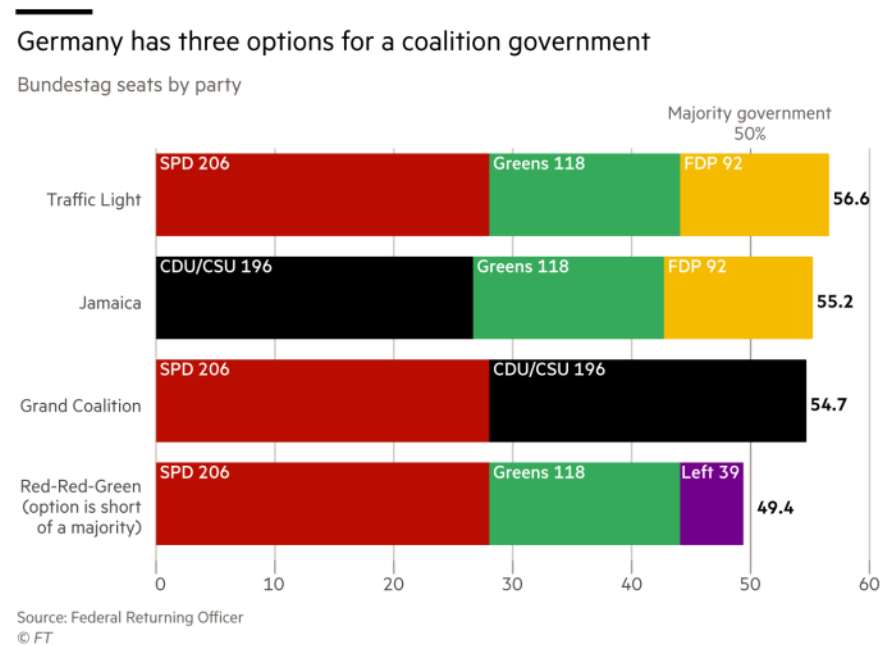


Richard Tempest
The World After Covid:
Prospects, Dangers, Temptations

Lecture Three

Russia: A Hopeful Pessimism

News of the Week: Sunday's election in Germany appears to have been won by the left-of-center Social Democratic Party. A coalition of two or more parties will, however, be inevitable



France abides. President Emmanuel Macron (note egg in full flight prior to presidential impact), Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo, National Rally leader Marine Le Pen



News of the week (before):

Abimael Guzmán, leader of the Shining Path Maoist guerrilla movement, died on September 11



Pedro Castillo, Peru's newly elected leftist president, has his work cut out. The early signs are not encouraging



The War on Terror is no more. In fact, even at the time of 9/11, Islamic extremists were never an existential threat to the United States or the West in general. Politically, however, they generated high narrative value, spelled out in blood and suffering across the globe



Terror is a medium of communication. Image shows Osama Bin Laden with his successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri. Unlike Bin Laden, the latter is a poor communicator



Self-projection and self-correction by the twenty-first century's most notorious terrorist



Unlike Germany, France, Japan, or even China, the United States is in a world-historical *nodal* mode. Translation: Quo vadis? Or to put it differently: the future course of events in this country may go in a variety of different directions



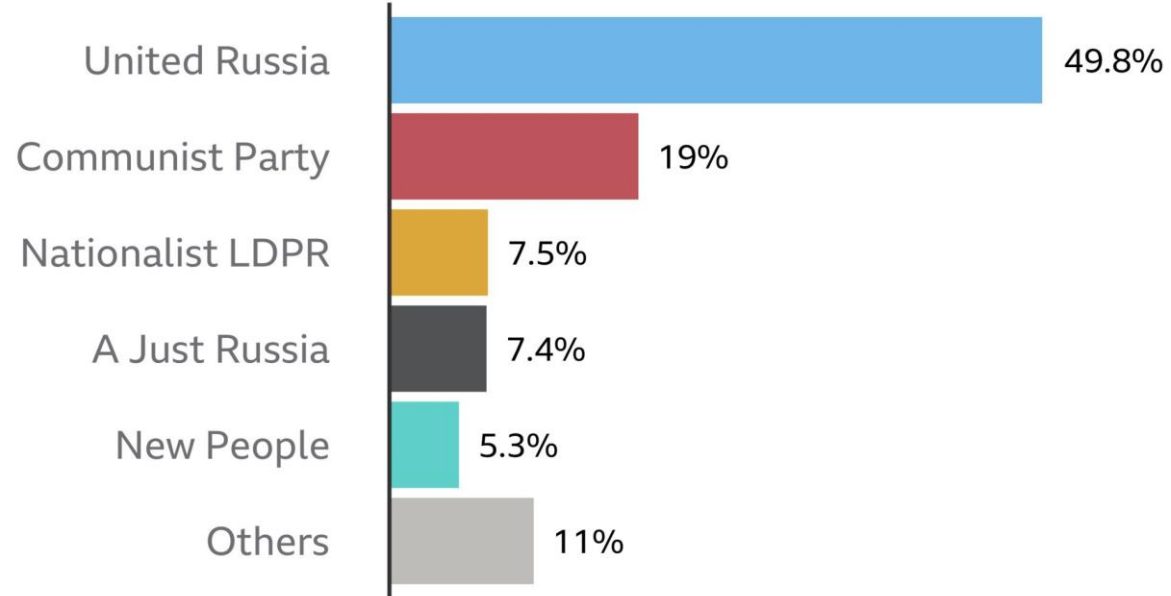
So what about Russia?



