad, the new governor Vladimir Yegorov said “the threat to democracy comes not from those in uniform, but from those who disrupt the country or rule the state in an amateurish fashion.”⁵⁰

⁴¹ *Izvestiya*, 22 February 2001.

⁴² Artemii Smirnov, “Predchuvstvie zolotogo dozhdy,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 5 March 2001.

⁴³ *Nevskoe Vremya*, 22 February 2001.

⁴⁴ E. Denisenko, “Militsiya pod kontrolem,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapada*, 22 April 2002.

⁴⁵ A. Tsyganov, “Pod koplakom Borisa Gryzlova ostaetsya GUV D Peterburga,” *Kommersant-S-Peterburg*, 29 May 2002; A. Smirnov, “Nikolai Vinnichenko: Moi polnomichiya analogichny polpredovskim,” *Delo*, 27 May 2002.

⁴⁶ “Poslanie prezidenta RF. V.V. Putina,” *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 19 April 2002.

⁴⁷ *Itar-Tass SZ*, 24 April 2001.

⁴⁸ *Itar-Tass SZ*, 18 January 2001.

⁴⁹ Viktor Chernova, “Federaly unichtozhayut korruptsiyu v Kaliningradskoi oblasti,” *Komsomol’skaya Pravda v Kaliningrade*, 27 March 2001; *Baltic News Service*, 24 March 2001.

⁵⁰ I. Khakimov, “Vizit Cherkesova,” *VIP-Kaliningrad*, 29 March 2001.

Cherkesov has also said that he was unhappy with the battle against corruption in Novgorod, Leningrad Oblast, Kareliya and especially Nenets, whose law organs he wanted to merge into Arkhangel'sk oblast.⁵¹ The head of the organized crime unit in Kaliningrad was fired.⁵² In Pskov, the oblast prosecutor was fired, and the vice-governor Dmitrii Dervoed dismissed for corruption.⁵³

One illustration of Cherkesov's willingness to demonstrate his influence over the procuracy is the statement issued by his press office after he met the deputy procurator for the northwest region in December 2000 and admonished him for making threatening statements about corruption among Petersburg banks. The statement warned that "the demonstrative publicity with which this investigation was conducted had negative consequences."⁵⁴

Petersburg itself is widely seen as corrupt: according to a procuracy study it was ranked the fifth most corrupt of 89 regions.⁵⁵ The city procurator and MVD economic crimes unit has been investigating the city's policies for channeling funds through local banks, and the raising of a R1 billion loan to ice hockey palace. The State Duma's audit chamber found fault with the disbursement of the city's 2000 budget. In fall of 2001 the procuracy started to close in on Governor Vladimir Yakovlev's inner circle, indicting four of his 13 deputies.⁵⁶ In October 2001 prosecutors filed abuse-of-office charges against Valerii Malyshev, including the receipt of soft loans from local banks, and fundraising for the All Russia party in the 1999 Duma election. A month later, prosecutors charged acting vice governor Aleksandr Potekhin for illegal transactions. And in March 2002 they charged vice governor Anatolii Kagan, head of the city's health committee, for fraud in allocating a R9 million (\$300,000) insulin contract with the local firm Kovi-Farm. However, one observer noted that despite Cherkesov's promise to "decriminalize the corridors of power" in reality the charges against vice-governors are rather weak and going nowhere.⁵⁷ And at the same time an ongoing case against finance minister Aleksei Kudrin was quietly dropped. Kudrin had been head of the Petersburg finance committee in 1995-96, and investigation was started into possible abuse of funds.⁵⁸

SECURING THE "INFORMATION SPACE"

Putin has emphasized the state's duty to managing information, even launching an "information security doctrine."⁵⁹ Cherkesov's office seems to have made work with the press a top priority. This includes close monitoring of publications and regular meetings with editors. This kind of "news management" strikes Westerners as sinister and undemocratic, but of course has deep roots in Soviet political culture.

Cherkesov has stressed that one of his tasks is to overcome the information barriers between the provinces where people live "within the walls of their own press" and get very little news about what is happening in neighboring regions.⁶⁰ This is a particularly acute problem for Kaliningrad, where the

⁵¹ Maksim Timofeev, "Cherkesov concerned about poor law enforcement in Northwest," RRR, vol. 6, no. 20, 30 May 2001.

⁵² Itar-Tass SZ, 23 March 2001.

⁵³ "Tass upolnomochen," *Novaya Novgorodskaya gazeta*, 23 May 2001; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 9 July 2001.

⁵⁴ <http://falcon.sinaps.ru/polpred/dec-yan.html>

⁵⁵ According to data from procurator-general's office, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 7 September 2001.

⁵⁶ Vladimir Kovalyev, "Third vice governor facing charges," *St. Petersburg Times*, 5 March 2002; A. Smirnov, "Kontrol' naya dubina," *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 1 April 2002; I. Bugrov, "Prokuratora prodolzhaet formirovat' kabinet Vladimira Yakovleva," *Kommersant-S-Peterburg*, 30 May 2002.

⁵⁷ Nikolai Sokolov, "Mochit v peterburgskom sortire," *Novye izvestiya*, 20 March 2002.

⁵⁸ Andrei Tsygankov, "Aleksei Kudrin ostalsya bez del," *Kommersant*, 7 December 2000.

⁵⁹ *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 28 September 2000.

⁶⁰ E. Ragozina, "General Cherkesov stanovitsya publichnyim politikom," *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 12-18 July 2000.

neighbors are Poland and Lithuania, and schoolchildren may not even get the chance to visit “mainland” Russia and for example tour the sites of Petersburg.⁶¹

Cherkesov’s team has put some effort into promoting news exchange across the region via television and news agencies – the latter including the new Rosbalt agency set up by Cherkesov’s wife Natalya Chaplina in November 2000. His office has helped set up online and videoconferencing links in Murmansk, Petrozavodsk, Novgorod, Pskov and Vologda, and radio links to Kaliningrad and Arkhangel’sk.⁶² The state TRK TV station has set aside 30 minutes a day for a program on the okrug.⁶³ This all means, according to Ivan Moseev, the editor of *Business-class* in Arkhangel’sk, that the only region-wide information comes with “Cherkesov sauce.”⁶⁴

