

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

"HOW DEMOCRATIC IS TODAY'S RUSSIA?"

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ANDREW KUCHINS: Welcome to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. I'm Andy Kuchins, the director of the Russian and Eurasian program, and I think we have a very interesting program this morning. The topic: "Russia: How Sovereign? How Democratic?" Russia has certainly been in the news quite a bit – quite a bit – in the last week, maybe a bit too much for the Russians' taste I imagine. In fact, I'm wondering whether the Russians are actually regretting the fact that they're chairing the G-8 meeting. (Laughter.)

You know, in the 1990s we talked about Russia's transition to democracy. It turned out that maybe that wasn't exactly where the trend was going. When Mr. Putin came to power and the popular term became *upravliaemaia demokratiya* "managed democracy," but in the last year or so the new hip term in Moscow is *suverennaia demokratiya* – "sovereign democracy." What does that really mean? What does that mean for Russia? What does that mean for looking at the Russian political system in a comparative perspective? What does it mean actually for Russia's relations with Europe, the United States and some of its neighbors? I think those are questions that our two illustrious panelists will be addressing today.

And we couldn't have really a better set-up for this discussion than having Mike McFaul and Sergei Markov. Mike and Sergei, well known to this crowd – Mike a long-time senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, professor of political science at Stanford University and also a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, and Sergei currently running the Institute for Political Studies in Moscow. But Mike and Sergei have a long and storied history together, which I'd known them all – known both of them for about – well, Mike almost 20 years, and Sergei for about 16 or so, and it was through Mike that I met Sergei.

MICHAEL MCFAUL: Eleven or eight. (Laughter.)

MR. KUCHINS: And if you believe that, I've got some nice property in Florida you might want to look at. But together back in 1990, Mike and Sergei formed the first discussion club, serious discussion club in Moscow, talking about democracy as much as democratic development. Mike and Sergei wrote one of the first books about Russian democracy back in 1993. I think Mike actually might have a copy of it over there. And Mike and Sergei together really founded the politics program, the Russian domestic politics program, over at the Carnegie Moscow Center back in the early-mid '90s. So they have a long history of collaboration. And they also have a long history as *opponyenti*, as I think they have quite different perspectives on Russian democracy.

Subsequently – and you know they have a long relationship as I said. I remember very fondly at Mike's wedding in Palo Alto in 1993, as I recall, but Sergei was one of the most enthusiastic participants, you know, yelling out, "*Gorko, gorko, gorko*" – it was a nice moment.

Sergei subsequently has gone on to bigger and better things, and is one of the most visible and authoritative political analysts in Moscow, and very well connected – so well connected that I think his new name might be Sergei "Kremlin Insiderovich" Markov – (laughter) – as you see he's

often quoted, "Sergei Markov, close to the Kremlin." (Laughter.) Kremlin connected. His office is actually very close to the Kremlin, has a spectacular view of the Kremlin. I encourage you to go there. And Mike as well, after leaving his full-time position with Carnegie and going on to Stanford and other things.

I have said way too much by introduction. You know, typically we have these discussions as lunch discussions, but decided that today it'd be better do it as a – I don't really want any food in the room. (Laughter.) Let's put it that way, okay? I don't want this degenerating into a food fight. But I'm sure it won't. But we're going to have quite a debate. And Sergei will lead off, and then Mike will follow. So let me just turn the floor over to you, Sergei.

SERGEI MARKOV: Thank you for your wonderful, kind introduction. First of all, I want to give congratulation to congratulate Mike to his new position as director of the Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law –

MR. KUCHINS: That's his 16th position that he's –

MR. MARKOV: Yeah, yeah, yeah – understands very well, you know. And I've already been discussing with Mike many years, and I think we need such friendly discussion of the issues.

My position – and you're absolutely right, I generally support Vladimir Putin ruling, and I've been very critical to the Yeltsin regime all this time. But, nevertheless, now I want to discuss more but in an academic style, and I'm not going to say any propaganda. If some of you will catch my propaganda, I immediately will pay \$10 as -- (Laughter.)

So –

MR. KUCHINS: This could be fun. (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: And lucrative.

MR. MARKOV: Yeah. And so I will express my own opinion.

We decided we would start from this report. This report, you know – remind me a little bit – the report in which we took part about three years ago. This was a report of the Council of National Strategy about the oligarchic regime and so on. We as academicians, you know, wrote this report criticizing excessively big role of oligarchs in Russian politics. But before this report had been issued, one guy, most of you know him – he put a few sentences – he added a few sentences in this report. And he said that the leader of the oligarchs, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, should be stopped by any means. And this report had been I think more or less realistic, but everybody quoted exactly these three or four sentences, and politicians used this report very intensively for solving political questions. Same here.

When I read this report I found a very lot of – 95 percent, you know, it's very reasonable, a lot of more or less objective remarks, but there are few very political ones. One of course is the title: "Russia's Wrong Direction." (Laughter.) And everybody quoted it. There were a lot of

Russian articles over this. Another few sentences about post-Soviet states, so-called, about relations with neighboring countries [were also very political]. And there are only negative terms about Russian relations with neighboring countries.

And now we can see how politicians use it. We can see implementation of this policy. Vice President Cheney visited post-Soviet countries. He'd come to Lithuania and he was giving this speech. He reminded me – and not only me, of a speech by the secretary of the Communist Party or the chairman of the Communist Party, or some kind of alternative Communist Party, who wants a war, and now, as I understand, Congress decided to issue the medal for the victory in the Cold War. So he came to celebrate the winning of the Cold War, and he came to say, look, now who is the master of this house? And we will tell who is right, who is wrong. Then he criticized Russia for so-called democracy, and after this he went on to Kazakhstan and cheered his new friend, Mr. Nazarbayev. Have any of you visited Kazakhstan and found a lot of democracy? (Laughter.) There is stability, of course, also in Kazakhstan. I don't think – I don't want to say that Nazarbayev is a very bad leader. He took a country is in very difficult condition and so on, but who can say that Nazarbayev is a strong proponent of democracy? Who can say that there is more democracy in Kazakhstan than in Russia? It's implementation of the policy; it's how politicians use academicians.

First of all, they gave them a grant on which they wrote a lot of good stuff, and then they added a few sentences to this – [Cheney] used it. I can tell you about how U.S. relationship could be and what could be the major topic – cooperation, antiterrorism, and Iran for example, and it's very important for both countries to respect each other and to further our common interests and such. But I'm sure you've heard plenty of such words from Russia, and I think this is so obvious that what we don't need to discuss it.

I will discuss another issue, which I think also should be discussed. It's about Russian democracy. First of all, I understand of course that Russia still hasn't constructed good democratic institutions. Russia is still on the way to democracy. If somebody will tell me that Russia is a democratic country, I will disagree. At the same time, if somebody told me that it was [democratic in] the '90s, I would also have disagreed. And I was at all times a proponent of the idea of the democratization of Russia and strong alliance with the United States. And maybe some of you know that I took part in this foreign political club – in fact, we were as strong as the Communist Party, and I was under suspicion and monitored – how to say – I was watched by the KGB and they prohibited me to travel abroad. And now it's for me a little bit culturally difficult to deal with the new people who now come to the leadership, because they have another cultural approach.

But, nevertheless, reports like this, and such political actions, like Mr. Cheney is doing, does it help us go forward to democracy? Is it a help to build the U.S.-Russia alliance? No. They create problems for us. We try to – how to say – to make propaganda of the U.S.-Russia relationship and we try to promote Russia more to the world democratic institutions. And this kind of thing creates problems for us. And now the biggest problem is the failure of United States soft power. The United States has been – how to say – a leading force in fighting for the freedoms and democracy in the whole 20th century. And I remember very well when we were listening to Radio Liberty and Voice of America and other things in Soviet time, it was real voices of freedom and it helped us out a lot. It helped the democratic revolution in Russia, which happened in 1991.

Without those examples of a big and prosperous and just democratic country, it would have been impossible to have such an anti-Communist democratic revolution in Russia.

But what has happened now? What kind of good example can we address now? Iraq? A president's strange promises that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq? Millions of people – hundreds of millions of people were telling him: Iraq does not have weapons of mass destruction. And he on the contrary says, “Who cares? We’ll put our troops there.” And what happened now? They didn't find WMDs.

I also should – because in this report, a lot of people from the Clinton administration contributed – I should ask those people, “What about Kosovo?” The U.S. was bombing Belgrade at the same time as ethnic cleansing, but this ethnic cleansing happened anyway. Hundreds of thousands of Serbs were cleansed from Kosovo; hundreds of the churches, Orthodox churches, were destroyed. Maybe for Muslim people, you know, it doesn't matter. For us it matters. And this technically didn't happen under the record for the United States.

Look what happened in Latvia and Estonia. The United States invited them to join the NATO democratic countries. Maybe they look to you as a democratic country. They were free, but a huge portion of the population has no civic rights there, only because they're ethnic Russians. And please don't combine democracy and true support there. It's absolutely different things. And we want to point that those politicians that think Russia is wrong, [they aren't genuinely] democratic politicians, though they are treated as such by Washington, especially in post-Soviet countries.

