

Fax:  
209-17-28  
200-02-67  
200-02-78

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# POLITICS

*What the government will be like if Russia's Choice carries the day on December 12*

## Yegor Gaidar's new government

The present government is a coalition and transitional body. What will the new one be like? It can already be anticipated that it will be either a new coalition of Russia's Choice and Sergei Shakhrai's Conservative Party or else a one-party government. In the latter case it will be formed by Yegor Gaidar, the leader of Russia's Choice.

Vladimir ORLOV

The First Vice-Premier and the Minister of the Economy himself maintains: "It is dangerous to sell the bearskin before you have caught the bear, yet we know what we will do if we get a steady majority". Refusing to discuss specific personnel reshuffles, Gaidar has let it be understood that a corresponding plan has already been

drawn up and reshuffles are inevitable. The implementation of the plan will depend on how many percent of the votes Russia's Choice will poll and who of the present-day ministers will be elected to the Federal Assembly.

"The new government, if formed by Russia's Choice, will become more homogeneous and more close-knit", Yegor Gaidar said. If the pro-presidential bloc does not receive a relative majority a coalition cabinet will be formed with little difference from the present one. But "no matter what turn developments may take the new government will surely prosecute an economic course similar to the one being pursued now. The new cabinet's programme will most likely be based on the working programme for 1994, a detailed plan of which was adopted on November 15".

In this way, if we are to believe the Vice-Premier, the first steps to be made by the Cabinet of Ministers in 1994 can already be predicted with a large share of confi-

dence. They include measures aimed at lowering the growth of the money mass and decelerating the rates of inflation by weeks, which must bring about the Russian currency's real convertibility and stabilization. A package of measures has already been prepared for the implementation of the reform of housing. The main accent in industry will be made on reforming relations in the coal industry, and in agriculture — on the introduction of a new system of purchasing prices and on the implementation of the President's Decree on the sale of land.

Today Yegor Gaidar has every reason to be satisfied with his role both in Staraya Ploshchad (seat of the government) and in the Kremlin (residence of the President). In the past three months he has succeeded in considerably strengthening his positions as the President's closest aide. It is Gaidar that was one of the initiators of dissolving the parliament and holding the earliest possible elections to the Federal Assembly. It is also he that in-

sistently recommended that Boris Yeltsin give up early presidential elections.

All of Gaidar's short-term political forecasts have come true with the exception of one: he expected to see the Yuri Skokov-led bloc as the main opponent of Russia's Choice. Contrary to the forecasts, Skokov has sunk into political oblivion. "Now I see that the most serious opposition to us in the would-be parliament will come from the bloc of the Agrarian Union and the communists. Stiff confrontation will be unavoidable here. It would be a mistake to underrate the role of the agrarian-communist bloc in Russia with its traditions".

Gaidar's work on the details of the government's plan for next year suggests that he is not going to quit Staraya Ploshchad. However, the Prime Minister himself is not ready to confirm this. "I do not rule out, of course, that in 1994 I will stay where I am now. On the other hand, I am now considering variants in which I could be far more useful working in parliament".

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СССР, 103829,  
ГЦЛ, Москва,  
ул. Табачная, 16/2.  
Тел. 229-81-86

МОСКОВСКИЙ  
ЭЖЕНЕДЕЛЬНИК  
ТАБЛИЦА  
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