Yakovlev had established a firm grip on the local media in St. Petersburg itself long before Cherkesov’s arrival. The governor’s team controls or is supported by the TRK Petersburg local television and radio company, the papers *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, *Peterburg-Ekspres*, *Vechernii Peterburg*, the local *Izvestiya* and *Komsomolskaya pravda*. Cherkesov has influence over the local broadcasts of Russia’s state television and radio company VGTRK (the RTR TV channel and Radio Rossii), the Petersburg branch of ITAR-TASS, *Nevskoe vremya*, and his wife’s *Chas Pik*.⁶⁵

An important setback to Yakovlev came in spring 2001, when the federal ministry for the press, broadcasting and mass media took the local radio company off the all-important first channel on the city’s cable radio service and gave it to the national Radio Rossii. (Nearly half of all listeners tune in to the first button.)⁶⁶ In October 2001 Petersburg TV lost the 25th channel to Euronews. And a subsequent initiative by Yakovlev to introduce new tax breaks for local media failed to pass the legislative assembly.⁶⁷

Local media have seized on Cherkesov missteps to embarrass the presidential representative, but have generally found slim pickings. This began as soon as he arrived, with a miniature scandal around his decision to take over an elegant downtown villa, ousting Wedding Palace no. 3. In March 2001 Cherkesov was tricked into endorsing a new anti-Semitic magazine *Admiralteistvo*.⁶⁸ Cherkesov managed to stop a plan by local Unity Party leaders to distribute busts of Putin to government offices, but he failed to catch a new schoolbook which featured a young Putin as a model of virtue.⁶⁹ It was not only in Petersburg where Cherkesov encountered hostile local media coverage. The government-controlled TV company in Novgorod, presumably loyal to Prusak, presented an acidic piece called “Cherkesov’s Letter to Putin,” done in the style of Soviet spy films.⁷⁰ The journalist imagined Cherkesov writing to Putin, with such phrases as “I have a colorless voice and colorless eyes. Should I also make colorless statements so no one will understand what I’m saying?”

In April, Cherkesov set up an Association of Northwest Media, whose leadership then signed a cooperation agreement with him.⁷¹ Cherkesov played a prominent role in launching Alexander Lyubimov’s Media Union, a rival to the Union of Journalists and an organization apparently keen to cooperate in state regulation of the press.⁷² Addressing their founding conference in June 2001, Cherkesov said “the

⁶¹ Material in this section is drawn in part from interviews with officials in the presidential representative’s office.

⁶² *Sankt Peterburgskie vedomosti*, 17 May 2001.

⁶³ Itar tass SZ, 7 February 2001.

⁶⁴ D. Groznyi, “Informprostranstvo dlya Cerkesovykh,” *Sreda*, 1 May 2001.

⁶⁵ Gordon Hahn, “Petersburg dominates ineffective federal district,” RRR, vol. 6, no. 37, 24 October 2001.

⁶⁶ V. Moskvina, “Radiostantsii Peterburga: 10 let spustya,” *Telesko*, no. 6, 2001.

⁶⁷ M. Korenevskii, “Deputaty pomeshali Smol’nomy prikormit’ piterskuyu pressu,” *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 18 April 2001.

⁶⁸ Vladimir Kovalyev, “Racism controversy hits Cherkesov,” *St. Petersburg Times*, 2 March 2001.

⁶⁹ *Moscow Times*, 6 August 2001.

⁷⁰ Elena Rikhovtseva, “Freedom of thought flickers through the regions,” *Russian Journal*, 20 July 2001.

⁷¹ *Vremya MN*, 17 April 2001.

⁷² Igor Aleksandrov, “Defile chistykh i devstvennykh,” *Obshchaya gazeta*, 26 June 2001.

so-called authoritarian democracy of president Putin has strengthened the country.”⁷³ Putin himself addressed the conference, noting that “a free press is the most important guarantor of our country's irreversible democratic course.”⁷⁴

RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNORS

It was reasonable to expect that the relations of the presidential representatives with the governors would be difficult. The polpredy were a new institution, injected into a political status quo which had developed under President Boris Yeltsin, under which Russia's 89 regional leaders enjoyed considerable political and economic autonomy. The reform's goal was to restore the decayed “vertical of power,” and the authority of the polpredy stemmed from their direct endorsement and ongoing personal contact with President Putin. More power for the polpred would presumably mean less power for the governor.

Cherkesov has generally kept his interactions with regional leaders well hidden. He seems to have good relations with the governors of Arkhangel'sk and Vologda, and rather strained relations with St. Petersburg's Vladimir Yakovlev and Novgorod's Mikhail Prusak. In the six gubernatorial elections that took place in the Northwest since his appointment, Cherkesov played no apparent role in two – Arkhangel'sk and Pskov. (See Table Five). In one race where Cherkesov signaled that he wanted the incumbent defeated, his wishes were thwarted: Nenets head Vladimir Butov won re-election. Cherkesov was openly hostile to Kaliningrad governor Leonid Gorbenko, who was defeated in the November 2000 election, as the Kremlin wished. Likewise in the December 2001 election, Cherkesov supported Komi parliament speaker Vladimir Torlopov, who managed to unseat the long-time incumbent Yurii Spiridonov.

The re-election of Petersburg governor Aleksandr Yakovlev in May 2000, shortly before Cherkesov's appointment, created a major political obstacle for him. Yakovlev became governor in 1996 by running against his former boss Anatolii Sobchak, who was Putin's sponsor and mentor. Sobchak was bedeviled by accusations of corruption, and speaking at Sobchak's funeral in February 2000 an emotional Putin hinted that it was the pressure of these political struggles that had brought about his premature death. In April 2000 Putin encouraged Valentina Matvienko to take leave from her post as deputy prime minister for social policy in order to run against Yakovlev. Despite an expensive media campaign, her poor showing in opinion polls (she was barely winning 15% support) caused her to withdraw her candidacy one month before the election. Cherkesov was neutral in the subsequent race between Yakovlev and runner-up Igor Artemev, a leader of the local Yabloko party, since Yakovlev's victory was a foregone conclusion. Although it was clear that he wanted Yakovlev removed, Putin, ever the diplomat, never publicly confronted the Petersburg governor – even agreeing to meet with him on the day of Sobchak's funeral.

Novgorod governor Mikhail Prusak, who clearly has ambitions for a political career at national level, has been one of the most outspoken critics of the federal districts reform. He said “You can't lump together Kareliya and Kaliningrad, or the Komi republic and St. Petersburg, because these are regions with a completely different way of life.”⁷⁵ He complained also about Cherkesov's meetings with investors. “This is idiocy, a mistake. Why is the polpred organizing meetings on investments? Is he better able than I to attract investments.”⁷⁶ As for Cherkesov himself, Prusak said “in terms of personal relations, Cherkesov is a talented man, he has proved that over the past year. But I think that in a bad system good relations and good people do not exist.”⁷⁷ In reply Cherkesov has criticized Prusak's record, arguing that the influx of foreign investment have not reversed Novgorod's economic decline

⁷³ “Zhurnalisty zhivut v novoi strane,” *Kommersant*, 14 June 2001.

