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Source: *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Mar., 1996), pp. 77-101

Published by: Sage Publications, Inc. on behalf of the University of Utah

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/449042>

Accessed: 01-02-2018 17:40 UTC

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# Mass and Elite Political Outlooks in Post-Soviet Russia: How Congruent?

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Political scientists have long sought to understand the representation of mass publics by their political leaders. Empirical research has primarily focused on patterns of representation in industrial democracies with established democratic traditions. Post-communist countries like Russia, by contrast, provide the opportunity to examine patterns of and attitudes toward representation in a society in which the electoral institutions and the attitudes are newly emerging. We employ survey data from coordinated samples of Russian elites and the mass public carried out in 1992 to address the following questions: Who are the elites in today's Russia? Are their views different from those of the public? In particular, where are the critical pressures for change in Russian politics and society coming from and who is resisting change—those at the top or the bottom of the political hierarchy? How do cleavages among different elite groups relate to the attitudinal cleavages among the general public? To what extent did the first competitive elections in Russia produce attitudinal correspondence between Russian citizens and their representatives in the legislature? We analyze elite and mass outlooks on key political and economic dimensions, first for the country as a whole, then within different districts. We show that Russian elites differ in social background from the mass public in the same manner as Western elites differ from the public. Russian elites also differ attitudinally from the Russian populace by being, on average, more reformist (politically and economically). The correspondence, or congruence, between Russian elite and mass views—overall and region by region—is only moderate but of roughly the same magnitude as that found in Western democracies.

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NOTE: The research reported in this paper was supported by National Science Foundation Grant #SES-9023974. We thank Robert Grey for a careful reading of an earlier draft. Reisinger was supported by the University of Iowa's Obermann Center for Advanced Studies during the writing of this article. He thanks Jay and Lorna and the Center's staff for their assistance.

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Political scientists have long sought to understand whether and how political leaders in modern democracies “represent” the entire citizenry. The issue is complex—the concept of representation has numerous facets, most of which are difficult to measure. Yet whether and how institutions work to bring elite behavior into line with the desires of the mass public in countries with different political institutions and traditions must remain a central issue in comparative politics. The ability to measure mass and elite attitudes generally became available to scholars decades or centuries after the initiation of the representative systems. Contrasting the political outlooks of elites and masses in a society with newly established electoral institutions makes possible a new perspective.

Russia is a society with such newly established electoral institutions. Dramatic developments have taken place since competitive, full suffrage elections were held throughout the U.S.S.R. in 1989. The interplay between elite and mass attitudes will have much to say about whether Russia’s current commitment to “democracy” as its form of rule translates into stable and effective democratic political institutions. This raises several important questions, including: Who are the elites in today’s Russia? Are their views different from those of the public? In particular, where are the critical pressures for change in Russian politics and society coming from and who is resisting change—those at the top or the bottom of the political hierarchy? How do cleavages among different elite groups relate to the attitudinal cleavages among the general public? To what extent did the first competitive elections in Russia produce attitudinal correspondence between Russian citizens and their representatives in the legislature?

We explore these issues with survey data from coordinated samples of Russian elites and the mass public carried out May-July of 1992. We first search for similarities or differences in the central tendencies and the degree of dispersion of elite versus mass opinions and, second, provide preliminary tests of the degree of attitudinal congruence between the Russian mass public and its political elites—thereby providing a reference point for future studies. Our measures of attitudinal congruence will not serve as measures of “representation” per se; congruence is not representation (Eulau 1987: 171). They will, however, provide an empirical foundation for discussions of the complex issue of representation in the emerging Russian electoral system. We show that Russian elites are, on average, more reformist (politically and economically) than the Russian populace; that the expectation is prevalent among the Russian public that legislators should follow the wishes of their constituents (whereas legislators seek greater maneuvering room to act as trustees); and, finally, that the level of “dyadic correspondence” between the views of particular legislators and those prevalent in their home districts are roughly

comparable to levels found in established democratic systems, which is to say that the level is only moderate.

#### PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Modern democracies are all representative democracies, with a relatively small group of elites making and carrying out policy. Such a polity can be “democratic,” that is, ruled by the people at large if, among other things, the rulers are chosen through mechanisms that make them “representative” of the public as a whole. The trouble is that there is little agreement over what it should mean for elites to “represent” the public. For example, one could argue that representation should produce *resemblance*. That is, the elite whose role is to represent the public should have a distribution of features that resembles the distribution found in the public at large (Pitkin 1969: 11). The resemblance could be based on ascriptive traits such as race or gender or religion. Or, the resemblance could be ideological (Huber and Powell [1994] discuss this in terms of the *proportionate influence* vision of representation). When thinking about the resulting group of elites—a legislative body, for instance—the resemblance understanding of representation suggests that the goal should be a body that is an ideal random sample from the populace. Simple statistical tests could measure the likelihood of the differences between the represented and the representatives being a matter of sampling alone.