I think there are two big matters which dominate U.S. politics towards Russia. One comes from the Cold War and it regards Russia as still a rival country, and as a result Russian influence as a rival interest. When I look in the U.S. media, and especially through Russian relations with another country, we can perform content analysis, and we can find Russian influence is regarded as rival interest 95 percent of the time. It's a legacy of the Cold War. Sometimes when I listen to some of the politicians like Mr. Cheney and like Mr. McCain and like Mr. Brzezinski, and I think -- and other guys –

Q (Off mike)?

MR. MARKOV: Yeah. I want to say, please, take your head out of the ice of the Cold War. It's over. It doesn't exist anymore. If there are any here, please tell them.

And another idea, which came from the '90s, is that Russia is weak country and the United States don't need to respect its interests. You remember this phrase – “Why does Russia matter?” Luckily they say that Russian matters. But, on the other hand, even in this report I could find some phrases that the United States is concerned about the security of Russian nuclear technologists, the Russian nuclear arsenal – forget about this. Don't be concerned about this. It's over. When it was Yeltsin, this was correct. Since Putin's arrival, after a few years it's already over; it's under control. And Russia is already not so weak. Russia will be stronger and stronger. And this should not be forgotten, and United States should learn how to respect Russian interests. Frankly speaking,

maybe it's the right thing for the U.S. in the whole world. The United States should learn very well how to respect another country's interests.

And, you know, I think that it's – when I look at Cheney, when I look at Iraq, I think it's not that Russia is going in the wrong direction; it's that the United States is going in the wrong direction. I've heard many times that Russia is retreating from democracy and so on. It's one of the toughest mistakes, because in '90s Russia had no democracy. That's why Russia cannot retreat from democracy. We know the problem of democracy ourselves very well. It's about freedom, especially on TV. It's about NGOs; it's about government elections, and so on. All these problems exist, no doubt, but in '90s [politics] destroyed the economy. By the way, in this report there's not enough about destroying the critical parts of the economy, because when I look at the figures they are not I think not very good data, because they show that GDP decreased only 40 percent, but it wasn't just 40 percent. There was a dramatic decrease in the standard of living and declining social institutions. In 1993 there was the coup d'état of Boris Yeltsin and then the shelling of the parliament. It was not democracy. It was a real coup d'état. He violated the constitution. He took all of the power, and when the whole constitutional court was against him, when parliament was against him, he just took tanks and just attacked the parliament building, and it was supported.

In 1996, it was free and fair elections. I really believe in this. But there was also the decline of moral values, taking control of – (unintelligible) – in Chechnya, and a great increase in criminality in the country. I think what Russia needs first of all for promoting democracy is cleansing the sense of democracy from the chaos of the '90s. And we should cleanse the sense of democracy from what the United States is doing right now, because it's very difficult to say now, look, go to democracy and United States may promote democracy, especially in the post-Soviet countries. I think every dog that bites against Russia in Ukraine and Georgia immediately has a few friends who are running to give them money. Is it promoting democracy? No, it's formation of Weimar syndrome in Russia. And this Weimar syndrome is one of the biggest problems for Russia. And I think we should – maybe I should stop here to give Mike the opportunity to talk.

(Laughter.)

MR. KUCHINS: Sergei, we want you to tell us what you really think. Don't hold back.

MR. MARKOV: Yeah. I'll have a chance to continue because I have a realistic strategy how to promote democracy.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, that's an excellent start to our discussion. I knew this was going to be fun.

Okay, Mike, go for it.

MR. MARKOV: Well, first, just I know that Mike is very energetic and very sophisticated and educated. That's why I ask Mike, because English is not my native language, to not speak too well and –

MR. KUCHINS: So you want Mike to speak in Russian? (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: After 16 years of sitting through three-hour seminars in Russian language with you, you're going to ask me in my home country to speak in your language? Interesting.

MR. MARKOV: No, no, no, not at all.

MR. MCFAUL: Okay, I'll try to be slow and deliberate, and maybe –

MR. MARKOV: – quick or something.

MR. MCFAUL: Okay, I'll try to be slow and deliberate.

And, thank you, Sergei, for your remarks. I'm glad to be here. Thank you all for coming. Usually we have luncheons, as you know, and there is sometimes rumor around here that people just come for the lunch and not for the entertainment. And the crowd today demonstrates that some people just come to the lunch, but the core of you are here for the substance, so I appreciate that.

MR. KUCHINS: Circus but no bread. (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: Right.

Now, I thought we were going to debate Russian democracy or what's Russian sovereign democracy. And I want to actually focus my remarks on that. I find it interesting – and I just by way of comment – to note that most of Sergei's remarks were about American foreign policy. I find this often in a discussion about Russian democracy that we change the subject – that we talk about Iraq, that we talk about Kosovo – we talk about all these other things. And not to get too much into Cold War analogies, but I remember other leaders in the Kremlin who also – to defer discussion of the substance of internal things always looked to foreign enemies and blaming foreign enemies. This is the first time I've heard that American soft power is responsible for the lack of democracy. But I'll touch on that, and I'll be happy to debate with Sergei his criticisms of American foreign policy, much of which I share. I'm not going to argue with you about Iraq as a model for democracy. That's a ridiculous statement to me, and I'm not going to defend that. But partly because that's not what we came here to discuss – at least that's not what I thought.

I'm tempted to talk about Cheney. Should I? No. (Laughter.)

MR. KUCHINS: You're going to have to at some point.

MR. MCFAUL: All right, all right. Well, a couple of things. How “Russia's Wrong Direction” here on this report and in Cheney's remarks about Russia – let's just leave aside for a minute his comments about blackmail and oil, which I will be happy to debate, but that's not about Russian democracy.

I read that speech very, very carefully. I didn't see anything analytically to disagree with about Russia. And, Sergei, you're going to have to do more than just say there was no democracy in the '90s, to then say, as you just did, we are now building democracy today. Help us understand.

You can't have it both ways. You can't say there was no democracy in the '90s; therefore, critics like this that talk about the wrong direction are wrong. Well, help me understand then what are the democratic reforms in the last five years that are pushing Russia in a democratic way? Because as you're going to hear from me, I don't see it. That's what Cheney talked about too. So let's not just throw away the analysis. We're being – I don't work for the American government. I certainly don't work for Dick Cheney. I worked for his enemies in the last two elections, including by the way one of the co-chairs of [the CFR task force], so it's very odd for me to hear that Dick Cheney is taking his foreign policy cues from John Edwards. That is really strange to me.

But – and I want to say very upfront you're absolutely right about the double standards about Kazakhstan. I couldn't agree with you more. It was a big mistake. If I were, you know, advising the vice president on that, I would have made the same kind of speech in Kazakhstan. You're exactly right. So no disagreement with me there.

Where I do disagree with you is that this is about the Cold War. The Cold War was maybe a nostalgic time for Russian foreign policy – maybe, I don't know – I don't miss it, but maybe you all do. But to me Cheney and John Edwards for God's sakes, who hadn't thought a minute about foreign policy during the Cold War, I don't think you can throw all this into just going back to the Cold War, because actually I see it in a very different way. I see it as a typical American uneasiness and difficult relationship with a strategic country that is autocratic. And I think it goes way back in our history – it doesn't begin with the Cold War – it goes right back to the American War of Independence, when we had an alliance with a French monarchy for a very strategic end. And if you go back and you read what our Founding Fathers said about it, there was a debate between so-called "realists" and so-called "liberals" back then. It then got really messy when there was a revolution in that monarchy and there was a debate in our country: Do we support the revolutionaries? – right? Do we support our liberal values, or do we support our realpolitik interests?

And I'm not – I don't want to excuse foreign policy. I'm trying to explain it – right? That for you to say this is hypocrisy, I say yes. Yes, it is. And it's a long tradition in America. If you say that it's all to cover up something else, then I say you're not understanding American foreign policy – not excusing it, I'm trying to explain it. But to say, you know, I wrote it down when you said the U.S. should learn to respect another country's national interests. I agree. But Russia should learn to respect America's traditions and foreign policy too. The way you talk, you want us to be like a 19th century European country. We're not. We have a different tradition, we have a different historical experience. So in a way all this “be like us” – just talk about national interests – I mean, Putin said it in his speech too – as if democracy is not part of the definition in some measure of American national interests, I think is just a fundamental misreading of America's history and American foreign policy. It doesn't have to do with Dick Cheney, it doesn't have to do with the Cold War, it doesn't have to do with Democrats and Republicans. I think it has to do with something much deeper and more profound.

I don't want to debate American foreign policy. I thought we came here to talk about Russian democracy and Russian sovereignty. And I want to make just a couple of points, first about democracy and second about the issue of sovereignty, which I actually think was really quite an interesting idea. Sergei has written about this in the Russian context, and I want to kind of

expand it out and see if we can find some common understanding about the idea of sovereign democracy.