⁷⁴ *Teleskop*, 27 June 2001.

⁷⁵ Vlad Kovalyev, “Is Cherkesov headed for Moscow?,” *Moscow Times*, 14 May 2001.

⁷⁶ “Nenuzhnyii progress,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 25 December 2000.

⁷⁷ *ORT Vremena*, 13 May 2001.

The Nenets Autonomous Okrug has seen fierce competition between Lukoil and Severnaya neft for control of its oil deposits. Severnaya neft, controlled by former Russian deputy finance minister Andrei Vavilov, backed Governor Vladimir Butov for re-election in January 2001, while Lukoil backed his main opponent Aleksandr Shmakov, the deputy director of Lukoil subsidiary Polyarnye siyanie. Cherkesov is seen as close to Lukoil. Between May 2000 and January 2001 Cherkesov never once met with Butov, and he has publicly criticized the anomalous legal situation of the Nenets A.O. – a sovereign subject of the Federation but also part of Arkhangel'sk oblast.⁷⁸ Butov won the January 2001 election with 68% support, and he shrugged off a court challenge to the result.⁷⁹

Cherkesov is fulsome in his praise for Anatolii Yefremov, governor of Arkhangel'sk, which he has described as his “second homeland”⁸⁰ The region needs all the help it can get in dealing with the region's redundant military bases and decaying submarines, along with new investment for a gas pipeline and the Lomonosov diamond mine.⁸¹ Kareliya's Sergei Katanandov supported Moscow Mayor Yurii Luzhkov's Otechestvo party in the 1999 State Duma race and subsequently was demonstratively loyal to Putin to make up for his earlier mistake.

Cherkesov had testy relations with the incumbent governor of Komi Republic, Yurii Spiridonov. In June 2001 the Komi parliament passed constitutional amendments removing claims of sovereignty of RK laws, and agreeing that the RK cannot unilaterally allocate land or resources.⁸² This despite protests from the nationalist Komi People's Congress that new budget rules which will cost republic 1.5 billion rubles.⁸³ Another blow to the region was Severnaya neft's decision in October 2001 to move its legal registration to Orel, a decision which will cost the city of Usinsk a hefty chunk of its tax base. Commentator Yurii Shabaev suggests that the company expects to find more compliant local courts in Orel.⁸⁴

Towards the end of 2001 the governors and legislatures began naming their representatives on the Federation Council. (See Table Four) The most controversial case was the nomination of former privatization chief Alfred Kokh by the Leningrad oblast legislature in February 2002. This decision was blocked by the Vyborg City Court at the request of local deputies and the procurator, citing violations in the candidate's registration. Sergei Mironov, an old ally of Putin and former deputy speaker of the Petersburg assembly, was chosen as representative from St. Petersburg, and went on to be selected Federation Council speaker on 5 December 2001. Some of the nominations seemed to be designed to “honorably exile” troublesome politicians to Moscow. Hence Kareliya governor Sergei Katanandov appointed his immediate predecessor Viktor Stepanov as his representative to the council, removing a threat that he might again try running for governor.⁸⁵ Similar thinking was apparently behind the nomination of former oblast дума speaker Valerii Ustyugov from Kaliningrad.⁸⁶ The senators from the northwest include former State Duma deputy and Yeltsin aide Gennadii Burbulis, who was selected by governor Prusak to represent Novgorod, which he represented in the Duma until he lost the seat in the 1999 election.

The battle for St. Petersburg

⁷⁸ Itar-Tass SZ, 1 February 2001.

⁷⁹ Alla Khodyreva, “Nenetskii gubernator mozhet lishit'sya prava byt' izbrannym,” *Kommersant*, 27 February 2001.

⁸⁰ Sergei Smirnov, “Zampolpreda vstretil Paskhu v Arkhangel'ske,” *troitskii prospect* (Arkhangel'sk), 17 April 2001.

⁸¹ *Volna*, 8 August 2000.

⁸² S. Sorokin, “Strasti po konstitutsii,” *Molodezh severa*, 6 July 2001.

⁸³ V. Turkin, “Zdravyismysl kak moment edineniya,” *Krasnoe znamya*, 1 November 2000.

⁸⁴ Yuri Shabaev, Important oil company reregisters,” *RRR* vol 6 no 39, 7 November 2001.

⁸⁵ *RRR*, 9 January 2002.

⁸⁶ *RRR* 17 January 2001.

The key political relationship in the region is that between Cherkesov and Petersburg governor Yakovlev. Cherkesov has denied that he is angling to remove Yakovlev, saying he is “neither a governor nor a super-governor.”⁸⁷ But the city of Petersburg is the jewel in the region’s crown, spending half the federal budget funds allocated to the okrug. Cherkesov was hopeful that he would be able to take over the expected \$1 billion federal funds that will be spent in preparing the city for its 300th jubilee in 2003. Some of this will go to the completion of ongoing projects: the ring road, the rebuilding of a collapsed metro line, and the refurbishment of the historic city center.⁸⁸ In January 2002 the city won a \$120 million World Bank loan to spend on jubilee projects.

Yakovlev has fought against the idea of Cherkesov moving in on the city. “Consider the project for building a bypass around St. Petersburg. No one is able to do this without the governor and his staff. How to get a loan, who is to be responsible for repaying it... Do you think the staff of the presidential envoy will be dealing with this?” “During the meeting with President Putin we agreed that presidential envoys would not interfere with the work of the territories.”⁸⁹ After some toing and froing over the jubilee spending, it was agreed by Cherkesov and Sergei Stepashin’s audit chamber (attached to the State Duma) that they will jointly monitor jubilee spending.⁹⁰ Cherkesov also seems to be directly involved in the plan to raise funds to rehabilitate the Konstantin palace for President Putin, through voluntary contributions.⁹¹ The first round in the jubilee war broke out over Yakovlev’s plan to move the zoo out of the city, triggering considerable public protests that were supported by Cherkesov. Yakovlev backed off.⁹²

Yakovlev’s trump card is his continued high public trust rating, which is maintained by skillful patronage politics and massaging of his image by a mostly compliant local media. He does face strong opposition from the liberal wing of the city’s political elite. He has managed to retain a place in the local branch of the Unity Party (now Unified Russia), and the loyalty of the legislative assembly.⁹³ Cherkesov has tried to increase pressure on the latter body, but failed for example to dissuade it from bringing forward local elections to December 2002 (so as to avoid clashing with jubilee celebrations in 2003).⁹⁴ The two men compete for the loyalty of local business elites, who are divided into a pro-Yakovlev “left bank” and Cherkesov “right bank,” indicating the location of their respective headquarters.⁹⁵ (See also the following economics section.)

