

12/7/2006

Closing Statement of the Participants of the Other Russia Conference

We, the undersigned participants of the Other Russia conference hereby declare:

The conference has succeeded in showing that Russia still possesses a civil society capable of defending its rights. It is also clear that this fact has become a special source of concern to the powers that be in Russia. Their goal is the complete and unending control of every national resource and this can only be achieved by repression and anti-constitutional means based on the destruction of civil liberties and the cleansing of the political field. Such methods are certain to drive Russia into the abyss.

Our goal is to combat this destructive trend and this is why they despise us and fear us. Their fear is justified as the tasks we set for ourselves and our country are incompatible with the existence of the present regime. We aim to restore civil control of power in Russia, a control that is guaranteed in the Russian Constitution that is so frequently and unambiguously violated today. This aim requires a return to the principles of federalism and the separation of powers. It calls for the restoration of the social function of the state with regional self-administration and the independence of the media. The judicial system must protect every citizen equally, especially from the dangerous impulses of the representatives of power. It is our duty to free the country from outbreaks of prejudice, racism, and xenophobia and from the looting of our national riches by government officials.

We are in the midst of a political crisis in which the opposition inside the political system acts within the limits specified by the Kremlin and by so doing only deepens the problems of Russian society. Therefore we must enable the formation of a new generation of Russian political elite – a generation capable of bearing responsibility for themselves and accountability to society, a generation that shares our democratic ideals and principles. We must focus all our efforts and resources on the political education of our compatriots and provide them with accurate information about the state of our country. To this end we support the establishment of independent public television in Russia.

We require current and precise assessments of what is happening in every corner of our great nation. Only with such knowledge will we be able to create our agenda and develop a program of principles to return Russia to the democratic path and to restore the constitutional norms and the rule of the people. For this purpose we will establish a permanent council to convene regularly to exchange information and opinions.

We hereby declare: the Other Russia conference at this given stage has fulfilled its task. We gathered together from a broad range of political beliefs and overcame a history of strife and mutual reproach. We rose above our prejudices to focus on the construction of a new democratic state of Russia under the rule of law. These ideals will unite, not divide us.

We have united under the simple and elegant words of Article 3 of our constitution: “The multinational people of the Russian Federation shall be the vehicle of

sovereignty and the only source of power in the Russian Federation.” We intend to use this power openly and through **our** representatives.

Lyudmila Alekseeva – Moscow Helsinki Group

Viktor Anpilov – Workers’ Russia

Mikhail Delyagin – Institute for Globalization Issues

Yuri Dzhibladze - Center for Development of Democracy and Human Rights

Garry Kasparov – United Civil Front

Mikhail Kasyanov – People’s Democratic Union

Eduard Limonov – National Bolshevik Party

Yelena Lukyanova – Law Professor at Moscow State University

Vladimir Ryzhkov – Republican Party of Russia

Georgy Satarov – Information Science for Democracy (INDEM)

Andrei Illarionov – Former senior economic advisor to the president