First, is Russia a democracy? My answer is no. I want to hear your response to it, because you said it wasn't in the '90s. So something must have happened in the last decade that I missed that made Russia more democratic. I want to hear exactly what you mean by that, Sergei.

In American academia – not to be imperial, but that's where I was trained – well, actually I was trained in Britain, but I've spent a lot of time in American academia – we make a distinction between liberal democracy and electoral democracy. Liberal democracy of course is elections – and I'll get to elections in a minute – but then all the other institutions that you talked about, right? – civil society, checks, judiciary, independent media, a competitive political party system. I think Larry Diamond's book on developing democracy, which by the way mentions Russia only in passing in a few sentences, so it's not a book about Russia – you know, this is always – when you're in Moscow it's always, Why are you always beating up on us? You know, you have unfair standards. And I just want to say, “No, that's not true.” There are some kind of, I think, universal kind of – “universal” is too strong a word – commonly held conceptions about what liberal democracy is. And, you know, I say go look at Larry Diamond's book. I think he gives you a definition.

And in our book over here, with Mr. Petrov and Ryabov, we actually used Larry Diamond's template. He has 10 points, I think, and we say, you know, about three or four of them exist in Russia, six or seven of them do not. It's not blanket. Russia is not Turkmenistan. There are some liberal institutions that are still alive and well. But by our analysis in the book, it's not liberal democracy. And I don't even think that's interesting to debate. I'm pretty sure Sergei agrees with me.

Moreover, I know that Sergei agrees with me that Russia has never been a liberal democracy, and I don't disagree with that. We actually wrote together in the fall of 1991, when we wrote the introduction to this book, we wrote in the introduction that we were really worried about the rise of executive power after August 1991. This book was published before 1993. And the rise of executive power means the diminished role for political parties, and we thought that was bad for democracy. And I think, you know, read the chapter again today – it stands up pretty well. And just to quote us from 13 years ago, “Whether this diminished role for political parties and associations” – that's civil society – “is temporary or permanent and remains uncertain.” So there were already questions back 13 years ago. So that whole mantra of Sestanovich is an apologist for Yeltsin – you know, maybe you can say it to him, but you can't say it to me. I published too many thousands of pages about the problems of liberal democracy, and maybe they need to be translated into Russian, I understand. But I'm not interested in that debate either. I think that's, with all due respect, that is propaganda when that is said.

Very interesting to me is: Is there a minimalist democracy in Russia, and what is the trajectory of Russian democracy? I agree with Sergei that it was unfortunate title for this paper, this Council on Foreign Relations paper. The original title, just so you know, I was a member of this task force – the original title was “Wrong Direction for U.S.-Russian Relations.” And somebody changed it right at the end to put Russia there. And, you know, I agree with you that

was wrong. But analytically – just for public relations that was wrong – but analytically I don't think the statement, either in the title or in the paper or in Cheney's speech, is wrong. I think it's pretty clear that Russia has moved in an anti-democratic direction over the last six years. Now, I'm not talking about the strength of the state, I'm not talking about standards of living, I'm not talking about popularity. Those to me are not concepts that measure democracy, and if we need to debate that, let's debate it. But to me I think it's pretty clear that if you use standard definitions of democracy – and let's just even take the word democracy out of it. Let's talk about pluralism or political competition – more neutral words, right? I think the checks on executive power today are weaker than they were in 2000, and I think you can go right through the list of the things that check presidential power in all presidential systems and then look at Russia and say it's in the wrong direction. So the media weaker today than 2006? Absolutely. More competition? No. Less competition. The governors – and, again, I'm not talking about good guys and bad guys, I'm talking about checks on executive power. Did they check power in some way five years ago, 10 years ago? Yes. Are they less of a check today? Yes. oligarchs, really bad guys – no Andrei Sakharovs here. But in other, you know, as a check on executive power, they played a role six years ago; they play a whole lot less of a role today. The Duma. A weak check way back, you know, 1991, 1993, a weak check, but a check nonetheless that played a role, and I can go through them in the '90s where the Duma played a role in checking executive power. Does the Duma play the same kind of role today in Russia? I would say absolutely no way.

Federation Council. Again, not a great institution in the '90s, but is it weaker today as a check on executive power? Yes.

Political parties independent of the Kremlin. Were they strong in 1991? No, read our book. Were they strong in 1995? No. Were they strong in 1999? No. Are they weaker today as a result of Putin's reforms? Yes.

Civil society. Were they strong in 1991? Yes. Right? Where's civil society? Right, there's 800,000 people on Manezh Square. That was a time when society in their mobilization and association had a causal role in politics in Russia today – in Russia back then. Are they doing that today? I would say less. Yes, they're doing it. Actually in civil society I think it's probably the most misunderstood and most robust part of the check on Mr. Putin. I hope we can debate that. But I would say you add all this up and it's simply less power – more power in the hands of the Kremlin and less power on those institutions that check it.

And then we could talk about the public chamber and the kind of parastatal inventions to substitute or mimic a democracy, you know, these shuras that have been created and which Sergei is a part of. We can talk about whether that's good or bad for democracy – you know, I don't know. I'm kind of agnostic. I think the jury is still out. But, you know, appointed bodies versus elected bodies – I prefer elected bodies.

Now, the second part is a harder question, and that is the minimal definition of democracy. Does Russia still meet the minimalist definition? And, again, in social science, political science here in America, we don't use an American definition, we use a foreigner by the way – his name is Joseph Schumpeter – and he wrote – this is a standard political science 101 Stanford University taught by my colleagues that don't do anything with Russia, right? They don't know about Russia,

they don't care about Russia – they teach courses on comparative democratization. This is his definition, which you'll see quoted a zillion times in American academia: "The institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote." Adam Przeworski came along later and kind of – in a similar way but maybe a little more complicated – Przeworski, who also – is a classic definition – he says a minimalist definition of democracy is the rules for the election are certain and don't change right before the vote, so that we can predict the electoral rules of the game ahead of time. The result of the election, however, has some uncertainty – right? We don't know ahead of time who is going to win the election. And the third key component for Przeworski is that once there's been this process the actual result is allowed to hold on. That is, somebody doesn't come in, like Mr. Yanukovich or Mr. Kuchma, says, you know, we didn't like that result so we're going to declare a different result. That's not democracy.

Now, I think it's – and, by the way, some other people would add more characteristics; I'm not going to today. Some would say you have to have full franchise. Some would say the state is not arbitrary to control who gets to compete and who doesn't get to compete in big issues, say in Iran or in some regional elections in Russia, and some degree of a level playing field. But, you know, come on, you know, I find that to be very, very subjective. The '96 election and 2000 elections in America – we'll talk about that in a minute, about level playing field. That's a more complex system.

Using these more simplistic ones, though, does Russia meet the definition today? I think it's arguable, and you know I hope you can debate it. But my answer could be somewhat provocative as well. Russia does not meet that minimalist definition today. And the key word for me is competition and uncertainty, those two together. That is to say here I disagree with you about the '90s, Sergei. We're just talking about competition – not all the big lovely things, you know, the whistles and stuff of democracy, right? – you know, rule of law, you know, the laundry list that you would get from an AID official – no offense – I saw one come in. But, you know, the laundry list of liberal democracy, let's just leave that aside, and this minimal thing: Was there political competition in the '90s that mattered and uncertainty about the elections, and has that increased or decreased over time? I would say it's clear it has decreased.

Think about '93 parliamentary elections, '95 parliamentary elections and '99 parliamentary elections. Were they free and fair? Absolutely not. Anybody who would argue that would be – that's absurd. Was there real competition and uncertainty about the outcome? Absolutely yes. We did not know, and Sergei did not either, because I know what he was writing at the time, and can send it to you offline if you want to see it. We didn't know who was going to win that '99 parliamentary election. It was not clear a year ahead of time. In fact, lots of people wrote that Luzhkov and Primakov and all those guys were going to win it, and they didn't. Now, the way it was fought, extremely unfair, not equal access to television and all that kind of stuff – but it was a competitive election. I make the same argument about '95 and the same argument about '93. I would not make the same argument about 2003, and I most certainly do not feel that you're going to have much of a competitive election in the parliamentary election of 2007. So on that, on parliamentary elections, I think it's the wrong direction.

Sestanovich is right, but competition isn't completely absent. But of course, because we all know that Russia has a super-presidential system – Sergei Markov and Michael McFaul wrote that in the fall of 1991 – that's nothing new. So we all know that the real office that matters in terms of power in Russia is the Kremlin. Then one has to ask, "Well, is there a competitive election for that office?" I would say in 1991 there were competitive elections for that office. Sergei, I would disagree with you – and you're disagreeing with yourself now from back then – but 1996, that was a competitive vote. It wasn't free, it wasn't fair – certainly even the Communists were nervous about winning the election. But there was a whole hell of a lot of drama in that election, uncertainty about it. And you know, because you spoke to the same bankers I did about who was going to win that election. They wouldn't have been paying you for your expertise had they known the certainty of who was going to win that election. Right? If it's a certainty, then we don't get to perform for them. We don't. There was uncertainty.