Overall, Yakovlev and Cherkesov have found an “uneasy symbiosis” with each other.⁹⁶ They tend to avoid each other at public gatherings whenever possible.⁹⁷ A survey of local experts shortly after Cherkesov’s appointment rated Cherkesov as second in influence to Yakovlev, but in the economic sphere he was only rated in 18th place.⁹⁸

ECONOMIC ROLE

⁸⁷ Cherkesov interview by Denis Sysoev in *AiF SPB*, 26 December 2001.

⁸⁸ Interview by Anna Shcherbakova, “Cherkesov keeps a hand on state financing,” *St. Petersburg Times*, 25 March 2001.

⁸⁹ Viktoriya Voloshina, *Izvestiya*, 28 March 2001; Natalya Korkonosenko, “Yubilei v skladchinu,” *Versty*, 23 February 2002.

⁹⁰ A. Mukhin, “Kontrol budet tak pri Petre,” *Nevsoe vremya*, 3 March 2001.

⁹¹ Viktoriia Uzdina, “Pomogite Putinu,” *Vedomosti* 12 March 2001.

⁹² *Kommersant*, 9 July 2001.

⁹³ D. Nikolaev, “Medved’ medvedyu glaz ne vyklyuet,” *Novaya gazeta v Sankt-Peterburge*, 6 May 2002.

⁹⁴ V. Rabotnova, “Deputaty prinyali vremya svoego ukhoda,” *Nevskoe vremya*, 30 May 2002.

⁹⁵ Sergei Shelin, “Shturm Smolnogo,” *Novoe Vremya*, 6 January 2002.

⁹⁶ Vladimir Kovalyev, “Yakovlev and Cherkesov: A tense 12 months,” *St. Petersburg Times*, 18 May 2001.

⁹⁷ For example Cherkesov did not attend the opening of an Aleksandr Nevsky statue. M. Bugrov, “Zdes’ kazhdyi kamen’ kogo-to znaet,” *Novaya gaeta v Sankt-peterburge*, 13 May 2002.

⁹⁸ “Kto pravit v Peterburge,” *Peterburgskii Chas Pik*, 27 July 2000.

Economic management was not part of the initial job description for the polpredy, nor does the polpred have any specific legal mandate or direct management responsibility for economic affairs. Yet our content analysis of official polpred engagements revealed that one third of his time is spent on economy-related activity. Why is this so?

It is important to remember the political culture within which the institution of presidential representative was introduced. In Soviet times there was no separation of political and economic power, quite the reverse, and this tradition of political authorities intervening in economic decisions continued even in the new conditions of market transition. Thus both elite and popular opinion would find it hard to imagine that the polpred would have any political authority and not also influence economic life. This assumption was reinforced by the general tenor of Putin's remarks, to the effect that the state had become too distant from the economy.⁹⁹

Similarly, Cherkesov himself stated "At the beginning of the 1990s there was the formula: shrink the state so as to free the individual in the economy. Unfortunately, in freeing ourselves from the state, individuals and economic actors lost the protection which only the state can provide."¹⁰⁰

At the same time, Cherkesov has claimed that "I never involve myself with economic management."¹⁰¹ On the other hand his words, and actions, indicate a willingness to take on the sort of economic role carried out in the past by Communist Party regional (obkom) secretaries – defending the interests of the region vis-à-vis the center, and trying to deal with crises as they erupt. Thus Cherkesov also said: "I propose that today and in the near future, our participation in economic procedures will be realized via the activities of anti-crisis managers - in the broad sense of this word. Such measures are pressing when conflicts arise in certain strategic areas for the economy or in city-forming enterprises."¹⁰² One example: an inspector from Cherkesov's office intervened to end the strike by private pilots which closed the city's ports for a day. They were protesting a proposed shift to state employment, which threatened to slash their \$1000 a month salaries.¹⁰³

Some of this activity is demand-driven: local managers appeal to political figures such as Cherkesov to help solve their problems. As one local factory manager put it, "the new power wants to win the trust of business. And business, like a prospective bride, is examining the powers, trying to see what it can expect."¹⁰⁴ Hence for example the Leningrad oblast electricity provider, Lenenergo, appealed to Cherkesov (and the oblast governor) before cutting off two communities for non-payment.¹⁰⁵ Cherkesov told an energy conference that it was "unacceptable" to have the EES company cut off energy to military bases, and he reportedly took the energy crisis in Arkhangel'sk directly "under control."¹⁰⁶ These interventions are less an assertion of power by Cherkesov, and more an example of him being dragged into ongoing policy stand-offs – an example of a kind of "bureaucratic capture" by local elites. In this complex network of lobbying activities, the "power vertical" of the presidential representatives has to compete with the influence of companies which network with patrons and allies both "horizontally" (locally, and in other regions) and "vertically" (in Moscow).

Like Russia as a whole, the northwestern economy has barely started to recover from its decade-long recession. There are pockets of viability – fuel and energy, food, timber – but otherwise the region's economy is in pretty sorry shape. In 1998 exports averaged \$514 per capita across Russia as a

⁹⁹ See for example Putin's annual address to the Federal Assembly, "Kakuyu Rossiyu my stroim," *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 11 July 2000.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Cherkesov by S. Shelin "Ya vernu gosudarstvu gosudarstvennoe," *Delo*, 18 September 2000.

¹⁰¹ Cherkesov interview by Denis Sysoev in *AiF SPB*, 26 December 2001.

¹⁰² Interview with Cherkesov by Anna Shcherbakova, "Cherkesov keeps a hand on state financing," *Moscow Times*, 28 March 2001.

¹⁰³ Vladimir Kovalev, "Problems of political amnesia," *Moscow Times*, 18 October 2001.

¹⁰⁴ *Vedomosti*, 19 February 2001.

¹⁰⁵ *Nevskoe Vremya*, 19 April 2001.