A different understanding of representation arises if one stresses *agency* by one person on behalf of one or many others. In a democracy, in other words, a representative should act as the people would like her to act. Very quickly, such an understanding of the purpose of representation raises difficult questions (Pitkin 1967). For example, should the representative seek to act as the people she represents desire on that issue at that time or should she use her best judgment about what is best for the constituents in the long run given her deeper familiarity with the issues, superior access to information or, perhaps, simply her moral judgment? In the former view, representatives are delegates of the public. In the latter, representatives resemble trustees more than delegates, with greater independence from public opinion on concrete matters (Friedrich 1968; Wahlke et al. 1962: 274–75; Pitkin 1969; Pennock 1979: ch. 8; Converse and Pierce 1986: 493–99). Given either style of representation, should the group of people being represented be the country’s populace as a whole or a sub-group within the overall population, such as voters in the district from which the representative was elected?

A third, distinct but related, perspective on representation focuses on correspondence or congruence between mass preferences and the attitudes and behaviors of representatives (Barnes 1977; Converse and Pierce 1986; Miller and Stokes 1963; cf Eulau 1987). Strictly speaking, a high degree of elite-mass

congruence is neither necessary nor sufficient to produce adequate representation, because understandings of the latter can be so varied. Nevertheless, it comes close to being necessary in the sense that, without congruence, the putatively representative body neither resembles the public nor is likely to act as a set of agents of the public. As Converse and Pierce (1986: 221) note, comparing the structure of elite and mass preferences is “absolutely central to the study of political representation, since this process obliges a representative to perceive and understand the policy sentiments of his constituents and somehow to take them into account, along with his own judgment of policy options.” So, while congruence is not the whole story, determining its presence or absence remains an important task of comparative political research.

Within this perspective of representation as congruence, the question of who should be represented also arises. One might want to stress overall congruence between a representative body and the citizenry as a whole (Weissberg 1978). This “collective correspondence” between elite and mass views stresses the ideological resemblance between representative body and public described earlier. However, depending on the electoral system rules, the collective correspondence might be low even when the voting process is producing legislators whose policy preferences match those of a majority of their district. Therefore, many prefer a different criterion of representation, “dyadic correspondence”: whether the legislator’s attitudes reflect the views of the voters in her electoral district. A political system could exhibit a comparatively high degree of collective correspondence, of dyadic correspondence, of both or of neither.

The issue of representation is controversial in Russia now and emerges frequently in media discussions of the political leadership. Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the “democratic” forces that helped his rise to power stressed the need to change the relationship between Soviet elites and masses. In the post-Stalin period, the elite-mass relationship that existed has been characterized as a “social compact” in which the elites were obligated to provide a slowly improving standard of living that was easily available to all citizens, in return for which the citizens were obliged to take their assigned place in the economy and to stay out of politics (Breslauer 1978; Cook 1993). The “democratic” opponents of Soviet power, however, pushed for a different elite-mass relationship, one that would remove some of the safety and stability provided to Soviet citizens but in return lead to a more dynamic, competitive economy with broader opportunities for enrichment and, importantly, with ways to force politicians to listen to them. Political representation, in other words, was part of the new deal being offered to Russians by anti-communist reformers. Details about the nature and philosophical underpinnings of Russian representation were not, of course, widely and explicitly shared by Russian

reformers. They are emerging through practice. It is therefore important to determine to what extent the new Russian leadership shares the public's expectations about how representation should occur. Our analyses provide a point of entry into the study of political representation in a fledgling democracy by examining for the first time three types of empirical evidence: 1. evidence of the resemblance, both ascriptive and ideological, between Russian elites and the Russian public as wholes; 2. evidence of elite and mass views of the proper role representatives should play; and 3. evidence of dyadic elite-mass attitudinal congruence.

### ELITE-MASS RESEMBLANCE IN RUSSIA

Members of Russia's working legislature, the Supreme Soviet, were elected in 1990, while Russia was still under Soviet power. Although a sizable minority of those elected supported the reformist path of Boris Yeltsin and other "democrats," at least as large a group were regional elites elected in races of dubious competitiveness and opposed to democratic reforms. Many observers doubt that any significant degree of "representation" in any sense could have resulted from these elections. The June 1991 election of Boris Yeltsin as the Russian President gave him the power to nominate top cabinet officials, a means of reshaping executive institutions in light of public views. Although the Supreme Soviet was disbanded in late 1993 (elections to a new legislature, the Federal Assembly, took place that December), our data provide information on a key period of transition during which the links to the Soviet era remained strong, yet experience with post-Soviet political and economic realities had occurred as well. In comparing Russian elite-mass congruence both to other countries and to post-1993 Russia, data from this "partially post-Soviet" time will be critical. How, then, do post-Soviet Russian elites resemble or differ from the general public? In examining this question, we employ data gathered from a survey of the populace of European Russia and from interviews with members of two extremely important segments of the elite—legislators and executive-branch officials.<sup>1</sup> When we examine dyadic attitudinal congruence below, we will employ data only for legislators since the executive-branch officials are not directly elected. For now, however, we combine both groups into a single sample of elites. Even though the ministerial officials are not directly elected, they are selected and confirmed by politicians who are elected. If, as many in Russia believe, the Russian administrative elite consists almost

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<sup>1</sup> Those interested in acquiring the data we use in our analyses should contact the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248 and request the dataset entitled "Monitoring Political Change in the former Soviet Union—Surveys Conducted in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania."

entirely of people who also belonged to the Soviet elite, the public will wonder whether elections and the change in regime led to any improvement in popular representation. Hence, it is reasonable to include executive-branch officials into a depiction of how the political elite resembles the mass public.