Likewise, in 1999 and 2000, uncertainty until Putin was appointed acting president, there was uncertainty in what I would call the presidential primary – at least until the vote in parliamentary elections in December. In 2004 was there any uncertainty? Not in my opinion. Two thousand eight, is there really any uncertainty? Yes, there's a little bit of uncertainty. And the uncertainty is: Who is Putin going to choose? That's the uncertainty. The uncertainty is not who are the Communists going to elect? The uncertainty is not is Zhirinovsky going to run or is his bodyguard going to run? (Laughter.) The uncertainty is not, you know, what liberal is going to come onto the scene and steal the show? There's none of that debate in Moscow today, nor in Washington. All the uncertainty is about who is Putin – well, there's some uncertainty about whether Putin himself is going to run, but all the uncertainty is of his choosing. It has nothing to do with the electorate. It has nothing to do with political parties in Russia that structure competition all over the world.

As Sergei Markov and Michael McFaul wrote 13 years ago: "Democracies, however, cannot survive over the long run without organized competition between political parties." Sergei, you were right 13 years ago, and I think you're right today.

Now, onto America and sovereignty. And, Andy, give me a – okay, I'm talking very slowly for his sake – (laughter) – normally this would be – I would have only – I would have been –

MR. KUCHINS: That's exactly what I was thinking. (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: Thank you. Now, in fact, we said in comparative perspective – and I want to just add for the purposes of debate, is the United States a democracy and is the United States moving in the wrong direction? If that were the topic today, I would say, yes, America is a democracy; and, yes, America is moving in the wrong direction. And I'm happy and willing to accept that. Likewise, the role of money and pushing presidential candidates out of the race has weakened competition.

I remember very vividly when Libby Dole was interviewed before the first primary in the Republican election, Republican primaries before the election of 2000, and she was rather emotional, and she asked, Well, why aren't you keeping in the race until Iowa? And she said, I don't have any money. And that guy over there had \$90 million – he's now the president. Is that a

free and fair playing field? Absolutely not. Did she get pushed out of the election well before the first voters had to vote? Absolutely yes. I'm not going to argue that. Moreover, just read the paper today. I mean, there are four stories about the problems with American democracy in The Washington Post. Citizens in this city don't get the right to vote. Monitoring lobbying scandals, wiretapping – yes, of course, in the wrong direction, yes. But by saying that, that doesn't mean that somehow therefore Russia is not also moving in the wrong direction. I just don't understand why invoking America or Iraq somehow then is an excuse for what is happening in Russia.

Moreover, I would say – I would also say that the comparison is not equal, because unlike the Russian system today, Sergei, I would say that for all those ills in the American democracy, which I think are real, there are mechanisms for correction. One of them is in the paper today. It's called an independent press investigating what they are doing. And the millions of wiretappings, which I personally think is atrocious that they have done – it's in the paper page one today. You're not going to find it, a similar thing, in Russia. And likewise, thankfully, we have some uncertainty about the election in 2008. We don't know. And it's not going to matter who George W. Bush, by the way, picks, and says, "Oh, you know, I want Condi to be president." That's not going to determine the outcome. It will have an effect; it's not going to determine it.

Now, Andy wanted me to conclude. (Laughter.) Let me just say one word about sovereignty to provoke Sergei, if I may, because I actually think this is a much more interesting debate. What does it mean to have a sovereign democracy? And I'll skip my remarks about Russia, but let me just tell you how it works in the United States, Sergei, thinking about some of the things you've written about what foreigners should and should not be allowed to do in the sovereign regime in Russia. And you I think have pointed out, and others in Russia pointed out, that Zbigniew Brzezinski likes to say America is the most sovereign state in the world. So I deliberately just kept my focus to America, because I agree with that. We are the most sovereign, and we are the most – in many ways have the most controls on what others external actors can do in our country. And the question for you – I'm just going to go through the list quickly, because I've talked too long. The question back for you is where do we draw the line for what is legitimate and illegitimate meddling in the internal affairs of our countries? And I'm just going to talk about my country. We'll talk about yours in a minute. Okay? Foreigners are allowed to work in the United States. I hope we're not going to have a big argument about that. That's good.

Foreigners – the second thing – foreigners are allowed to study in the United States. We used to have a debate about that in the Cold War. Soviet citizens could not study at my university. That's over.

Foreign academics are allowed to do research in the United States. There's some control on it – not much.

Foreigners are allowed to own property in the United States, including stock and whole companies.

Fifth, foreigners are allowed to invest in religious institutions. I drive by the mosque on Mass. Avenue every day – it happens all over our country everywhere.

Sixth, foreign NGOs work in the United States and have offices here. All of them do. Easy, it's in our laws.

Seventh – a little more seedy now – foreign parties and trade unions are allowed to have offices here and representation here. The Ebert Foundation, Heinrich Boll Foundation – they're here. AFL-CIO has an office in Paris.

More are tricky. Eighth – oh, this is not so tricky – foreign governments hire public relations firms to lobby for them on Capitol Hill and the executive branch. That happens here. A problem in Russia, a little bit.

Ninth, foreign companies do the same. They do that here. Violation of our sovereignty? You tell me.

Tenth, foreigners are allowed to own parts of the media. There are restrictions on that. And foreign broadcasts are allowed to be on American television – BBC, Deutsche Welle – they're all on – and soon Russia Today will be broadcast throughout the United States.

Eleventh – more complicated – American NGOs, think tanks and universities take money from foreign foundations, some of which have ties with their governments. And let's just be clear this is all not in the sake of doing things that are in line with the Bush administration's policies. So let me just give you an example, because this I think is where the rubber hits the road. Hitachi Foundation is a foundation set up by a foreign country – it's called Japan. They have their offices here in the United States. They give money to NGOs. In fact, one of the NGOs they give money to is my wife's former NGO. It's called the Family Violence Prevention Fund. And without getting into the details, what they funded that NGO to do in San Francisco was about 100 percent the opposite of what the Bush administration's policy is on family violence prevention policies.

More complicated: Heinrich Boll Foundation here in town has meetings all the time – I just attended one – on the role of international law in governing great powers. I'm sure that if Dick Cheney was there he would have been appalled at the people that they invited and that they organized for their conference.

Third, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. They just funded a major conference with people that work with MoveOn.org. I don't know if you know MoveOn.org, Sergei, but MoveOn.org is a very left-of-center political organization here in the United States that has done a great deal – spent millions and millions and millions of dollars to try to oust the Bush administration. And yet in another venue in another time they did a conference together on work-family issues – again, not the administration's policy.

Moreover, there's Taiwanese money at Stanford University. There is Saudi money at Georgetown and Harvard, just to name a few. There's Chinese money all over this town in terms of NGOs. And there's Russian money all over this town as well in terms of NGOs, public relations firms, owning companies, studying at Stanford University and then forming multibillion dollar companies. And, finally, there is foreign money to get Americans to study abroad.

Now, I could go on, but Sergei won't let me, and Andy won't let me. But it does beg the question though. This is sovereign America – why does Russia want to have a different standard than the one that I think. And I could talk about Germany, France, Japan – would all be the same, less sovereignty. Why does Russia need to be more sovereign than all the rest of these Western democracies?

All right, sorry. I went on too long.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, Mike, thanks. And in the interest of fairness, Sergei, we'll give you up to 10 minutes to respond to some of Mike's questions. I think some of the highlights there is that Russia is not a democracy today. There is less competition and there is a new parameter for the measurement of democracy. How much are the bankers willing to pay people like us? (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: Andy cut me off, but I have a page and a half about what are the ethics for people like Sergei Markov and Michael McFaul in terms of dealing with these internal interventions in sovereignty, taking money from Western banks, taking money from Russian banks. But we'll get into that later.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay. The other key point there, it's not only less competition but also less uncertainty about results. So, Sergei, why don't you, if you could take on those points in particular about why you think that Russia is actually becoming more democratic today, or if you actually do so? Please.

MR. MARKOV: Thank you. First, I agree with Mike that the United States is a democratic country. (Laughter.) And so a few –

MR. KUCHINS: How about Russia?

MR. MARKOV: I already mentioned Russia is on the way to democracy – (unintelligible). This is my point.

MR. KUCHINS: Sergei, answer the question. Is Russia today a democracy or no, in your view?

MR. MARKOV: No, of course not.

MR. KUCHINS: It is not, okay.

MR. MARKOV: It was never.

MR. MCFAUL: So what is the beef –

MR. MARKOV: – on the way to democracy.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, let him go. Ten minutes.

MR. MARKOV: And why we're talking so much about U.S. foreign policy? Because there's a problem. First of all, image, as I already mentioned. Russia is looking for its own way to democracy. The standard idea of democracy, it's clear. When we're talking about Russian sovereign democracy, it doesn't mean that Russia will form its own model of democracy. No. It will ask the people's public opinion, discuss politicians – of course. The democracy model is something between the European and American models. It's clear that we're going to go this direction, but of course we have to find our own way. Every country goes towards its own way. The United States has its own way, Great Britain has own way, Germany has its own, Spain has its own, Japan its own, and so on and so forth – Poland, Hungary and so on.