Official results of the September 17 Russian parliamentary election

State Duma election in Russia

Votes counted so far



Threshold of 5% of votes cast required for seats to be allocated in the Duma.
Nearly 99.7% of votes counted.

Source: Central Election Commission of Russia, 20 Sept 12:45 GMT

BBC

Putin's accomplishments

Made the restoration of communism well-nigh impossible

Won Second Chechen War

Rising living standards (until recently)

Reformed agriculture

Reformed the army (though navy needs work)

20 years of (relative) stability

Successfully competed with the United States and the EU

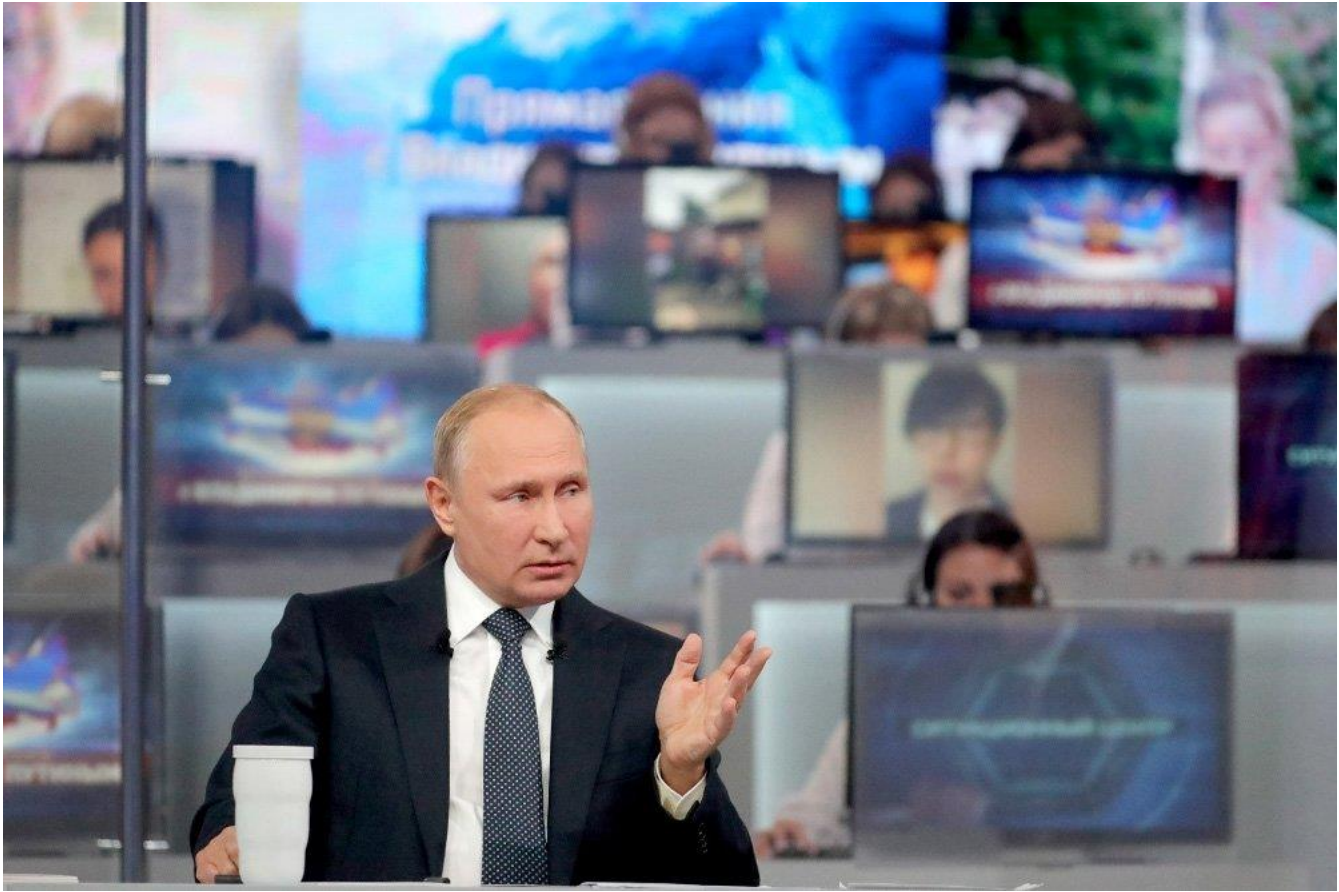
Valery Solovei: “If you wish to create an image of a politician’s greatness and of the absence of any alternatives to him in his capacity as a national leader, remove all competition so that against the backdrop of the political mice and reptiles that remain even a Lilliputian will look like a giant”