Our samples were designed to be broadly representative of the European portion of the Russian Federation's legislators and executive-branch officials, on the one hand, and its adult populace on the other (details of the sampling are in Appendix 1). Thus, the ascriptive differences between elites and masses in our samples reflect differences between the related populations. Table 1 shows that the match between the proportion of urban and rural respondents in the mass sample and the type of electoral districts of the legislative sample is quite close. The average age of the elites is five years older than the age of the average mass respondent, as should be expected. Yet Russian elites are relatively young, 47 years old on average, compared to their equivalents in many countries as well as to their predecessors in the pre-Gorbachev period. Virtually all of the elites have completed college, and a quarter have received a post-graduate degree. By contrast, only a quarter of the populace at large has a college education. Another salient distinction is gender. Males represent less than half of the Russian citizenry yet hold 95 percent of the top posts in the political system. (Similar educational and gender patterns are common worldwide. See Welsh 1979: 145.)

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHIC "PORTRAITS" OF RUSSIAN ELITES AND MASSES, 1992

	Elites	Masses
Number responding to the questions below:	110-112	1246-1301
1. Locale of Residence or District Elected From:		
Urban	73.6%	78.2%
Mixed	21.8	--
Rural	4.6	21.8
2. Average Age:	47	42
Range	30-66	18-85
3. Average Level of Education Achieved:	6.4	4.0
where: 1 - through 4th grade	0.0%	5.8%
2 - 5th-11th grade	0.0	10.4
3 - Complete Secondary	2.7	21.6
4 - Professional School or Technicum	.9	28.8
5 - Incomplete Higher	0.0	7.9
6 - Higher Education (Diploma)	67.9	23.3
7 - Post-Graduate Work	3.6	.5
8 - Post-Graduate Degree	25.0	1.6

Table 1 (continued)

	Elites	Masses
Number responding to the questions below:	110–112	1246–1301
4. Percentage Male:	95.5%	46.4%
5. Primary Occupation [within elite sample, legislators only]:		
Unqualified Worker	0.0%	5.0%
Qualified Worker, Master, Foreman, Brigadier	7.7	20.3
Technician or Engineer	10.8	10.1
Agricultural Worker	1.5	4.2
Service or office worker	18.5	18.5
Private Business		5.3
Intellectual or Student	29.2	13.0
Military	3.1	1.3
Cleric	0.0	.2
Retired	1.5	18.2
6. Nationality Distribution:		
Russian	89.2%	86.9%
Ukrainian	6.3	2.1
Byelorussian	0.0	1.9
Jewish	.9	2.2
Other	3.6	6.6
7. Religion:		
Non-believer	80.9%	52.6%
Russian Orthodox	16.4	43.3
Catholic or Protestant	.9	1.3
Jewish	0.0	.6
Muslim	0.0	1.2
Other	1.8	1.0
8. Percentage Who Ever Belonged to the Communist Party:	The large majority	17.5%

Source: University of Iowa Surveys, "Monitoring Political Change in the Former Soviet Union," 1992. Details in Appendix 1.

Whereas about 35 percent of the mass respondents work in blue-collar positions, only 18.5 percent of the legislators have blue-collar work outside of parliament. This latter figure is surely larger than would be found in most Western countries, but it does reveal the disappearance after 1989 of the large share of seats reserved for "workers" in Soviet-era legislative bodies. These findings—that elites are older, better educated, predominantly male and come largely from white-collar occupations—accord with patterns found worldwide.

Ethnic Russians dominate the Russian Federation's elite, and over 95 percent are Slavic (either Russian, Belarussian or Ukrainian). The proportion of

Russians and other Slavs in the public at large is quite similar. Although Russians were only a slim majority of the citizens of the Soviet Union, they dominate the population of the Russian Federation. A large minority of the Russian populace has embraced the Orthodox Church now that religion has been legalized (two out of five). Only one out of five elites, however, professed any religious preference (mostly Orthodox Christian).

As we noted earlier, the Russian elite shows a fairly high continuity from the pre-1991 elite. This means that a very large proportion of those currently in the elite were once members of the Communist party. Such membership was virtually a prerequisite to gaining responsible positions at the middle level or above in Soviet political, economic, military and other hierarchies (Hill and Frank 1986: ch. 1). It was quite clear by the 1980s, moreover, that the Party incorporated members of extremely diverse political viewpoints, within the Central Committee as well as the rank and file. Despite the role that the 1990 elections played in bringing fresh blood into the Russian elite, the largest proportion of those capable of filling a leadership position in 1992 would have been Party members at an earlier time. Thus, although we did not ask elites whether they had formerly been Party members, the proportion would be very high. Hence, in Table 1 we contrast that with the percentage of mass respondents who had ever belonged to the Party. One-time membership in the Communist party provides only limited information about the orientations of the current elites. Such membership does, however, mark an important distinction among mass respondents. Party membership was a characteristic of the more active and prominent citizens. As a variable, it now correlates with less reformist and market-oriented positions among mass respondents.