But to be drawn to this direction we need to have good examples in democracy. And the problem is that now when people ask, A, do they support democracy or not in Russia, now they support democracy less than in the '90s. It's exactly because of two reasons: the United States' foreign policy – that's why there was so much talk about this – and it's about – it's because of the '90s. At the same time, public opinion supports, by the way, most of the sufficient democratic characteristics, like free and fair elections, free media, right of opposition and others. But, nevertheless, when they talk, are you going to become a democracy – (unintelligible) – is hesitating because you every time suggested that '90s was pretty good, you were talking about uncertainty and competition. Yeah, that's right. There was much more uncertainty and competition in '90s. But these characteristics, they are characteristics not only of democracy but also of anarchy. There is a lot of uncertainty and competition under anarchy. It's why we don't want to go back.

MR. KUCHINS: Touché.

MR. MARKOV: You know, it's what we try to avoid. And one of the problems with democracy for us not only is the fact that the United States supports undemocratic politicians like Saakashvili; the United States doesn't want to pay attention to the strong anti-democratic features in the Orange Coalition. I can talk a lot of specific details over this issue, but some later. Now I'm talking more about Russia.

I don't think everybody realizes that [the CFR report] is based exactly on this Cheney approach. Other people, they have a different approach to the issue of democracy in Russia and in other countries. And Kazakhstan is really a good example. Let's say you're saying that you are against – you don't support it. But as I understand it, if you looking at this report, as I understand, most of the contributors took part in the meeting of Cheney with experts in Russian affairs.

MR. MCFAUL: That's not true. Just empirically, that's not true.

MR. MARKOV: Some of them.

MR. MCFAUL: Yeah, two. There were only three experts there.

MR. MARKOV: And so when you said that, that it was more uncertainty and competition, that's right. But you should take into account that it was not democracy; it was anarchy. We don't want to go back. We need to cleanse this idea. And when you ask, what is – (unintelligible) – the

problem with the '90s – and it was also was a lot of advice, and you continue to advise by doing this. And the problem is that when Russia, the Soviet Union, decided to move in the late '80s, democracy was the number one priority. But then, as a result of the '90s, democracy is still to be one of the priorities but it has gone down to something like third place after – or fourth place after security, stability and economic conditions – with respect to Russian interests internationally. And that's why to work with democracy we need first of all to solve those problems. By solving this problem we put democracy ahead – on top of the priorities. That's the point. That's why I'm saying that Putin is doing more for democracy than Yeltsin did.

MR. MCFAUL: Concretely, what has he done to help democracy? Just help me understand.

MR. MARKOV: As I mentioned, he tried to solve those priorities which now remain in the public opinion before democracy. By solving them, he cleared the way for democracy to come to the top as a priority. And we agree with you, I think, about the concept of democracy. All this I agree with you – something like this. But what we failed – and this is not only – (unintelligible) – but the whole academic community failed about some concept of democratization of Russia, democratization, a way to democracy. We have pretty good stories about, you know, the development of democracy in countries where it developed on its own basis, like United States, the United Kingdom, and so on. We have done pretty well describing the way to democracy from authoritarian rule. There is a lot of how-to literature on this. We have a lot of literature on how to promote democracy, how to have democracy in the countries where somebody else took control over this process, like Germany, Japan, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and so on. But we don't have any theory about development of democratic institutions, first of all, from chaos and anarchy which happened in Russia in the '90s, to a country with real independence, on their own pace. It's, by the way, a big change for us, and I would encourage your expert community dealing with democracy not to think about revolutions but to think how to – what kind of trends we should promote. And my opinion is that this general trend could be something like this.

First of all, we should solve those problems which now in the public opinion are a higher priority than democracy. It's political stability, it's formation of government institutions, and it's promoting economic growth – each one. Then to build institutions which can work in these democratic institutions, meaning political parties. And now we have some kind of change of law; we should promote political parties to make them more strong. And then I think we should create better conditions for NGOs because I don't support this law, frankly speaking. I criticized it. It was changed, partly changed, but I think not enough. It should change more. And I clearly expressed this criticism in the Russian media plenty of times. I think the law places too much burden on non-government organizations. And we hope that – yeah, we will change it.

And then more reasonable social policy, which should decrease the gap between rich and poor, because what Putin said is right, that it cannot be democracy with angry and hungry citizens. It will be – it's clear it's Weimar syndrome, it's Weimar syndrome where fascists come to power. We don't want – fascists meaning – it can be national and socialist, and so on. It's what we stopped. We want to create some foundations for the democracy.

At the same time, I criticize a little bit – you know, a lot of people I think in the Kremlin, they have a little bit Marxist methodology toward developing democracy. It's economic determination, let's say. They think that they will solve the problem with economic growth; then automatically they will get the prosperity of business and society, and it will be a basis for the democratization of the political system.

I think it's only partly true, because people are used to this Marxist methodology because it's what they studied at the university in Soviet times. And I think that it's not enough, that the political system has its own trends. And now I think we have a very dangerous trend which is called hyper-loyalty, first of all which was created by bureaucratic institutions and increasing trouble with bureaucracy. It's one of the consequences of recovering governmental institutions. But to recover governmental institutions, it's absolutely needed what should be done. That's why I think generally we're going in the right direction. We're trying to create some kind of basis for the next breakthrough to the democratic – to more democratic institutions, to more open society. But please help us. If you attack another country, or a couple of other countries, we will have very big problem with the theory of democracy. And if you will support, continue to support Saakashvili or even support his war against ethnic minorities in Ossetia and Abkhazia, people will support, you know, violence, de-Russification of Ukraine, if you will continue to support this regime a lot. If you will continue to support all the Russophobes in neighboring countries, it will be very difficult for us to strive for democracy.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, that's clear. Gentlemen, gentlemen, you have each spoken for precisely the same amount of time.

MR. MCFAUL: I get no rebuttal?

MR. KUCHINS: Not yet.

MR. MCFAUL: Thirty seconds?

MR. KUCHINS: No, no. You're going to –

MR. MARKOV: Twenty seconds, please.

MR. KUCHINS: No, no, no. (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: No democracy at Carnegie, yes.

MR. KUCHINS: No, there is no democracy at Carnegie. Look, we have an alert audience here which has listened for a long time. Each of you is going to have at least five minutes at the end to make your final statements, in which Mike you will go first, okay. But right now let's turn to the audience for some questions and some comments and you guys will take that and then we'll conclude. All right? Thanks.

Anders?

Q Thank you very much, very interesting indeed. I would like to pick on a few points that Sergei made. He said Putin helps solving the people's problems. And with that argument Hitler would of course also qualify as a better democrat than Yeltsin. So that is perhaps not a very strong argument.

And now that you have brought up the Weimar Republic here increasingly, and I think that's a very important point, because the Russian television and radio are very much pushing the Weimar syndrome. Why are they doing that? And why does Mikhail Leontiev, one of the most nationalist propagandists, have a daily program on primetime Russian television? I could go down the list, but that is perhaps the most striking.

I even heard Alexander Prokhanov on Russian radio praising Germany of the 1930s for its sound attitude of wanting old imperial territory to come back to the empire. Why is all this in the official media?

Then solving problems – the biggest problem in Russia, according to opinion polls, is corruption. Whatever surveys we have now show a sharp increase of corruption in the last two years or so, which is what we would expect if society is being closed up, as it of course is. So why should all feedback in society be tied up and closed down? What is the democratic development in that? Thank you.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, we're going to collect a couple more questions and comments. And I'm keeping a list here, and right now I have Andrei Piontkovsky, Greg Minjack, you, yes, and Ambassador Adamishin, yes, okay. And, please, everybody identify yourselves for the rest of the crowd.

Q Andrei Piontkovsky, Hudson visiting fellow. Sergei, the change of the subject is the first most classical instrument of propaganda, so I can claim my \$10 – (laughter) – for any –

MR. MARKOV: No!

(Cross talk.)

MR. KUCHINS: You will, you will, you will. I promise you will, but not right this second.

Q For any points you make about American foreign policy and Yeltsin policy, in spite of the fact that basically I agree, mostly agree with you on all this, on all the subjects, including unfortunate very hypocritical behavior of Cheney with his statement in Vilnius and with – I wrote about it myself.

But I will be generous. I know that you are restricted in your financial – I'll risk my own money. I just checked in my pocket; as a modest academic I have \$30. And I still – now I make a quotation about Russian democracy, and I pay immediately if you identify the source.

MR. KUCHINS: Well, \$30 – here we go.

Q “The liberal values in the country are under threat. Business and media are strangulated by bureaucracy. The sprouts of civil society are trampled down. Power structures are becoming the independent political force.” It’s not Mr. Cheney. It’s not even from my article or –

MR. MARKOV: It’s everybody, because it’s true, you know. That’s the problem.