¹⁰⁶ Radio Mayak, 6 October, 2 November 2000.

whole. Leningrad oblast was above average, at \$904, as was Kareliya at \$643 (mainly timber), while Novgorod lagged at \$354 and Pskov at \$99.¹⁰⁷ From 1990-98 the Russian GDP fell on average by 54%: in the SZFO, Leningrad did best, falling “only” 47%, while the other regions ranged between Novgorod (48% drop) and Kareliya (53% drop).¹⁰⁸ From 1990-98 Pskov lost 29% of its jobs, Kareliya 25%, Novgorod 21% and Leningrad oblast 12%.

The scope for involvement of the polpred in long-range development planning is quite limited. For one thing, the national government’s own economic strategy is not very clear, and does not command a lot of support among economic managers. The federal district includes a broad swathe of territory with no particular economic logic or institutional structure linking together the economic activities of its component parts. Across Russia as a whole inter-regional trade has fallen dramatically since 1991, with the partial exception of food supplies. The Northwest is particularly disparate compared to other federal districts, with each part pulled in different direction – Belarus, Estonia, Finland. “The formation of a unified subject in the northwest thus far resembles an experiment in which it is not clear who is accountable or who will pay for unifying projects and who will push them through.”¹⁰⁹ Back in January 1991 the northwest regional economic cooperation association was formed. It included Kirov oblast (not part of the Northwest federal district).¹¹⁰ At the association’s April 2001 meeting, in Kirishi, only one governor showed up – the president of the association, Vladimir Yakovlev.¹¹¹ Cherkesov himself did not attend (he sent a deputy), and no high official came from Moscow. To all intents and purposes, the organization is moribund.

A May 2000 government decree promised a development plan for the region, but none has been forthcoming. Cherkesov admitted that “There is no district-wide economic development program,” nor could there be because there are no federal executive agencies at that level.¹¹² German Gref’s think tank, the Center for Strategic Projects, opened a branch in Petersburg in December 2000, with backing from local businesses such as Baltika brewery, Telecominvest and Rossiya bank.¹¹³ The development plan it issued in July 2001 drew harsh criticism from Novgorod governor Prusak, and others. Cherkesov created a special expert commission under local economist Yurii Solodukhin to draw up an alternative plan, which was issued in September.¹¹⁴

Putin himself met with eight of the SZFO region governors in Baldae, Novgorod in August 2000. The governors urged caution in reform of housing costs, and disagreed with economy minister German Gref when he proposed eliminating the forestry ministry.¹¹⁵ At a major conference on housing reform Cherkesov joined the governors of Nenets in warning against precipitate price increases.¹¹⁶

Cherkesov created an advisory committee of local business leaders, scheduled to meet on a monthly basis. In this he was emulating his boss, President Putin, who has made regular meetings with leading businessmen a routine fixture of his administration. The first meeting took place in November 2000. Six of the members of Cherkesov’s council are from Petersburg, and 1-2 from each of the other

¹⁰⁷ “Economic performance, public policies and living standards in North-west Russia,” Dmitri Zimine, St. Petersburg Centre for Russian Studies, June 2001.

¹⁰⁸ www.gsk.ru

¹⁰⁹ Sergei Ageev, “U semi nyanek,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 18 June 2001.

¹¹⁰ Kaliningrad is also part of the Central association, and Novogord – the Black Earth association.

¹¹¹ Artemii Smirnov, “ Proshchal’nyi yubilei,” *Ekspert Severo-zapad*, 2 April 2001.

¹¹² Itar-Tass SZ, 25 May 2001.

¹¹³ Konstantin Smirnov, “ Ekonomicheskoi politiki Germana Grefa klonirovali,” *Kommersant*, 18 November 2000.

¹¹⁴ E. Ozerova, “Ekonomicheskie orientiry,” *Peterburskii Chas Pik*, 22 August 2001; Yu. Voskresenskii, “Severo-Zapadu nuzhna vera,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 15 October 2001.

¹¹⁵ “Prezident pogruzaetsya v problemy,” *Troitskii prospekt*, (Arkhangel’sk) 8 August 2000; Dmitrii Nikolaev, “Za nas reshat bez nas?,” *Kaliningradskaya Pravda*, 5 August 2000; Ol’ga Kolotnecha, “Prezident poznakomilsya s Valdaem,” *Novgorodskie vedomosti*, 4 August 2000.

¹¹⁶ *Izvestiya*, 13 February 2002.

regions, including such leading firms as Lukoil, Baltika brewery, Lenenergo, Severstal, Syktyvkar Cellulose, Apatit chemicals, and the Admiralty Wharf shipyard.¹¹⁷ There were some notable absences from the gathering: no representative from Pskov, and the director of the giant oil refinery at Kirishi (which cooperates with Surgutneftegaz, a Lukoil rival) failed to show up.

Cherkesov's involvement with local business elites was seen as part of his unfolding political rivalry with Petersburg governor Yakovlev. Old adversaries of Yakovlev and those currying favor in Moscow have rallied around Cherkesov: "It seems that the big companies, like Baltika Brewery and Menatep St. Petersburg Bank, or those with mighty mother companies like Lenenergo (under the wing of EES), are Cherkesov's supporters."¹¹⁸ But Yakovlev has a strong base of support in local construction and retailing companies, and banks such as Baltoneksim Bank.¹¹⁹ Yakovlev has day-to-day control over the running of the city: the use of land, the issuance of permits, and the allocation of city contracts, something with which Cherkesov cannot compete. Yakovlev has established a visibility as an effective lobbyist for his city on the national stage.¹²⁰

Perhaps the most visible economic activity of the polpred is cheerleading for investment projects across the territory, and glad-handing foreign investors such as Totalfina, Dresdner Bank, and the US Eximbank.¹²¹ In February 2001 Cherkesov presided over a large international conference "Investments-2001: New Realities - New Capabilities of Northwestern Russia," which attracted 1200 participants.¹²² A follow-up conference was held in March 2002, bringing together officials from the SZFO regions. Cherkesov has created an investors' council and a commission for investors' rights. While foreign investors have found conditions attractive in Leningrad oblast and Novgorod, many have been stymied by the corruption and licensing regime of St. Petersburg. The Swedish pulp and paper giant AssiDoman were forced out of the Segezha pulp mill in Kareliya after sinking tens of millions into the project.