Demographically, Russian elites do not “look like” the Russian citizenry (an unlikely prospect for any country). Yet that fact may not prevent mass values and preferences from being adequately reproduced at the top levels of power. Indeed, the elite might advance those values and preferences more skillfully precisely because of their atypical educational achievements and other skills. We turn now therefore to comparing elite and mass views in several ways. We begin by examining their self-placement along the primary political dimension now operating in Russia: “radical” vs. “conservative.” The empirical literature comparing elite and mass attitudes has often focused on specific policies or policy areas. Indeed, a key finding of Miller and Stokes (1963) was that the relationship differed across policy areas. However, when a valid ideological dimension can be assumed to exist, important aspects of attitudinal similarity or dissimilarity are revealed by contrasting the elite and the mass distributions along the dimension (Converse and Pierce 1986: *passim*; Huber and Powell 1994: 293–95). We therefore provide this analysis before turning to individual issue areas.

In post-Soviet Russia opposing wings of the political spectrum are typically depicted, despite the inadequacy of doing so, by the terms “radical” (connoting the desire for Western-oriented changes such as marketization, especially for their rapid introduction) and “conservative” (either opposed to such changes or opposed to their too-hasty introductions).<sup>2</sup> We asked both mass and elite respondents to place themselves at a point along a seven-point scale in which one represented the most radical position and seven indicated the most conservative position. As Table 2 shows, elites are more likely to describe themselves as radical than are the mass respondents. The average placement, however, is not far from the mid-point (4). The mass sample was also near the midpoint, also on the radical side.

Before discussing what it means to find that the elite sample is less conservative than the mass public, we need to determine whether this pattern of self-labeling corresponds to the pattern for specific attitudes. Table 2 also presents the average value for 15 other questions that were asked of both elites and masses. (Appendix 2 provides full wordings.) Questions #2–8 are political in nature. The elite sample looks less favorably than the masses on the Communist party (#2), is more comfortable with the pace of reform (#3), is less likely to prefer order to freedom (#4), has a less favorable view of Stalin (#5), places a higher value on popular political participation (#6), is more supportive of party competition (#7) and is more supportive of organized opposition (#8). Each of these questions is tapping the reaction to changes that were unimaginable just ten years ago. For each, the elites are on average more supportive of the political changes. In addition, for almost every one of these questions, the elite answers are less widely dispersed.

Questions #9–13 provide information on economic orientation. Our data show that the elites’ economic views, as well as their political views, are more pro-reform. Though none of the five questions asks about privatization or market economics per se, each relates to a dimension of the transition away from Soviet-style centrally administered economics and the expectations that went with it.

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<sup>2</sup> For examinations of the appropriateness of assuming a bipolar left-right or liberal-conservative scale in Western polities, see, for example, Conover and Feldman 1981; Klingemann 1979. The terms radical and conservative have become “powerful, political symbols to many members of the public” in Russia, as Conover and Feldman (1981: 621) argue is true of the terms liberal and conservative in the United States. Empirically, our data do show an attitudinal foundation for the labels of radical and conservative now deployed in Russian politics. The index of political reformism that we develop below correlates with the individual’s self-identification as a conservative or radical. In both mass and elite samples, the correlations are moderately positive and significant at a .000 level:  $.29$  and  $-.39$  respectively. (The negative sign of the correlations indicates that those who label themselves as conservative are more likely to score low on the index of political reformism.)

Table 2

ATTITUDINAL DISTRIBUTIONS AMONG RUSSIAN ELITES AND MASSES, 1992

							Mean (std. dev.)	T-test of Difference
1. Self-placement on Ideological Scale								
	Radical	2	3	4	5	6	Conserv- ative	
Elites.....	6%	16%	30%	41%	7%	0%	0%	3.3 (1.00)
Masses .....	4%	10%	24%	44%	12%	5%	2%	3.7 (1.17)
2. Rating of Communist Party								
	Low	2	3	4	High			
Elites .....	48%	24%	23%	5%	1%			1.9 (.98)
Masses .....	37%	24%	25%	9%	5%			2.2 (1.17)
3. "Political Reform is Moving too Rapidly."								
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree			
Elites.....	7%	26%	7%	51%	9%			3.3 (1.16)
Masses .....	19%	39%	13%	24%	6%			2.6 (1.20)
4. "Better to Live in an Orderly Society."								
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree			
Elites .....	12%	40%	9%	32%	7%			2.8 (1.21)
Masses .....	29%	42%	7%	18%	4%			2.2 (1.17)
5. "Stalin not Given Enough Credit These Days"								
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree			
Elites.....	1%	17%	5%	53%	23%			3.8 (1.02)
Masses .....	9%	26%	18%	26%	21%			3.2 (1.30)
6. "Public Participation not Needed if Decisionmaking by Trusted Leaders."								
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree			
Elites.....	4%	25%	7%	48%	17%			3.5 (1.14)
Masses .....	12%	44%	10%	21%	7%			2.7 (1.18)
7. "Multi-Party Competition Helps Polity"								
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree			
Elites .....	22%	61%	5%	11%	2%			2.1 (.93)
Masses .....	14%	40%	18%	25%	4%			2.7 (1.11)
8. "Anyone has Right to Oppose or Resist any Government initiative."								
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree			
Elites .....	13%	59%	9%	17%	2%			2.3 (.98)
Masses .....	12%	47%	13%	23%	4%			2.6 (1.10)
9. Rating of Cooperative Workers (Businessmen)								
	Low	2	3	4	High			
Elites.....	5%	10%	34%	41%	9%			3.4 (.97)
Masses .....	28%	19%	26%	20%	8%			2.6 (1.28)
10. Influence on Life and Politics of Businessmen								
	Too Much	2	Too Little					
Elites.....	21%	49%	30%					2.3 (.79)
Masses .....	48%	28%	24%					1.8 (.82)