Q It’s true. Yes, it is. What kind of democracy you are talking to in this case? This is not about states. This is about trajectory. This is a statement of 19 leading members of ruling party – (unintelligible) – among them Senator Kosachev, the chief of foreign policy committee, governors, both of them – they made the statement before the Congress on November 21st.

Next day they were recommended to shut up, and they shut up. But it doesn’t change the value of their assessments or what they are talking about – they have nothing to talk. I think you’re wasting time inside discussions, and the real problem is that now just before our eyes the United States and Russia are sliding into a state of cold war to say the least. And you just mentioned the contribution of some American senators to this process. But I think much more contribution was made – and I would like you to comment – by mainstream Russian government propaganda which for two years is portraying America as a threat, as an enemy, number one. From propaganda directed from the very top, beginning from the famous Putin statement after Beslan that terror is just an instrument in the hands of more powerful, more dangerous, more traditional enemies. The idea that America is the enemy, just indoctrinating every day, every hour into minds of Russian people.

And what it’s doing is very dramatic because there is no objective reason for Russian-American confrontation. We are faced with the same challenges, with the same enemies. And what is going on now is detrimental to the basic security interests of Russia and the United States. As the main contribution to this process is made by Russian propaganda, and I’m addressing to you as very influential figure in public who is responsible for public relations and media.

Thank you.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, one more question/comment from Greg Minjack, and we’ll give you guys each a few minutes to respond to some of these.

Q As a practicing political campaigner who has seen up close the competitive side of Russian politics for a long, long time, what does one do when the competitors are so inept that they can’t find their way out of a dark room. And if there’s no competition in Russia, from what I’ve seen up close with the competing parties, it is not necessarily is the state’s fault; it is their own fault. And I am not sure what the answer is on that to break through the arrogance and sort of the insular nature of these parties that would be the competitive force in this system. And I guess I wanted a comment on that, and then maybe a prescription on how to solve that issue.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay. Sergei, why don’t you take this first, and then – or do you want Mike to go first? Okay, Mike.

MR. MCFAUL: Yeah, because he’s spoken twice. Democracy –

MR. KUCHINS: But spoken for the same amount of time. (Laughter.)

MR. MCFAUL: Okay. Just really briefly, most of the comments are towards Sergei, so I'll leave them for him. On the Cold War though, I do think – maybe I'm wrong – I mean, I've been wrong a million times, so – but it's just hard for me to believe that Dick Cheney is sitting down there in his bunker with all the things that he's worried about in the world, thinking, I want to rekindle the Cold War with Russia. It just doesn't make any sense to me. And I just think – again, by way of explanation, I don't think the Cold War for our side is the right analogy. I think Andrei is absolutely right about the Russian side. But think about it. What was the Cold War about? It was about two great powers in ideological battle. Neither of those two conditions exist for my country. Putin himself said it in his speech: we spend 25 more times on military budget than Russia. So what's the rivalry there? And, B, you're not trying to export communism – maybe you're trying to export an idea of sovereign democracy, but I don't think it's doing that well. We're not so good at exporting democracy ourselves, as you just said yourself. I totally agree with that.

So what's the essence of the Cold War from our side? I think it's actually much more like our relationship with Mubarak, our relationship with Aliyev, our relationship with Musharraf, our relationship with Hu Jintao; that is, these are people we need relationships with – Nazarbayev – but they're complicated. They're complicated because of the domestic politics here. And, by the way, Russia is treated in a very kid-gloves way too. You're all focused on the speech of Cheney, but nobody has disagreed with what he said in his speech. Sergei did not disagree either. Nobody has disagreed with his description of Russia. So what's the flip side then? Are we supposed to lie about what we see? Is that called good politics? I don't understand that. And, moreover, let's not forget there have not been too many presidents who have been to Camp David. Your president has been there. You can be treated very well when my president shows up as his guest in St. Petersburg. I have every reason to expect that. And when we talk about contrary things, we should cooperate. I don't think you have to call somebody a democrat to cooperate with them on arms control and nonproliferation. We most certainly didn't do that in the Cold War. So having a higher standard for now I think is somewhat illusionary. But we have to call Mr. Putin a democrat in order to talk to him about Iran. Why? Explain to me that. I just don't intellectually understand what is the connection there. I think it's actually just like these other troubled relationships with strategic countries. And if Russia was a small peripheral country with no oil and gas, then we would treat Russia more like we treat Mr. Mugabe or Mr. Lukashenko; that is, there are double standards at play in Russia's favor too.

Sovereignty issues in Georgia. My goodness, if Russia were a small backwards power we would have a totally different, much more aggressive approach to the violations of sovereignty in Georgia. But what happened in Ukraine – again, my goodness, there would be a totally different policy if this was not – if your country was not a strategic country; but it is, so we have this sort of dual policy, mixed, complicated, in my opinion hypocritical, but perfectly understandable if you look at our relationship with countries like that around the world.

Quickly on Greg's point. I think it's an excellent point, but I don't think it's an accidental point. I think the Kremlin – and Sergei, you tell me what you know about this – I think the Kremlin has every interest in wanting to have Mr. Zyuganov, the biggest loser ever, to be running

for president again, and again, and again, and again. It's not an accident, A. B, I don't know this for a fact – I've heard other people comment on it – I see there's a television camera on me, so I want to be careful – but other people say in Moscow the same thing about Mr. Yavlinsky – right? He's convenient. Let's just rerun the 1996 election again, because that's easy for us to win again. That's the first point. So I don't think it's an accident that these has-beens have a hold on power. My personal prescription: step down. How many elections have you lost? If you were advising Mr. Yavlinsky or the Yabloko Party as just a hired hand in terms of public relations, the first thing you'd say is, "You lost in '96, you lost in 2000, you lost in 2004 – Mr. Candidate, Permanent Presidential Candidate, you don't get to run again. Or, if you do, you at least have to compete in a primary system where the people actually have a voice in this, and not just your Politburo, right?"

But then the second thing is, let's be clear, other people I know that I think might aspire to be good presidential candidates in your country – it's very difficult, because you know any campaign in a big country like Russia you need two things to make it happen. You need access to national television and you need money. And the Kremlin today, for those that raise their head and are just in the last bit critical of Mr. Putin, they lose their access to national television, and they go around and they tell the people that give them money, "Stop giving this person money, or you are going to end up like Mr. Khodorkovsky." And that – those conditions therefore make it very difficult for renewal, and frankly I think that's the big problem with your system, Sergei: There's no competition. Competition, like in markets, creates good products, creates the best – the best person wins. That's good for the system. And your system doesn't have political competition, and so you get, I think, lackluster politicians dominating that don't have to compete.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, very well done, Mike. I think Grigory Yavlinsky and Gennadi Zyuganov are vying for the Harold Stassen Award of Russian Politics. (Laughter.)

Sergei?

MR. MARKOV: A few words. First about – you know, first, I agree with you about corruption. I think it's one of the biggest weaknesses for Vladimir Putin, that he doesn't pay enough attention to the corruption. And – (laughter) –

Q (Off mike.) (Laughter.)

MR. KUCHINS: There are different ways of paying attention to it. (Laughter.)

MR. MARKOV: And I think that corruption will be one of the crucial points for the next political period, and I think its role will increase in the agenda. I can talk to you of a lot of things of how it happened specifically, but first of all this idea that it's one of the political mistakes. Public opinion demands to fight against corruption, and the authorities are not doing this, and it's not a good way.

And about your remarks that TV is moving forward Weimar syndrome, most politicians complain that media is doing something wrong. You know, media wants to reflect – they reflect real Weimar syndrome. And, believe me, recommendations to TV media not to encourage Weimar

syndrome, but to decrease it; recommendations to create some more optimism, and but not Weimar syndrome. So I disagree with your point.

I also agree with what Greg and Mike were speaking about, his question. I agree with Mike on the position of this issue.

And a few words about anti-American propaganda in the media. I disagree, but also there are huge anti-Russian propaganda in the American news media. And when I open the Washington Post, I shocked. I want to ask, "Is it somebody from the Washington Post?" I want to ask them, "Do you have a personal vendetta with Russia?" Please stop it.

MR. MCFAUL: Sergei, what specifically? To be a little more specific, what has been published in The Washington Post that you consider propaganda? Just make it clear.

MR. MARKOV: Mike, maybe it's difficult for me to give specific examples right now, also because my psychology protests against the Washington Times in such style that I immediately try to forget what they are writing about. (Laughter.)

Q The political file. (Off mic.)