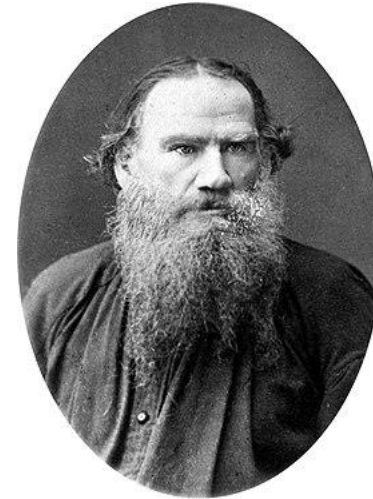
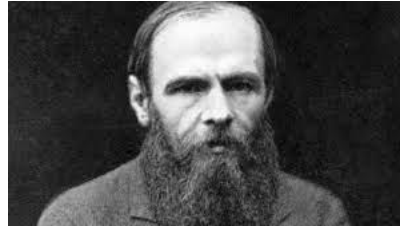
Sergei Markedonov: “The post-Soviet space continues to remain the most realist of all spaces”



The man at the top. Here we see President Putin answering questions earlier this year at his annual Direct Line phone-in show. This is cold charisma in ritualized action!



Public figures fall into three categories, as per these three great nineteenth-century novelists



In 2011, the number of Russian state and municipal officials exceeded two million. It has grown considerably since then



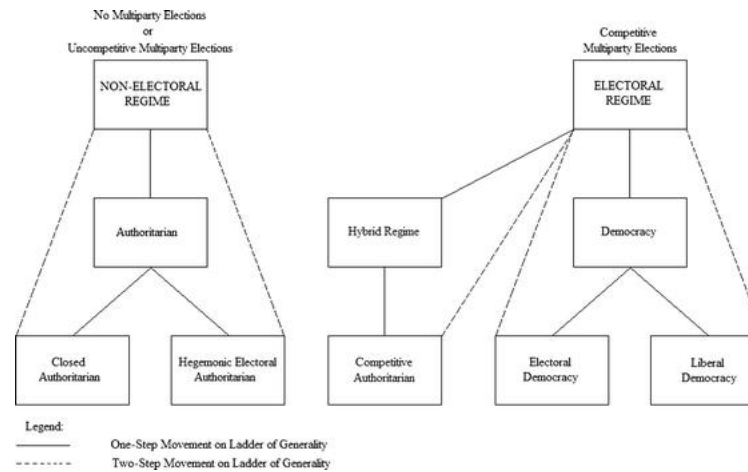
Специальное статистическое обследование государственных и муниципальных органов власти началось только в 1994 году, поэтому сопоставимых данных за более ранний период нет.

В СССР в середине 1980-х годов общая численность чиновников составляла

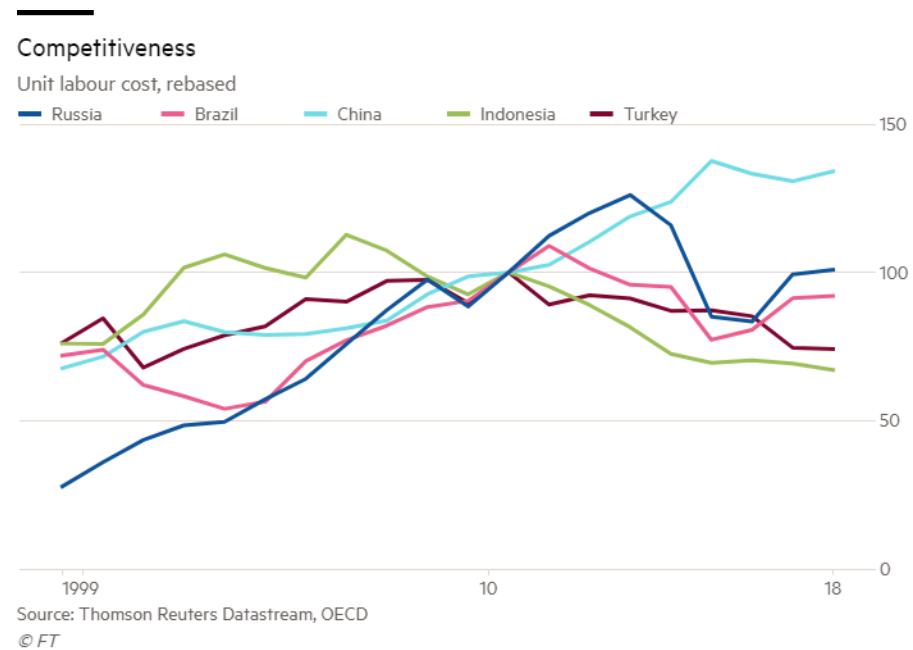
около 2 млн. человек. Учитывая, что население СССР было в 2,5 раза больше, чем в современной России, можно подсчитать, что число чиновников на душу населения выросло примерно в три раза.