Table 2 (continued)

					Mean (std. dev.)	T-test of Difference
11. "Should be Mechanism to Regulate Income"						
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree	
Elites.....	6%	16%	5%	58%	15%	3.6 (1.12)
Masses.....	12%	22%	7%	37%	21%	3.3 (1.35)
12. "Economic Reform Must Occur Even if it Means Hardship."						
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree	
Elites.....	20%	55%	4%	16%	6%	2.3 (1.13)
Masses.....	11%	46%	11%	22%	10%	2.8 (1.21)
13. Position on Job-provision Scale						
	Government	2	3	4	Help Oneself	
Elites.....	9%	2%	30%	32%	28%	3.6 (1.12)
Masses.....	20%	15%	30%	17%	17%	3.3 (1.35)
14. Danger from Economic Inequality						
	None	2	3	4	Highest	
Elites.....	8%	17%	32%	23%	19%	3.3 (1.19)
Masses.....	4%	7%	21%	32%	36%	3.9 (1.10)
15. Danger from Inflation						
	None	2	3	4	Highest	
Elites.....	5%	8%	23%	37%	27%	3.8 (1.09)
Masses.....	1%	3%	12%	26%	58%	4.4 (.91)
16. "Legislator Must Follow Wishes of Constituents."						
	Fully Agree	2	3	4	Fully Disagree	
Elites.....	0%	11%	7%	74%	8%	3.8 (.74)
Masses.....	10%	37%	16%	32%	6%	2.9 (1.14)

Source: University of Iowa Surveys, "Monitoring Political Change in the Former Soviet Union," 1992. Details in Appendix 1.

On average, Russia's rulers have a greater openness to a marketized future: a more prominent role in society for private-sector business people, a wider income disparity than was true (in terms of official salary) under socialism, and each individual's need to pursue a job actively without the state providing one.

Both the political questions (#2-8) and the economic questions (#9-13) reinforce the pattern found for the first question in Table 2 (ideological self-identification): Russian elites are more reformist than the mass public (cf. Zimmerman 1994). This finding fits nicely with patterns found in established democracies (Dalton 1988: 207-9). It also bears out expectations put forth by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) concerning the role that elites play in establishing a democratic order. Even so, our finding is counterintuitive in light of one prominent perspective on post-Soviet Russian events. This perspective, proffered by supporters of President Yeltsin (both Russian and foreign), saw

Yeltsin and a team of reformers grappling with implacably conservative elites (especially members of the 1990–93 Supreme Soviet) who came to power during the Soviet period and therefore did not reflect post-Soviet sensibilities. The main thing—according to this image—that allowed Yeltsin and his team to keep reforms going, however uncertainly, during 1992 and 1993 was Yeltsin’s continued popular support, as evidenced by the April 1993 referendum and the resulting boost that Yeltsin gained in his battles with the legislative branch.<sup>3</sup> Our findings show that this perspective oversimplifies the dynamics underlying past and current political struggles. The opposition by a sizable majority of the 1990–93 legislators to Yeltsin and his government may have arisen as much from institutional interests—that is, from the desire to see the legislature’s role remain strong—as from ideological antagonism between Yeltsin and the Supreme Soviet.<sup>4</sup> This is not to deny genuine political differences between the two branches—the differences grew stronger from 1992 through 1993, especially as more and more legislators sympathetic to President Yeltsin resigned their seats to take positions in the executive branch. Even so, legislative and executive-branch elites were closer to each other on some key ideological questions than to the mass public as a whole.

The more reformist stance among the elites also partially supports the argument, made in the 1970s and 1980s, that Soviet citizens had a “social compact” with the regime in which the regime provided economic security in exchange for political acquiescence. Although this compact prevented many kinds of personal advancement and enrichment, and despite the harm it caused the Soviet economy, support for several of the old economic system’s features remains higher among the general populace than among the elite. The elites, with a higher standard of living and greater prospects to maintain it during a time of rapid change, face the future with less trepidation than many Russians. It is important to note questions #14–15 in this regard. These questions about the degree of danger to the country from two types of economic difficulty show that, by a strong margin, the general public felt the danger from the country’s economic crisis more keenly than did the (more privileged) elites.

Finally, it is worth noting that, although the differences between elite and mass views are noteworthy and informative, the magnitudes of the differences are not out of line with elite-mass differences found elsewhere. For example,

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<sup>3</sup> Our elite sample is only partly made up of legislators. The sample of governmental officials includes people brought in by Yeltsin and his reformist associates. Yet within the elite sample, legislators are less conservative than governmental officials (mean of 3.19 vs. 3.70, producing a t-test statistic of  $-2.2$  [.030]).