MR. MARKOV: Yeah, yeah. If you want, I can –

MR. MCFAUL: I actually do want, because I think, with all due respect, this is a really important point, Andy. With all due respect, Sergei, this kind of defense I think is really ineffective to me. You're not convincing me, because actually I know all those people at The Washington Post, known them for a long time. I disagree with some of their analysis. But the sweeping notion that The Washington Post's coverage of Russia is like ORT's coverage of America, I just think it's indefensible. So if you're going to defend it, you have to defend it with a little more facts, a little more substantive analysis of what is so propagandistic about what Peter Finn or Greg Hiatt writes about your country, because I think it's a little bit like the Cheney speech; that is, you actually – and we've been arguing for an hour and 40 minutes, and everybody says, propaganda, subjectivity – this is outrageous – return to the Cold War. And not once in an hour and 40 minutes has anybody actually disagreed with the substance of what he says. And I think that – that to me is really an echo of the Cold War – not on the American side but, with all due respect, on the other side. Then you're just throwing it up – Oh, this is anti-Russian. It's not anti-Russian. It's anti-Putin. And I think therefore to put it in the blanket of anti-Russian is, A, not serving anybody's purpose; but, B, actually is dishonest. I need to tell you I think it's dishonest, as my good friend, okay? (Laughter.)

MR. MARKOV: Yeah, referring to Mr. Cheney. (Laughter.) But first of all, could we think about – nevertheless, I think that it's very anti-Russian, and we can make again, anti – you know, conduct analysis of this, and to Russia it looks like the worst country in the world for them. And –

MR. MCFAUL: You obviously don't read what they write about Zimbabwe and Egypt and Azerbaijan and other –

MR. MARKOV: I read about –

MR. MCFAUL: Sorry. I'm sorry.

MR. MARKOV: It's also critical, but not so much. (Laughter.) And, also, Andrei, when you are talking about aggressive media, I agree with both sides, but we should separate the aggressiveness of those who are more strong and attacking from the aggressiveness of those who are more weak and dependent. Why dependent?

And now let's move to Dick Cheney. It's not only some of the – (unintelligible). Oh, you know, as usual, politicians, it's difficult to catch them, you know. More important is the context; it's more important to whom he will talk. He will now criticize him. It's more important what he – how will he put his speech into context after he'd gone to Kazakhstan, what his real message was for us, how we read this message: we do not care about democracy; we care about pipelines, oil and so on. Give us Gazprom and we will say that you are a democratic country – (laughter) – and we don't agree.

Also, another message: if you try to find some competition, some contradiction, you know, shut up, because you have no right to criticize the United States.

MR. MCFAUL: Who said that?

MR. MARKOV: We understood this message. It's an absolutely sharp contradiction with those – he was talking about democracy in Lithuania and those – how he called Nazarbayev as his best friend and so on. So these sharp contradictions. And he just progressed with this message –

MR. KUCHINS: We're going to go back to the crowd.

MR. MARKOV: – that you can do any contradiction.

MR. MCFAUL: Sergei, nobody told you to shut up. It's not true.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay. Well, I'm telling you to shut up because it's – (laughter, cross talk) – Sergei. I'm telling you to shut up for a second. I like that, though – give us Gazprom, and we'll call you a democracy. (Laughter.) Now, Mr. Putin has allowed for us to invest in up to 49 percent of Gazprom, so maybe we'll call you 49 percent democracy. (Laughter.)

All right, let's go back to the crowd for a few more comments, and then give you guys a chance to wrap it up. Okay? Yes, I've got you, and I've also got you on the list, and I've got Ambassador Adamishin. And I've also got you right there. Please? Identify yourself.

Q My name is Lyuba Wolf. I'm from Stanford University, one of Professor McFaul's students.

MR. KUCHINS: Lyuba Wolf?

Q Lyuba Wolf, yes. So –

MR. KUCHINS: Not Comrade Wolf? (Laughter.) It's – by the way, is that a Russian fairy tale that that's taken from, you know, the wolf that eats but never listens? Or did Mr. Putin make that up? I mean, I was – sorry.

Q Anyway, my question was – it's a question and a comment. I understand your frustration that we are on the one hand criticizing Russia then going to Kazakhstan. But the difference between Russia and Kazakhstan – Kazakhstan is not purporting to be a democracy. The difference is that Russia is currently going to be chairing the G-8 meeting, and the G-8 is a group of industrialized democratic powers. So if Russia wants to be involved in those kinds of organizations and be a world leader as a democracy, then it's going to be held to a higher standard than something like Kazakhstan. So in your analysis you pretty much said that Russia is not a democracy. In that case, what business does it have being part of G-8 – and not only being part of it, but chairing the next meeting? So I wanted to hear your thoughts on that.

MR. KUCHINS: Excellent point, Comrade Wolf. (Laughter.)

Ambassador Adamishin.

Q Currently at the United States Institute of Peace.

This discussion has taken away just my questions, so I'm not asking anything. But I –

MR. KUCHINS: Can you tell us something? (Laughter.)

Q I can't resist the temptation to make brief comments. When I hear or see an adjective is being attached to the word "democracy" – "managed democracy," "sovereign democracy," or now "coming soon" or "later" democracy, I recall the famous novel by Mikhail Bulgakov, not McFaul, "Master and Margarita." (Laughter.) And one of the heroes of this novel has ordered a portion of sturgeon, and then asks whether this fish was fresh. And the reply was, "It's the second freshness." (Laughter.) And so he just noted that the freshness is not second or first; it exists or doesn't. This is my comment.

MR. KUCHINS: Thanks.

Yes? No, not you, Ed, but you – you had your hand up earlier.

Q Thank you, Peter Ericson from Embassy of Sweden.

Mr. Markov, you said that the U.S. and probably the rest of us should respect Russian interests, and in order to do that, it's important, of course, to fully understand them. There are these conflicts that are usually referred to as frozen, and it's generally assumed that Russia has a key role in helping to solve those. Could you please explain Russia's interests for instance as it refers to the conflict in South Ossetia and to make us –

[TAPE CHANGE.]

MR. KUCHINS: The phrase other than "sovereign democracy" that is talked about right now of course is "energy superpower." Now, we should have another debate about this whole notion of energy superpower, and maybe we will soon. But, you know, if I'm in the Kremlin, I think to myself, you know, Dick Cheney was the secretary of Defense back in 1992 when the U.S. national security strategy was written in which the prevention of the emergence of peer competitors was the focal point of U.S. foreign security policy, and it remains I think the key point of U.S. foreign security policy – we just don't talk about it very much, because obviously a lot of people don't really like that.

It's hard to – you know, it's hard I think for people – if I were in the Kremlin, that's what I would be seeing, and it's hard for me to get around that. And I guess my question then is to both of you, you know, because part of what we're talking about here is the U.S.-Russian relationship, you know – what – how – we are very much in a bad dynamic right now. Things are spinning in the wrong direction. How do you guys think we can kind of turn that around and make the relationship seem a little bit more constructive? Because I think the relationship today actually is in some ways worse than it's been in 20 years. So, you guys, last comment – the last comments are yours. Mike, why don't you –

MR. MCFAUL: Let me go last.

MR. KUCHINS: You want to go last?

MR. MCFAUL: I'll be very brief, so, Sergei, go ahead.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, Sergei, are you ready?

MR. MARKOV: Sure. I'm ready every time. Just about a good question about – you're absolutely right. Russia has bigger standards about this, and at the same time, it was – (unintelligible) – from the beginning. It was encouraging Russia to get this way. And it still works and should be done. It should be continued. And the problem is that's not criticism of Russia. As already mentioned, he criticizes Russia. Russia has a lot of problems. We're on the way to democracy. We're still being constructed. And we will be happy – so for example some criticizing of this – (unintelligible) – from abroad, because it's helped us to change this far.

But when criticizing, do it honestly. When you criticize us for something, but absolutely not criticize other people for the same, it's dishonest, as I already mentioned, for example, in this governance issue. I think that it's a mistake to change government posts from general elections to presidential appointments. I think it's a mistake. I think we should come back to the general election. At the same time, the reason it happened after Beslan is they're afraid that maybe it could be one moment eight Beslans and one capture of an atomic station, or a power station. They have been concerned. But I think it's a mistake.

And I agree with some criticism of this issue. But if you call Mr. Lukashenko a democrat, but Lukashenko says that federalism is some kind of almost criminality, people who think that Ukraine should be – (unintelligible) – country should be put in the prison, as they are separatists. If they have a system when just a president just appoints governors, asking nobody – and you're talking about this, about democracy I can see. And look at the Crimean Republic. They have only one region in Ukraine which has the same system as Russia. The president suggest, and regional parliament voted for it. The president of Ukraine made different trips, made tremendous pressure and then forced an Orange politician as prime minister of autonomous Crimean Republic. This Orange politician got 1.5 percent – it was the result of the Yushchenko party in the last elections in Crimea. But nevertheless – (unintelligible). Where could I see any criticism of this? Or if Ukraine not an important country maybe for U.S. politics? No, I can read newspapers from Ukraine almost every day, but all of them only – (unintelligible) – team. Why don't I read about anti-Semitism of Yushchenko team? You know who is the main anti-Semite is one of the closest –

[Crosstalk.]

MR. MARKOV: I want The Washington Post to read also about this. And everybody knows that all anti-Semitism in Ukraine, they come to the Yushchenko coalition. Why we read nothing about this? It's the point.