State sponsorship is typically regarded as key for long-term investors. In the words of Leningrad oblast vice-governor Grigorii Dvas, "if a project falls under the eye of the state, that means the negotiations go faster and the interest rate is kept to the minimum."¹²³ But the reality of the new Russian economy is that investment decisions are made on commercial criteria, and there is little local government officials can do to attract investors, apart from not scaring them away with excessive regulation. As Alfa Bank chairman explained to an investment conference in Kaliningrad "The drowning man has to save himself."¹²⁴

The star performer in attracting foreign investment is Leningrad oblast. It offers easy access to the Petersburg transport hub, but does not suffer from the city's Byzantine politics and license regime. In 1997 Leningrad province copied Novgorod's policies by adopting a number of laws which granted investment-related tax breaks for projects over \$1 million. In 2001 Leningrad oblast got more investment than Petersburg, including \$400 million from foreign investments such as RJ Reynolds, Philip Morris, Kraft, Henkel washing machines, Caterpillar, Ford in Vsevolozhsk, Ikea in Tikhvin, and new pulp mills operated by Knauf, AssiDoman and International Paper.¹²⁵ Two new ports for oil (Primorsk) and coal (Ust-Luga) exports are joining existing facilities at Vysotsk and Vyborg.

Cherkesov has also involved himself in some of the ongoing disputes over privatization and investment projects. Cherkesov has been supporting such major companies as Lukoil and Severstal. Severstal is a massive steel mill located in Cherepovets, Vologda, whose dynamic young director Aleksei

¹¹⁷ Sergei Slusarenko, "Putinskii podkhod k oligarkham," *Kommersant*, 25 November 2000.

¹¹⁸ Anna Shcherbakova, "Who's side are you on? A matter of 2 governors," *St. Petersburg Times*, 27 March 2001.

¹¹⁹ A.A. Mukhin, *Biznes-elita i gosudarstvennaya vlast'*, Moscow: Izd. GNOM I D, 2001, pp. 51-56.

¹²⁰ Yakovlev ranked seventh in the nation according to one expert survey – followed by Novgorod's Prusak at number 8. S. Turanov, "Luchshie lobbisti Rossii," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 20 March 2002.

¹²¹ "Kto takoi investor?," *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 2 April 2001.

¹²² "Protsess poshel," *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 5 March 2001.

¹²³ V. Gryaznevich, "Sub"ektivnyi faktor," *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 2 April 2001.

¹²⁴ A. Denisenkov, "Kaliningrad poluchil shifrovku iz tsentra," *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 17 December 2001.

¹²⁵ Lev Lur'e, "Kolebal evolyutsii," *Kommersant Vlast'*, 19 February 2002.

Mordashov has used its \$1 billion export revenue to create a powerful nationwide industrial conglomerate, buying iron ore deposits, coal mines, the Vostochnyi seaport and the Ulyanovsk auto factory. In an interview, Mordashov praised Cherkesov, saying his appointment “meant a new opportunity to build good relations between business and power” and “there is a big change in conditions that were present one year ago and today.”¹²⁶ Mordashov mentioned that he knew Cherkesov’s then deputy, Kuznetsov, from the time when he ran the Oktyabr railway, of which Severstal was the main customer. The Cherkesov-Mordashov relationship appears to be mutually beneficial, but one has the impression that Mordashov is probably big enough to deal directly with the Kremlin without the help of the polpred.¹²⁷ Still, Cherkesov helped Mordashov stop the sale of Vorkuta coal mine to Aleksandr Mamut’s Moscow-based MDM bank in December 2000. Vorkuta is the source of 80% of the coal for Severstal, which managed to buy a 15% stake in the coal mine.¹²⁸ Severstal has also invested in iron ore deposits in Murmansk, the pipe manufacturing facility at Izhorskii zavod in Petersburg, the chemical port terminal in Vysotsk.¹²⁹ MDM were however able to buy their way into the Kovdor mineral deposits in Murmansk, despite opposition from governor Yevdokimov.¹³⁰

Cherkesov also apparently has good relations with the oil giant Lukoil: one of his earliest meetings, in September 2000, was with Lukoil chairman Vagit Alekperov.¹³¹ Lukoil is investing heavily in the northwest region, as is Transneft, now completing its \$460 million Baltic oil export pipeline. Cherkesov helped Lukoil increase its operations in Nenets A.O. (against the governor’s wishes). The tender to develop the large Gamburtsev Val oilfield in that province was won by Severnaya neft, but Lukoil and other oil majors are disputing the sale.¹³² The other companies offered bonuses of \$100 to \$140 million, while Severnaya neft won with a bid of just \$7 million. Cherkesov said his office was monitoring the procurator’s investigation of the tender. Inside Petersburg, the Lenenergo firm is protesting an August 2001 decision by the city to create a new, city-owned corporation to supply electricity, using assets formerly used by Lenenergo.

It is not clear how much influence the polpred has over decisions regarding federal subsidies; federal orders for goods (an important lifeline for many Russian farms and factories); and the management of federal property. Novgorod governor Prusak complained that reforms led to the closing of Novgorod’s Sberbank branch and the oblast’s office of the forestry ministry.¹³³ These federal institutions now perform their functions from their branch offices in St. Petersburg. Prusak blamed this consolidation on the polpred reform, although Sberbank officials said it their own decision.

Cherkesov has been quite active in trying to salvage the precarious economy of Kaliningrad. He has expressed his frustration with the lack of a federal program for the region, with clear lines of responsibility.¹³⁴ In December 2000 the State Customs Committee (GTK) passed a resolution on the unification of tariffs which had the effect of abolishing the Kaliningrad Special Economic Zone, created by presidential decree back in 1996, which granted the zone tax exemption for all imports and exports.¹³⁵ With Cherkesov’s support, governor Yefremov a month later met with the head of the GTK and Prime Minister

¹²⁶ Ol’ga Romanova, “Dlya vedomostei,” *Vedomosti*, 4 November 2000.

¹²⁷ Oleg Lur’e, “Aleksi Mordashov: portret oligarkha,” *Novaya gazeta*, 16 August 2001.

¹²⁸ Natalya Gotova, “Russkya chernaya metallurgia vot-vot ob”edinit’sya,” *Kompaniya*, 12 February 2001; Natalya Gotova, “Ugolnye oligarkhy,” *Kompaniya*, 19 March 2001.

¹²⁹ *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 18 June 2001.

¹³⁰ Igor Korolkov, “MDM Group,” *Moscow Times*, 31 October 2001.

¹³¹ A. Klepikov, “Cherkesovskii forum,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 5 March 2001.

¹³² *Vremya Novostei*, 19 March 2001; D. Butrin, “Val pretkoveniya,” *Kommersant Vlast’*, 3 April 2001; V. Chernitsyn, “Voina s oligarkhami,” *Ekspert Sever-Zapad*, 7 May 2001; V. Sunsheva, “Orlovskim neftyaniкам sud ne ukaz,” *Komsomol’skaya Pravda*, 31 January 2002.