<sup>4</sup> Contrast Smythe’s (1990) analysis of ideological cleavages within the Russian parliament to that found in RIA News Agency, Moscow, December 11, 1992, in Lexis-Nexis, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, December 14, 1992.

in a study of representational congruence in the United States, Backstrom (1977: 422) found an average difference across six issues of 11 percentage points separated the proportion of the public supporting the issue and the percentage of House members, and a 20 percentage point difference between the public and Senators. Similarly, Holmberg (1989) discovered a 15 percentage point difference between the opinions of those in the Riksdag and the Swedish public in 1985. When we calculate analogous percentages for the questions in Table 2, the average difference between the elite and mass sample is 20 percent. In addition, the legislators in Backstrom's study were less conservative than the public, which matches our findings above—even though the features of political and social life that conservatives seek to conserve are quite different in Russia and the U.S.

Question #16, which asks whether a legislator must follow the wishes of his or her constituency, provides an intriguing contrast in perspective between elites and masses. It measures whether the respondents see legislators as trustees or as delegates. The question is not written to provide an obvious “right” answer, not from question wording and not because one answer is more clearly “democratic” and thus the socially approved way to answer. Also, the question does not easily relate to a pro- or anti-reform position. The Russian elites pretty consistently disagreed with the view that they should act as delegates, following only their constituents' wishes. This accords with findings that legislators even in established liberal democracies tend to stress their trustee role (Welsh 1979: 150; Converse and Pierce 1986: 498, 687). In other words, elites see themselves as having been placed in a position of public trust and responsibility and consequently feel that they are the proper ones to make decisions on behalf of the public. Russian citizens, by contrast, are more likely to see themselves as able to play a continued role between elections and as justified in doing so (though the distribution of answers is wider than in the elite sample).

To summarize our findings concerning the resemblance between the Russian elite and the mass public, the elite do differ from the mass public, both ascriptively and attitudinally, in important ways. Elites are older, better educated, predominantly male and more upper class. For attitudes that can be characterized as more or less reformist, elites are more reformist. The variance of attitudes is more limited for elites as compared to among the mass public. What Huber and Powell (1994) call the proportionate influence vision of representation is far from fulfilled in Russia. Also, and importantly, elites and masses disagree about the proper style of representation. Elites tend to see a representative's role as one of trustee, acting as he or she sees fit in the public's interest while the mass respondents prefer representatives to act as delegates, carrying out the public's wishes. Although the Russian elections in 1990 and

1991 resulted in an elite that was no mirror image of the public, the electoral institutions should not be judged a failure. Russia's legislative and executive elite differed from the Russian public in 1992, yet they differed much more strikingly from Soviet-era elites, generally supporting those reforms that had gained increased public support during the late 1980s.

### DYADIC CONGRUENCE

We now turn to exploring dyadic congruence, or correspondence, between the political outlooks of legislators and of their constituents. One version of what representation should mean in a democracy holds that voters elect someone whose views are viewed favorably by a majority of those voting. A predominantly radical (or liberal or democratic or . . .) district ought to result in a comparatively radical (or liberal or democratic or . . .) legislator and vice versa, when all else is held equal. Such a pattern is what Converse and Pierce (1986: 507–610) call “relative” congruence between mass and elite views. (They distinguish this from “absolute” congruence, which we discussed as attitudinal resemblance above.) Because we designed our sample of elites to mirror the sampling points of the mass survey, we are able to examine dyadic (relative) attitudinal congruence for nine regions (*oblasti* or regions having equivalent administrative status).<sup>5</sup> These regions are roughly comparable in size and importance to medium-sized American states. They are not, however, coterminous with electoral districts. Hence, we have several legislators elected from most of the nine regions. Rather than comparing the position of a single individual with district views, therefore, we will compare an average position of the legislators elected from a given region to the views of the public of the entire region. Although this procedure is not directly equivalent to that followed by Miller and Stokes (1963), Converse and Pierce (1986) or others, it will serve to illuminate whether regional differences in the distribution of political views produced corresponding differences in legislator views.

Several of the individual questions presented in Table 2 (#2–5) covary well along the dimension of political reformism, that is, how respondents evaluate key features or symbols of the Soviet political system versus recent changes designed to eradicate those features and denigrate the symbols. We therefore begin by contrasting legislator and citizen positions for each region on an Index of Political Reformism constructed from these questions (see Appendix 2). The values of the Index can range from 0 (the least support for

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<sup>5</sup> The cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg are sufficiently large that they have the administrative status of *oblast'*. The area surrounding them is a separate *oblast'*. Hence, the table distinguishes between Moscow City and Moscow *Oblast'* and St. Petersburg City and Leningrad *Oblast'*.

political reform) to 16 (the most). The average placement on this index is two points higher among the elite sample than among the mass public: 10 vs. 8. This means that, as the individual answers presented in Table 2 indicated, Russian elites are less attached, on average, to the pre-Gorbachev political order. No member of the elite sample has a score below three, while over one-tenth of the masses fall into that range. It is nevertheless worth pointing out that the average mass value of eight falls at the mid-point of the scale. The populace ranges reasonably broadly around the mean (the standard deviation for the mass sample is 3.4 compared to 2.8 for the elite sample). For each region, Table 3 presents the number of respondents as well as the median, mean, standard deviation and range of the index for both the mass and elite samples.<sup>6</sup> The table also provides the difference between the elite and mass mean scores for each region and then reexpresses that difference as the number of standard deviation units that the elite mean would lie away from the mass mean (using the standard deviation of the mass sample). For seven of the nine regions, the legislators elected from a given region are more reformist than the public from the corresponding region, with legislators from Murmansk in the far north being more than four-and-a-half points more reformist on this sixteen-point scale (1.3 standard deviations above the mass mean) than residents of that *oblast'*. The exceptions to this pattern are Tula and Volgograd, where the legislators are less reformist than the public. The degree of this gap, as shown by the standard deviations, is quite small, however.