** По данным Росстата и других источников.*

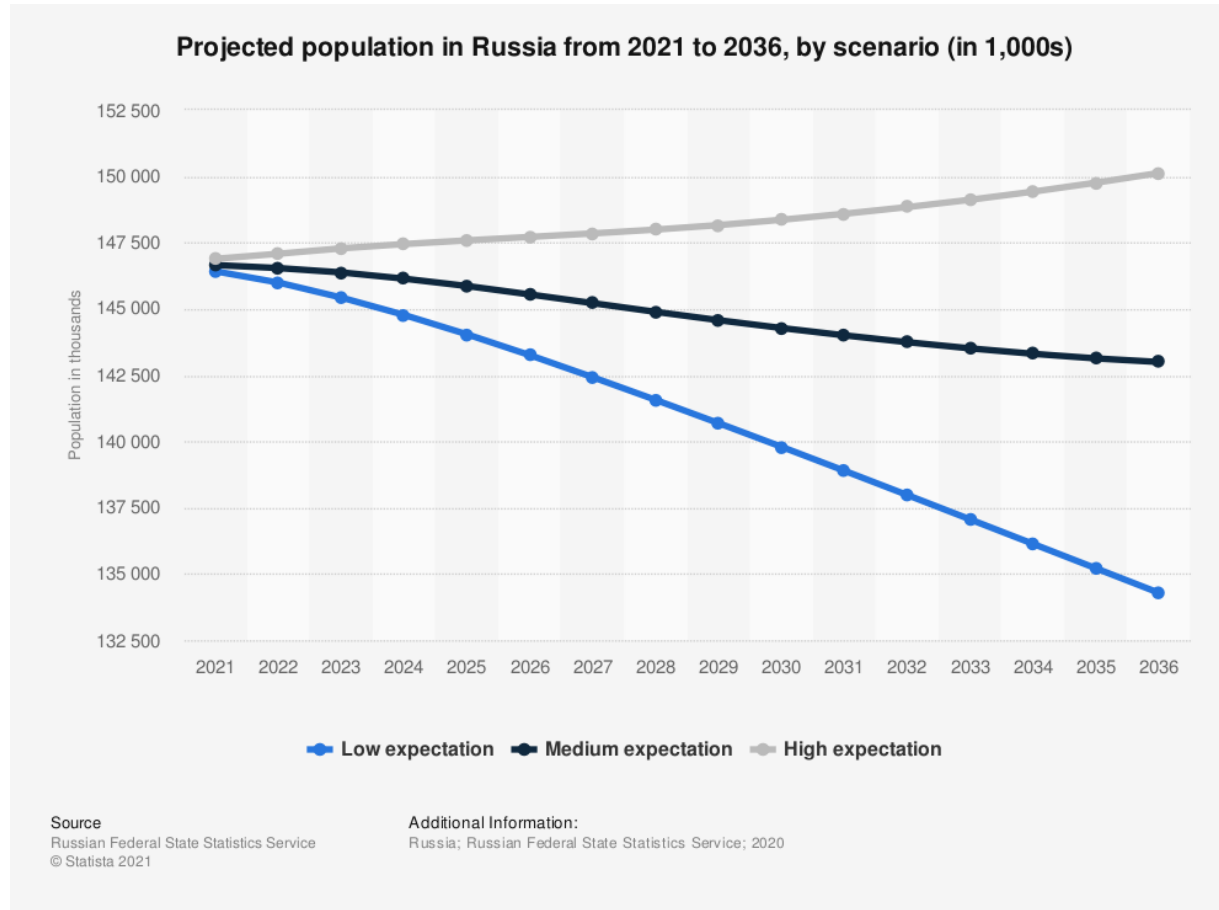
Putin is known for his one-liners, and his phrase “the vertical of power” is among the most famous ones