¹³³ “Nenuzhnyi progress,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 25 December 2000.

¹³⁴ Interviewed by Mikhail Kushtapin in *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 19 April 2001.

¹³⁵ Konstantin Smirnov, “Osobaya zona upushchennykh vozmozhnostei,” *Kommersant Vlast’*, 289 May 2001.

Mikhail Kasyanov, and then with President Putin. On 1 February the GTK issued an order withdrawing its earlier resolution.¹³⁶ Cherkesov intervened once again later in the year, when he opposed a new plan for reforming the region's economy proposed by economy minister Gref, one which would have closed the region's amber mine, in part to stop the smuggling of amber and related tax fraud.¹³⁷ Cherkesov is reported as saying "German Gref is a big enthusiast of Kaliningrad. However his words about developing the region for export production is incomplete and poorly thought through idea."¹³⁸

CONCLUSION

Has the introduction of the post of presidential representative been a success or failure, based on the experience of the northwest region? It is impossible to give a definitive answer to this question, since the aims of Putin in initiating this reform were rather opaque. Unlike some other regions, the northwest did not experience any serious challenges to the integrity and sovereignty of the Russian Federation. The presidential representative's achievements in clearing up corruption and impacting the more routine political and economic life of the region are decidedly modest.

The introduction of the presidential representative seemed designed to bring back a sense of coordination and direction to a chaotic and confused society. Also, perhaps, its advocates hoped to discreetly and cautiously smuggle back in some elements of the old Communist Party and Gosplan, hidden beneath a cloud of liberal democratic rhetoric and forms. One is reminded of former prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's favorite saying: "We hoped for something better, and got the usual."

¹³⁶ V. Bashkanova, "U osoboi zony osobye problemy," , " *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 19 February 2001.

¹³⁷ *Kommersant Vlast'*, No. 45, November 2001.

¹³⁸ Vladimir Zhukov, "Peterburg meshaet Kaliningrad," *Kommersant*, 12 April 2001.

TABLE ONE
STAFF OF PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT

The department heads were as follows:

First deputy Vladimir Isaevich V'yunov (responsible for supervision of military and security organs). V'yunov was born in 1947 in Stavropol. A colonel-general, he is a 1997 graduate of Frunze Military Academy, and in 1987 of the General Staff Academy. Served in the Caucasus and Pacific border guards, appointed department chief of the NW border district and in 1992 head of the district.

First deputy Aleksandr Petrovich Kuznetsov (responsible for work with the regional administrations, and the territorial representatives or “inspectors” of the polpred in the regions). Kuznetsov, Cherkesov’s second “first deputy,” was born in 1957 in Pskov, graduated from Leningrad Railways Institute in 1979, and from the Northwest Academy of State Service in 1996. He worked as deputy head and head of Smol’nyi district council, head of St Petersburg central railway station, deputy head of the October (NW region) Railway, and then head of the latter in June 1998. Kuznetsov was reportedly an old colleague of Putin under mayor Anatolii Sobchak.¹³⁹

Deputy Sergei Borisovich Sviridov (cadres and awards). Sviridov was formerly an official in the central apparatus of the FSB in Moscow. Cherkesov explained in interview that experience in the security agencies is good preparation for work with cadres.¹⁴⁰

Deputy Aleksandr Vyacheslavovich Fedorov (law, implementation of federal laws and presidential directives). Fedorov was formerly deputy head of St. Petersburg directorate of FSB.

Deputy Valerii Dmitrevich Bol'shakov (coordinating federal organs, work of the Presidential Main Control Administration). Bol'shakov worked in the FSB, then as deputy procurator of St. Petersburg, then most recently as committee head in the Legislative Assembly. Bol'shakov is responsible for the work of the Main Control Administration of the president.¹⁴¹ The regional branch of the presidential Main Control Administration was incorporated into the staff of the polpred after the latter’s creation.

Deputy Yevgenii Ivanovich Makarov (political-information work). Makarov is the former chairman of the St. Petersburg/Leningrad Federation of Trade unions.

Deputy Lyubov' Pavlovna Sovershaeva (economic development and financial control, especially of the federal budget and federal programs). Sovershaeva was formerly vice-governor of Leningrad oblast, and chair of the oblast Committee for the Management of State Property (i.e. privatization).

Deputy Andrei Georgievich Stepanov (Kaliningrad). Stepanov was appointed special inspector for Kaliningrad on 21 September 2001. Prior to that he was chief federal inspector for the Leningrad oblast. From 1994-96 he was vice mayor of Petersburg, and head of the trade and food committee, and after that president of the “Reforms and politics” social movement.

¹³⁹ *Kommersant*, 25 July 2000.

¹⁴⁰ Interview by RIA Rosbizneskonsalting, August 2000, on web at www.pskov.ru/opinion/opinion1b.html

¹⁴¹ Artemii Smirnov, “Predchuvstvie zolotogo dozhdy,” *Ekspert Severo-Zapad*, 5 March 2001.

TABLE TWO MAIN FEDERAL INSPECTORS, BY REGION

Komi Republic

Aleksei Fedorovich Grishin, formerly chief of staff of the Komi president.

Kareliya Republic

Valentin Aleksandrovich Shmykov, born 1943, finished forestry school, went into Communist party work, then entered the KGB in 1980, becoming deputy head of Kareliya KGB in 1986, later becoming head of the Federal Tax Police in Kareliya.¹⁴²

Vologda Oblast

Vladimir Vasil'evich Zolotov, formerly head of the Federal Tax Police in Vologda.

Kaliningrad Oblast

Aleksandr Vladimirovich Orlov, former presidential representative in the region.

Murmansk Oblast

Vladimir Losev worked in Murmansk 1975-93 as an engineer in the Nerpa shipyard, then as an instructor in the Severomorsk Communist Party gorkom, then in the FSB at the Apatit company, then from 1994 in the FB at Sosnovy bor nuclear plant.

Novgorod Oblast

Vladimir Vladimirovich Chistyakov, former presidential representative in the region.

Leningrad Oblast

Andrei Georgievich Stepanov, formerly head of social movement "Reforms and politics." Replaced in September 2001 by Nikolai Sedykh.

St. Petersburg

At first carried out by first deputy polpred Valerii Bol'shakov, then from 9 May 2001 by Nikolai Vinnichenko.

