

*Yeltsin's Russia: Myths and Reality*, by Lilia Shevtsova

New Book from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

On May 12, 1999, in the midst of impeachment proceedings against him, Russian President Boris Yeltsin dismissed Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov and nominated Sergei Stepashin as his successor. Within a week the Russian Duma dismissed impeachment proceedings and confirmed Stepashin in his new position — actions that appeared as political victories for the embattled Russian president but did little for the government's ability to solve its most pressing political, economic, and foreign policy problems.

The dismissal of Primakov was the third time Boris Yeltsin fired a prime minister in little more than a year and followed a precedent he set early in his administration -- extricating himself from political difficulties by changing senior government officials and personal advisers. Lilia Shevtsova's important new book, *Yeltsin's Russia*, is both a comprehensive political history of Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union and a political biography of the central figure in that history.

Her work chronicles how a leader once regarded as a genuine democrat jettisoned reformist policies when they threatened his hold on office, introduced a new constitution that gave major and unchecked powers to the presidency, blundered into a disastrous war in Chechnya, and insisted on holding on to office through long periods of physical incapacity and political impotence.

*Yeltsin's Russia: Myths and Reality* is the most current and comprehensive account of the achievements—and failures—of Boris Yeltsin's Russia, and an invaluable guide to the forces that will shape Russia in the post-Yeltsin era.

"...remarkable clarity and objectivity...indispensable insights"

—**Jack M. Matlock, Jr.**, former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union

Lilia Shevtsova is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment's Russian and Eurasian Program, dividing her time between the Endowment's Washington and Moscow offices. She is one of Russia's best known and most respected analysts and writers, and a frequent commentator for both Russian and Western media.

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