To tap pro- or anti-market positions, we have taken several questions presented in Table 2 (#10–14) concerning key aspects of market economics (and which covary) and added them together to produce an Index of Pro-Market Orientation (Appendix 2). The values of the index can range from 0 (least supportive of market economics) to 18 (most supportive). The average score for the elites is over two points higher than for the general public: 11 vs. 9. As with the Index of Political Reformism, the average score for the mass sample falls in the middle of the scale while the elites' average score is further along the reformist end of the scale. Also, the standard deviation of the elite sample is quite a bit smaller at 2.9 than that of the mass sample, 4.0. Only a single elite respondent scores below 4 on the scale in contrast to approximately one-tenth of the mass public. Table 4 presents the relationship between the market orientations of elite and mass respondents from the same

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<sup>6</sup> We include both medians and means in Tables 3 and 4 because some (e.g., Huber and Powell 1994) draw theoretical attention to the "median voter" and hence advocate employing medians not means in measures of representative-district relationships. For all our nine regions, no substantive difference in results emerges when using the median instead of the mean. We therefore focus on differences in means.

Table 3

LEGISLATORS AND THEIR DISTRICTS: POLITICAL REFORMISM

	Range	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation	Difference in Means (in Standard Deviation Units)*
Region = Moscow City					
Elites (n = 18)	7-15	11.5	11.3	2.5	.92
Masses (n = 172)	0-16	8	8.2	3.6	
Region = Moscow <i>oblast'</i>					
Elites (n = 15)	4-14	10	9.8	2.9	1.06
Masses (n = 75)	0-16	5	6.2	4.1	
Region = St. Petersburg					
Elites (n = 8)	5-15	11.5	11.3	3.3	.92
Masses (n = 93)	1-15	8	8.1	3.5	
Region = Leningrad					
Elites (n = 3)	8-10	9	9.0	1.0	.94
Masses (n = 55)	0-11	6	5.9	2.9	
Region = Tula					
Elites (n = 3)	5-11	6	7.3	3.2	-.43
Masses (n = 110)	1-16	9	8.8	3.3	
Region = Volgograd					
Elites (n = 3)	7-10	10	9.0	1.7	-.23
Masses (n = 96)	3-15	10	9.8	3.0	
Region = Pskov					
Elites (n = 2)	6-13	9.5	9.5	5.0	.51
Masses (n = 40)	1-12	7.5	7.8	2.7	
Region = Samara					
Elites (n = 5)	6-11	8	8.4	1.8	.13
Masses (n = 133)	0-16	8	7.9	3.5	
Region = Murmansk					
Elites (n = 3)	12-13	1.3	12.7	.6	1.33
Masses (n = 23)	3-13	8	8.0	2.3	

\*A positive difference indicates that the elites are more reformist on average.

Source: University of Iowa Surveys, "Monitoring Political Change in the Former Soviet Union," 1992. Details in Appendix 1.

regions. Only in Volgograd are the legislators less supportive of the market than the average citizen, by about one-half of a standard deviation. In the other *oblasti*, the legislators show greater average support for the market than do the residents of the region, with averages falling from .3 to 1.5 standard deviation units higher on the index than the public average. The most dramatic examples of relatively economically conservative regions with relatively pro-market representatives are the Moscow *oblast'* (outside Moscow city) and Murmansk.

Table 4

LEGISLATORS AND THEIR DISTRICTS: PRO-MARKET ORIENTATION

	Range	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation	Difference in Means (in Standard Deviation Units)*
Region = Moscow City					
Elites (n = 18)	4-16	12	11.9	2.7	.57
Masses (n = 180)	0-17	9.5	9.6	3.8	
Region = Moscow <i>oblast'</i>					
Elites (n = 19)	1-16	13	11.4	3.9	1.12
Masses (n = 71)	0-15	7	6.9	4.2	
Region = St. Petersburg					
Elites (n = 8)	9-15	13	12.3	2.3	.45
Masses (n = 96)	2-17	1.1	10.4	3.4	
Region = Leningrad					
Elites (n=4)	7-15	10.5	10.8	3.3	.31
Masses (n = 30)	2-14	8	8.0	3.0	
Region = Tula					
Elites (n = 3)	6-14	1.2	10.7	4.2	.63
Masses (n = 127)	1-16	8	8.1	3.6	
Region = Volgograd					
Elites (n=3)	7-12	9	9.3	2.5	-.53
Masses (n = 116)	0-18	12	11.5	4.2	
Region = Pskov					
Elites (n = 2)	12-14	13	13.0	1.4	.84
Masses (n=35)	3-16	10	9.6	3.3	
Region = Samara					
Elites (n = 6)	9-13	1.1	10.8	1.3	.33
Masses (n=140)	1-18	10	9.5	4.0	
Region = Murmansk					
Elites (n = 3)	12-17	1.5	14.7	2.5	1.51
Masses (n = 24)	2-14	10	8.6	3.2	

\*A positive difference indicates that the elites are more pro-market on average.