Pskov Oblast

Aleksandr Vladimirovich Selivanov, formerly head of the Pskov control administration.

Nenets Autonomous Okrug

Al'bert Maratovich Kharisov, former chief adviser in office of presidential representative in the region.

Arkhangel'sk Oblast

Aleksei Alekseevich Yermakov, former deputy head of Arkhangel'sk garrison and deputy head of an air-defense division. Since 1997 he was also an adviser to the oblast administration on civil defense, emergencies and relations with military units.

¹⁴² "Samyi glavnyi inspektor v republike," *Severnaya Kur'er* (Petrozavodsk), 8 August 2000.

TABLE THREE**MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY, BY REGION**

(administration representative listed first, legislature listed second)

Komi Republic

Rakhim Azizboevich Azimov

Yevgenii Nikitovich Trofimov

Kareliya Republic

Yurii Ivanovich Ponomarev

Viktor Nikolaevich Stepanov

Vologda Oblast

Valerii Ivanovich Fedorov

Gennadii Timofeevich Khripel'

Kaliningrad Oblast

Valerii Nikolaevich Ustyugov

Nikolai Petrovich Tulaev

Murmansk Oblast

Andrei Grigor'evich Gur'ev

Vyacheslav Alekseevich Popov

Novgorod Oblast

Gennady Eduardovich Burbulis

Mikhail Mikhailovich Sorokin

Leningrad Oblast

Sergei Aleksandrovich Vasil'ev

Valerii Aleksandrovich Golubev

St. Petersburg

Sergei Mikhailovich Mironov

Mikhail Gennad'evich Mikhailovskii

Pskov Oblast

Mikhail Vital'evich Margelov

Nikolai Yakovlevich Medvedev

Nenets Autonomous Okrug

Yurii Nikolaevich Volkov

Tat'yana Ivanovna Konovalova

Arkhangel'sk Oblast

Mikhail Antonovich Korobeinikov

Yurii Sergeevich Sivkov

TABLE FOUR WORK OF THE APPARATUS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVE

<i>Sphere of activity</i>	Events, meetings	
	number	as percent of total
Economics	83	34
of which		
socio-economic situation	12	5
socio-economic cooperation	26	11
investment	16	7
Relations with business	4	2
federal programs	2	1
technology	1	
public administration	36	15
of which:		
laws and implementation of laws	15	6
international relations, diplomacy	31	13
social policy (including housing, health care)	23	9
Security	16	7
of which:		
Defense	7	3
border issues	1	
law enforcement	6	2
Customs	1	
culture, science, education	15	6
military structures	13	5
organizational questions, honorary occasions	9	4
Crime	4	2
of which:		
corruption	2	1
mass media	3	1
Elections	3	1
Environment	2	1
Other	7	3
<i>TOTAL</i>	245	100

Source: Derived from information provided by the SZFO press office at <http://falcon.sinaps.ru/polpred/news.html>

TABLE FIVE ELECTIONS IN THE NORTHWEST FEDERAL DISTRICT

Region	Date of election (turnout, percent)	Head at time of election	Election winner (votes, percent)	Second place candidate (votes, percent)	Position of presidential administration
Murmansk	26.03.2000 (69.1)	Yu. A. Yevdokimov	Yu.A. Yevdokimov. (86.7)	Against all (4.8)	Took place before Cherkesov's appointment
St. Petersburg	14.05.2000 (47.7)	V.A. Yakovlev	Yakovlev (72.7)	I. Yu. Artemev (14.7)	Took place before Cherkesov's appointment
Pskov	12.11.2000 (54.1)	Ye. E. Mikhailov	Ye. E. Mikhailov (28.0)	V. I. Bibikov (15.1)	No clear position ¹⁴³
Kaliningrad	19.11.2000* (47.0)	L.P. Gorbenko.	V. G. Yegorov B.G. (56.5)	L. P. Gorbenko (33.7)	Favored winner
Arkhangel'sk	17.12.2000 * (36.5)	A. A. Yefremov	A. A. Yefremov (58.5)	N. A. Malakov (31.6)	No clear position ¹⁴⁴
Nenets A.O.	14.01.2001 (73.8)	V.A. Butov.	V. A. Butov (68.3)	A.V. Smakov (13.6)	Favored Shmakov
Komi	16.12.2001 (48.5)	Yu.A. Spiridonv	V.A. Torlopov (39.8)	Yu. A. Spiridonov (34.9)	Favored Torlopov
Kareliya	28.04.2002 (52)	S.L. Katandov	S.L. Katandov (53.4)	A.E. Myaki (14)	Favored Katandov

* - second round

Sources:

http://www.fci.ru/elections/glav/gl_sub51.htm

http://www.fci.ru/elections/glav/gl_sub78.htm

http://www.fci.ru/elections/glav/gl_sub60.htm

http://www.fci.ru/elections/glav/gl_sub39.htm

http://www.fci.ru/elections/glav/gl_sub29.htm

http://www.fci.ru/elections/glav/gl_sub83.htm

http://www.fci.ru/calend/11_2231101_161201.htm

<http://www.komi.ru/news/article.php?sid=1358>

<http://www.strana.ru/stories/02/03/05/2561/132684.html>

<http://gov.ru/main/regions/region.html>

¹⁴³ Mikhailov did make some pro-presidential statements, for example that he supported the Unity Party but only if Putin also supported it. "V kakuyu partiyu vstupite?", *Kommersant Vlast*, 22 May 2001.

¹⁴⁴ Yefremov was reportedly close to Lukoil, which in turn is seen as close to Cherkesov. F. Selivanov, "Malen'kii Yeltsin, ryzhii i bez 'sem'i'", *Kommersant – S-Peterburg*, 27 February 2001.

TABLE SIX ECONOMIC INDICATORS, NORTHWEST REGION

	Population 1.01.1998 (1000s)	% urban	Average wage November 2000 (rubles)	Cost of living, minimum basket November 2000 (rubles)
Arkhangel'sk	1,492	74	3026	1249
Nenets A.O.	46	61	5689	n.a.
Vologda	1,334	66	2724	1050
Kaliningrad	943	80	2200	945
Murmansk	1,035	94	3946	1365
Novgorod	737	72	1988	925
St. Petersburg	4,716	100	2875	1444
Kareliya Republic	775	74	2687	1168
Komi Republic	1163	76	3902	1673
Pskov	819	65	1604	941

Source: SPB Vesti, 28 July 2001, Ekspert Severo-Zapad, 18 June 2001, p. 36.