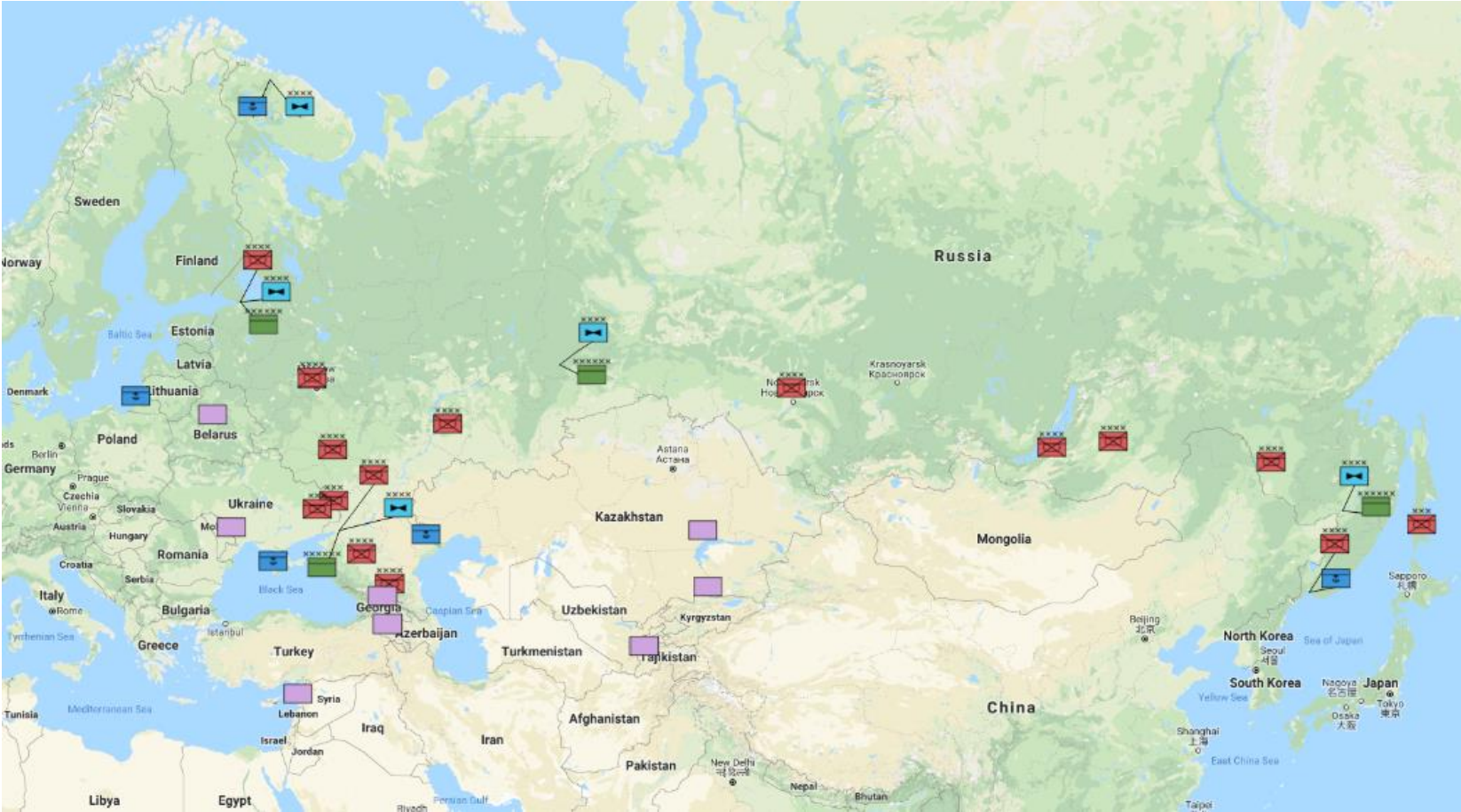
Economic performance, which in the early and middle years of the Putin administration was sustained by high energy prices, is now subpar



Demographic trends are concerning



Russia, like China, Iran and Turkey, is a revisionist power, though its military presence is regional rather than global