And about Ossetia conflicts – you know, I am happy to answer a lot of this question. Maybe we can make something specific of this issue. Ossetia has never been part of the independent Georgia, and I think a democratic solution is asking certain people where they should be. But –

MR. MCFAUL: Same thing for Chechnya?

MR. MARKOV: Same thing for Chechnya, for sure –

MR. MCFAUL: Okay, great.

MR. MARKOV: Because Chechen people for sure want to be part of the Russian territories, not only here – oh, yeah, I know that there is a lot of – (unintelligible) – for Chechnya. Believe me now, please. I could predict – I could predict about Chechnya some time, not right now, in a few years, U.S. officials will study well the lessons about Russian policies in Chechnya as big success. Not right now. Now you don't believe me. It will happen in five, eight years; I think in the next administration, because these things have been done not so badly. There's a lot of this problem because absolutely destroyed army was doing this, absolutely destroyed government institutions were doing this. And ask – look at Putin's last address. He told that the kazarat (ph) – you know, small soldiers for the beginning second war from the whole country, because it was totally destroyed. But, no, I don't want to discuss this issue in Chechnya, but it's absolutely – it should be more details because it's too much preoccupied by – (unintelligible) – and it's difficult to destroy those – (unintelligible) – without going to details. (Unintelligible) – with Chechnya too strong, and I need much more time to destroy it.

And so and Russia, as I already mentioned, did construct its democratic institutions. Russia just only on its way to do it. It's a very difficult way. We don't know this way, because, as mentioned, there are no – (unintelligible) – democratization from anarchy. Also, it's a difficult way because the concepts of democracy became dirty after the years of the '90s. And it's also difficult for us because we lost a lot of resources, and democracy, as one time French bankers told me it's the best thing for the rich nations, and for poor countries it's very difficult to do it. The more poorer you are, the more problems you have with democracy. That's why we are going on our way to this. I think we are going the right way, because we try to solve those problems, which are major obstacles to the formation of democratic constitutions.

We need a lot of help – international help included. And the problem is that now I think the United States are doing this. One of the biggest problems, and I come back to my first mark – this, how to say, propaganda of the '90s. And, secondly –

MR. MCFAUL: Sergei, that's just so unfair.

MR. MARKOV: – is support of any anti-democratic – any anti-Russian politician in neighboring countries, even if they are not quite democratic – (cross talk). Yeah, I got your point about morals, about approach of the United States foreign policy. I keep myself Henry Kissinger's diplomacy, who explained a lot over this issue. But our problem is that more and more Russian public see that in this change between moral approach can support democracy and seeking geopolitical determination, the United States were afraid for us to make a choice to the geopolitical determination. It's how we read Cheney's message.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, a very brief five minutes.

MR. MCFAUL: First of all, if that's the way you read Cheney, then you don't understand the United States at all. (Speaks in Russian.) Okay? With all due respect, Sergei, if you think we have a strategic interest in Belarus as part of our world domination, then you don't understand our country. You really don't. If you think that headlines – the Ukraine is the most important issue in America today and it's in the paper, then why aren't we talking about the Orange guy appointed in the republic, in the Crimean Republic, then you really, really don't understand the United States. There's not a foreign correspondent from The Washington Post or The New York Times in Kiev. That I think says a lot about where, with all due respect to my Ukrainian friends, where Ukraine is in the geopolitical construct of American political thinking. Moreover, you're right about, you know, your point about the negative news about Russia – although, you know, that's a problem for all news. The Bush administration complains about that on ABC News as well. I think that's rather endemic.

MR. KUCHINS: Good news is not news.

MR. MCFAUL: Yeah, it's not news. But the real point about Russia, with all due respect, for the American people – and I've looked at the polling on this – is that it's not on our radar screen. This geopolitical battle that you're envisioning out there – for my mother in Montana could be – it's the farthest thing that she cares about. And that's why this is not the Cold War, friends. It's not the Cold War. There's Iraq, there's al Qaeda, there's Iran, there's North Korea, there's avian flu. Russia

for geostrategic thinking and for the American people is simply not the place that it was 20 years ago. So that's the first thing I want to say. And just, with all due respect, you need to understand that to understand our country. I think that's very important.

Second thing. The real crux of our disagreement is the phrase that Sergei keeps using, "is on its way" – right? He's used it about 20 times. Russia is on its way to democracy. In my view, Russia is not on its way to democracy; it's becoming more autocratic. Now, we can debate anarchy – and we have before in the '90s. I think this notion that the '90s was this giant anarchic time in Russia, and then finally there's stability, you know, in 1999, is a bunch of nonsense. There were 250 terrorist attacks in the Caucasus last year – 250. There were not 250 terrorist attacks in Russia in 1992 or '93 or '94 or '96 or '97 – and we could have that debate another time. Andy is not going to let us have it now.

But, with all due respect, I lived in Russia –

MR. KUCHINS: – won't be here.

MR. MCFAUL: A lot – I lived in Russia in the '90s. It was not an anarchic place. This to me is truly a kind of – everything was bad in the '90s and now everything is good. That is not what people were saying then. I think it's an excuse, frankly, for autocracy. That's the way I read these comments.

Third – third point, to Andy – yeah, I think you're right from the Russian perspective to see this stuff. You know, and I don't want to – why am I defending Dick Cheney, of all people? Why do I have to defend him? (Laughter.) It was a mistake.

MR. MARKOV: Why do you defend him?

MR. MCFAUL: But –

MR. MARKOV: Why?

MR. MCFAUL: But let me tell you what he wrote in his speech – go back and read the words – and I'm going to end on this – go back and read exactly what he said about democracy in Russia. And then Google "Michael McFaul, March 2000 in The Washington Post," when the Clinton administration was in power. I wrote exactly the same thing – exactly. And for five years – what's so weird about this – why are you always criticizing Russian democracy? We're on our way. And I've been sitting here for five, six years saying, Why are you guys talking about him as your best friend? Why are you ignoring the democratic erosion? So, from my perspective, this is a very strange conversation – very strange conversation – that somehow they finally come to see what I see to be objective truth. And this is my penultimate point. (Laughter.) What's interesting, we have been debating Russian democracy for two hours, and not once have we actually taken on the substance of Dick Cheney's speech, this report, Michael McFaul's writing from six years ago. We're not actually – you know, somebody said it earlier – it's not interesting – Andrei I think said it. It's not interesting. You're not debating it, Sergei. So therefore when you, at the end of two hours, go like this and say this is propaganda, that's really reprehensible, because if you're going to

call it propaganda then you need to show us where it's wrong and then we pay our \$10 to each other. And if you're going to call The Washington Post propaganda, then you have to show, well, where is it just propaganda? Because otherwise – otherwise we're not having a dialogue. Otherwise it's *novoyaz* and otherwise we are actually in a kind of Cold War spitting match. And now I think that is really, really dangerous.

And the last thing, in terms of Andy's point about what is to be done, I think we need to move away from that. And I think this is maybe a small, small, little incremental step. But I think we have to stop sitting in our huddles with all of our respective *tusovki*, our respective friends who have the same view, and saying, those jerks, you know, Russia phobia, you know, those Montana farmers they're getting all Russian phobia, you know, they're returning us back to the Cold War. We have to stop doing that and stop talking about things as propaganda, especially when we're not actually disagreeing with anything, and start having a much more dialogue – sometimes fierce dialogue, but a dialogue about objective facts, objective trends, and get away from this, you know, propaganda-this and propaganda-that, which frankly I gave you two hours to defend, and you weren't able to defend it at all. So the next time we do it, come with, you know, come with your points where you think it is propaganda, and then we'll – then I'll get around to talking about ORT and that other stuff, which we didn't have to do here, because I actually don't think there's a lot of disagreement about what are the objective facts.

And the final point, Andy. (Laughter.) All right, never mind, never mind. That's the final point.

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, that was good. Two points. Two points. But those are good points.

MR. MCFAUL: Also –

MR. KUCHINS: No, no, no, no. Sorry, that's it. That's it. Unplug. (Laughter.) Two points. I get the last word, my man.

MR. MCFAUL: – thank Sergei for being here.

MR. MARKOV: What's the difference between the last point and final point? (Laughter.)

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, Mike was being funny.

MR. MCFAUL: The ultimate –

MR. KUCHINS: Okay, two points. Two points. First of all, you know, when I hear that, you know, in five to eight years we're going to re-gather here in this room and we're going to be looking at what a success story the Russian Chechnya policy is and how democratic Russia is – you know, it reminds me of the poet Tyutchev: "You can't understand Russia with your mind." It's really a leap of faith.

But the main point I want to say is to echo what Mike just said, first of all to thank the two of you, and to thank everybody here, because I think the very dangerous thing going on right now is that there is – everyone is kind of – we're not talking to each other, we're talking past each other. And the more that we talk to each other, the higher the likelihood is that we're going to understand each other and maybe we're going to respect each other more. And just the fact that the two of you have been talking with each other and arguing with each other for 16 years about these things, that's a testament to what I think we need to do more broadly with the relationship. So let me just thank both of you very much for a terrific job today, and thank everybody else. (Applause.)

(END)