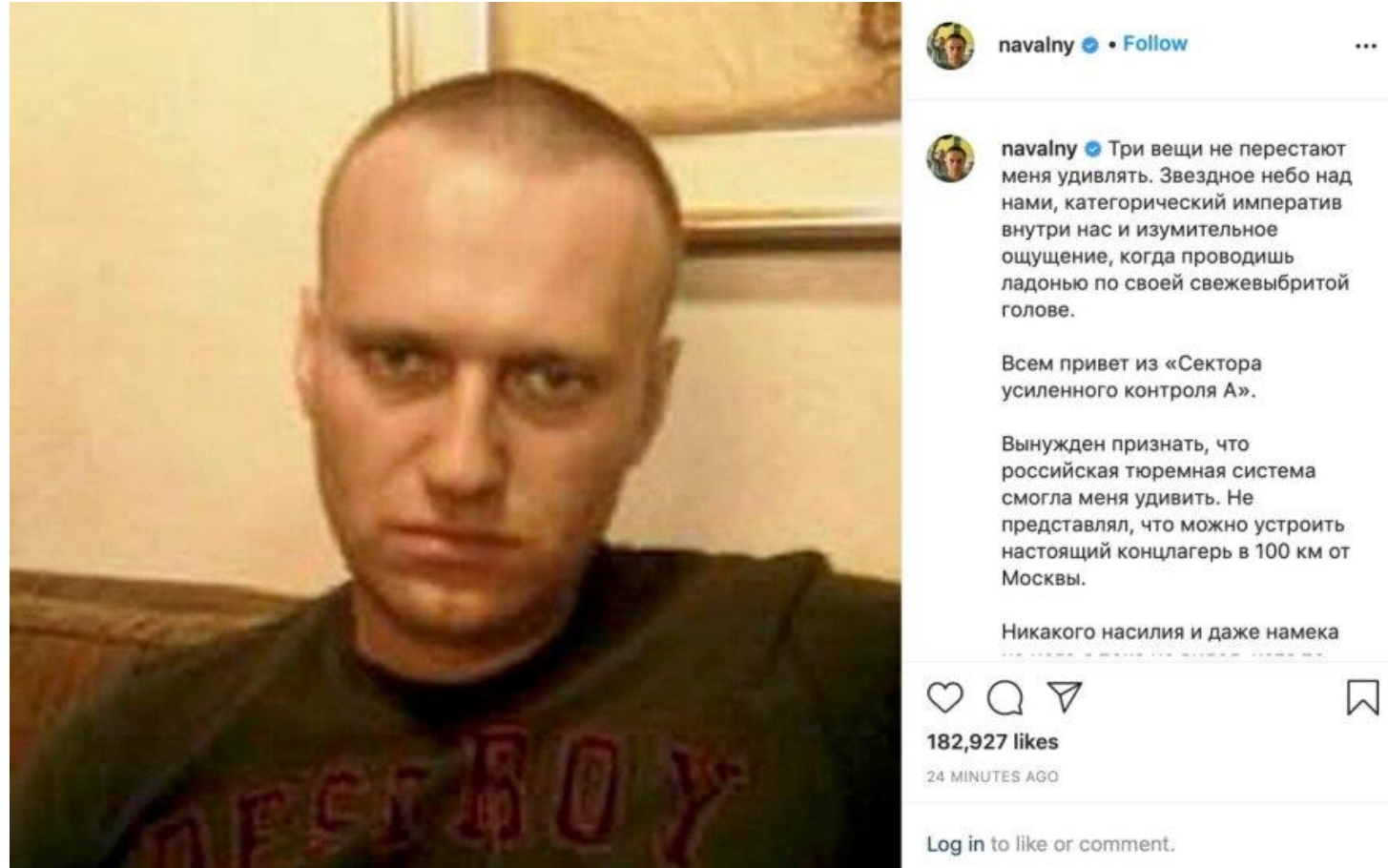
Russia's militarization of the Arctic is related to climate change



Alexei Navalny addressing supporters in 2018



Navalny social media post from Corrective Colony No 2 in Vladimir Province, which the opposition leader describes as “a friendly concentration camp”



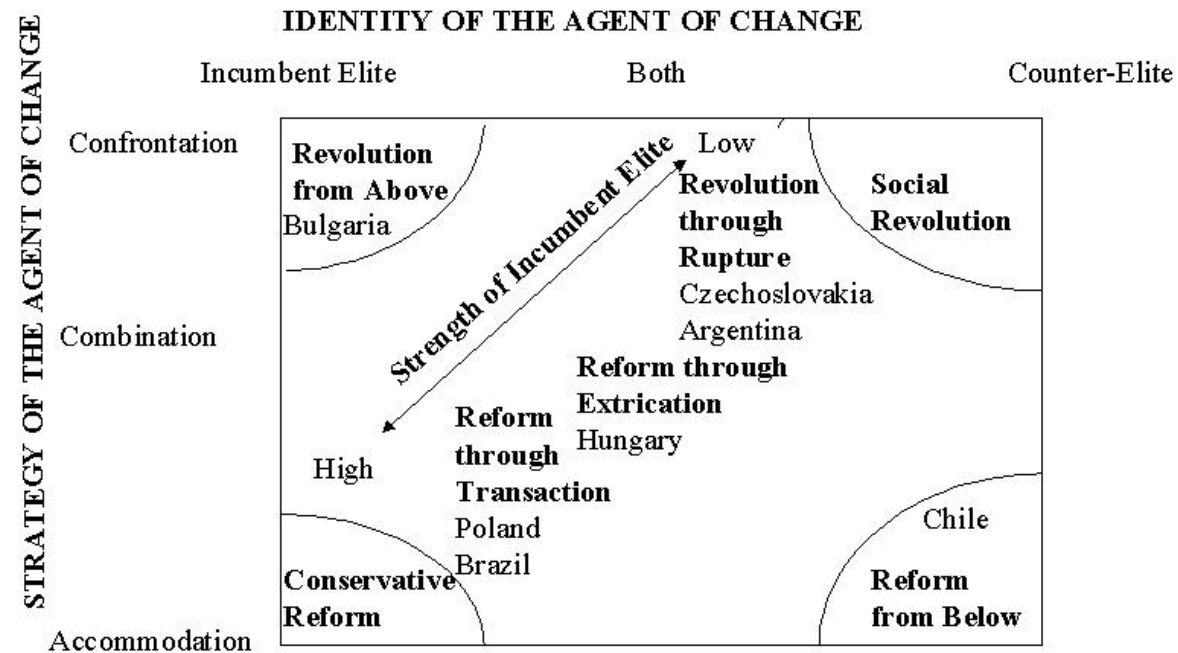
Judge Natalya Repnikova died from Covid on September 17, 2021



Last year's protests in Khabarovsk, Siberia were inspired by the arrest of popular local governor Sergei Furgal

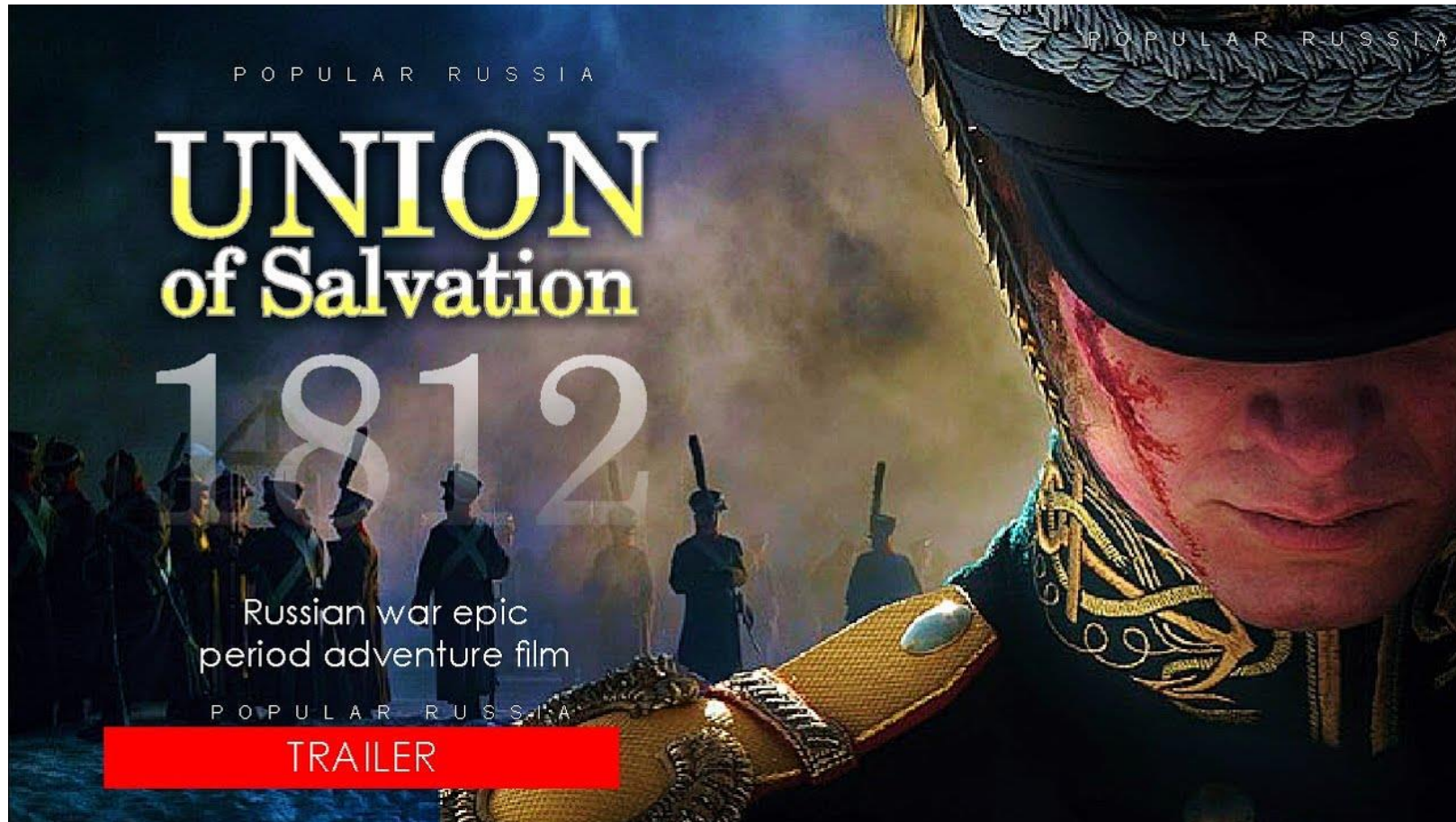


“A revolution is 10,000 vacancies.” Napoleon



Source: adapted from Munck and Leff (1999: 197).

“You say you want a revolution...”



Emperor Nicholas I of All the Russias



Former president and prime minister Dmitry Medvedev: honorably discarded



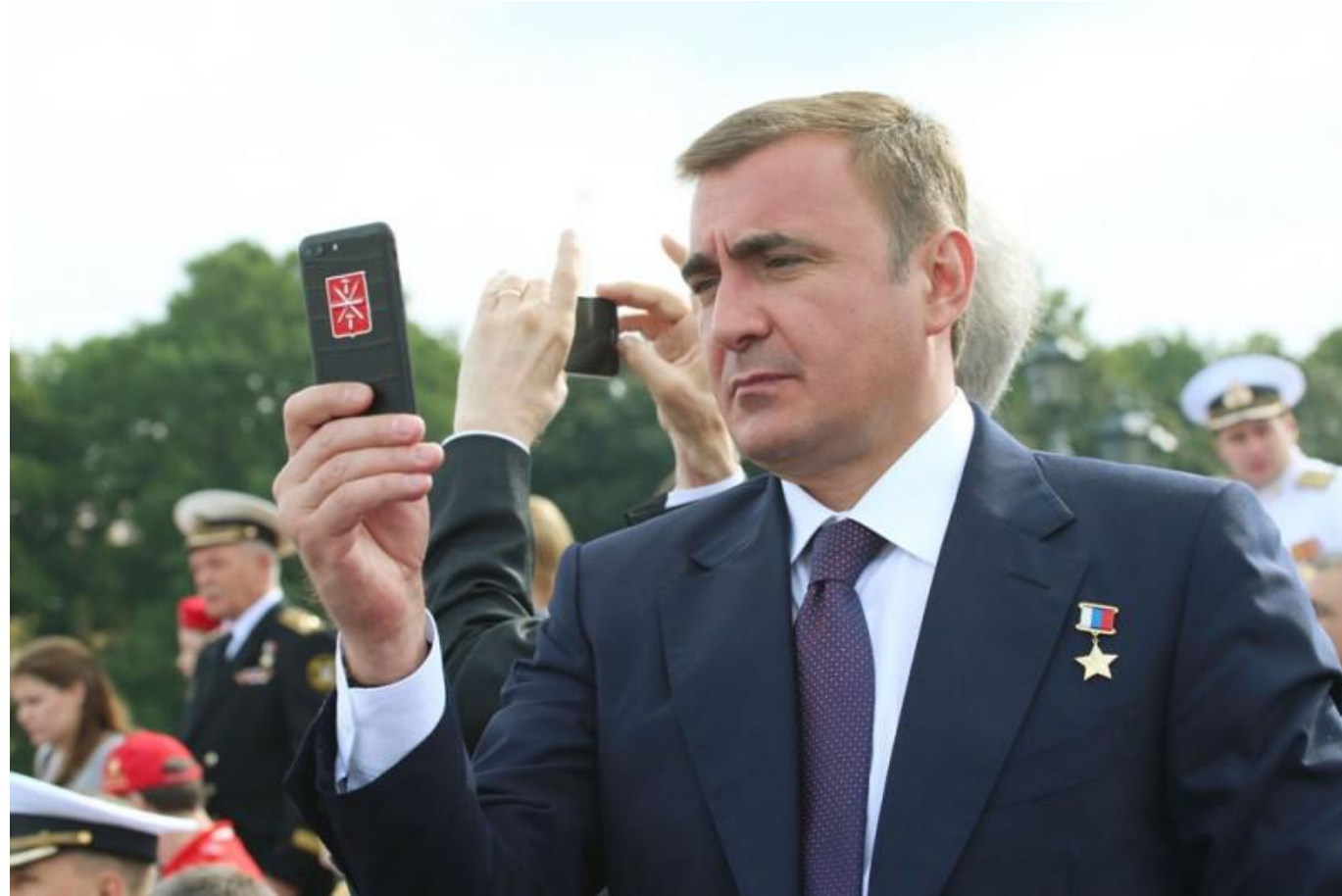
Putin and defense minister Sergei Shoigu (b. 1955) on a vacation trip to Siberia earlier this year



Putin and his new(ish) prime minister, Mikhail Mishustin (b. 1955)



Tula Province governor Aleksei Dyumin (b. 1972)



Yaroslavl Province governor Dmitry Mironov (b. 1968)



A Soviet-era *avos'ka*, or string bag