Source: University of Iowa Surveys, "Monitoring Political Change in the Former Soviet Union," 1992. Details in Appendix 1.

A final noteworthy aspect of the data relates to urban-rural cleavages. The difference between the attitudes and behaviors of urban and rural Russians has been well documented. Our samples permit us to compare two cities with their surrounding regions, Moscow and St. Petersburg. In both cases, the less urbanized and rural residential areas in the surrounding regions (the Moscow *oblast'* and the Leningrad *oblast'*) are noticeably more conservative than are the cities proper. The same pattern ought to hold true for the legislators elected

from these regions, and it does. The legislators' scores on both the reformism and market indices are lower than the scores of their city counterparts (while simultaneously being higher than those of their constituents). This, then, shows a pattern of what Converse and Pierce (1986) call relative congruence.

How to summarize the general trend across the nine regions? A common practice is simply to correlate the distribution of means across the mass and elite samples. A high correlation would indicate that, for example, relatively conservative regions have relatively conservative legislators and vice-versa. The resulting correlation for this Index of Political Reformism is  $-.151$  (statistically insignificant at  $.698$ ) and for the Index of Pro-Market Orientation is  $-.260$  ( $.500$ ). Because we have only nine regions to compare, a more appropriate measure of correlation is Kendall's tau-b rank-order correlation, which compares the ranking of the regions within each sample and produces a statistic that can range from  $-1$  to  $1$ . The tau-b across these nine regions for the two variables is  $-.028$  ( $.916$ )—no correlation at all, statistically. The statistic for market orientation of  $-.056$  likewise fails to achieve statistical significance ( $.835$ ). These insignificant correlations reflect the pattern discussed just above: in some regions the legislators are more conservative than the public, in others they are more reformist and in some the match is pretty good.

The use of such correlation measures has been criticized (Achen 1977) for being atheoretical and dependent upon sample size and variance. Although it is pleasing to imagine an electoral system in which the rank ordering of legislators' views correlates highly with the rank order of average views of the electoral districts, the correlation is not a firm guide to the degree of dyadic congruence in a system. Indeed, the correlations are generally low, even in established Western democracies: The low correlations in our data are only slightly smaller than Converse and Pierce (1986: 719) find in France, where the average correlation for six different issues is  $.07$ . In order to gain some perspective on what degree of elite-mass congruence is present and what, in rough terms, it means comparatively, we now examine two measures proposed by Achen (1978) of the congruence between legislator views and district views. The proximity score for each district reflects the average squared difference between a representative and each constituent in the sample on some ideological measure. The closer that the representative is to more of the residents of the district, the smaller the proximity score. The centrism score indicates how far the representative is from the mean of the citizen sample. Numerically, it is equivalent to the difference between the proximity score and the variance of the mass sample. The smaller the number, the closer that the average legislator score for the region is to the mean for the citizen sample (in either direction).

Table 5 presents the proximity and centrism scores for each region for both of the already presented indices of outlooks: political reformism and market sup-

port. The scores presented in Table 5 are efforts to measure the gap between elite views and average mass views within a given district. In that sense, they are re-calculations of the absolute and standardized gaps presented in Tables 3 and 4. The same cross-regional differences are therefore evident. For the most part, those regions whose representatives exhibit the most proximity also exhibit the most centrism (Kendall's tau-b between the two measures is .70 [.008] for political reformism and .93 [.001] for pro-market orientation).

☰ Table 5  
PROXIMITY AND CENTRISM SCORES FOR NINE REGIONS

REGION	REFORMISM		PRO-MARKET	
	Proximity*	Centrism	Proximity	Centrism
City of Moscow	.088	.074	.061	.054
Moscow Oblast'	.116	.104	.116	.100
City of St. Petersburg	.086	.076	.045	.039
Leningrad Oblast'	.071	.034	.050	.046
Tula	.050	.047	.059	.054
Volgograd	.036	.034	.067	.063
Pskov	.040	.037	.069	.061
Samara	.049	.004	.055	.050
Murmansk	.103	.096	.144	.126
Weighted average across the nine regions:	.069	.053	.066	.059

\*Note: The lower the scores, the greater the proximity or centrism.

Source: University of Iowa Surveys, "Monitoring Political Change in the Former Soviet Union," 1992. Details in Appendix 1.

The proximity and centrism measures have an advantage over the mean differences presented in Tables 3 and 4 because they involve scaling our reformism and market indices to a 0–1 range. This eliminates one difficulty in comparing the Russian findings to those from other political systems. Although such cross-national and cross-research design comparisons require great caution, the rough comparative magnitude of the proximity and centrism scores is of interest given the questions about how genuinely representative are post-Soviet Russia's legislators. The figures in Table 5 are, by rough comparative standards, quite low, indicating a satisfactory degree of dyadic congruence. When, for example, Achen (1978: 483–89) calculated proximity and centrism scores for the United States using the Miller-Stokes data, the results ranged from .3 to .42 for proximity and from .10 to .24 for centrism.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

We have examined the relationship between elite and mass attitudes in Russia in 1992 from a number of angles. Russian elites are better educated than the public at large, predominantly male and come largely from white-collar occupations. They are also more reformist ("radical") than the general populace, both in how they label themselves and in how they respond to relevant political and economic issues. This finding that the Russian elites are more reformist than the mass public accords with findings in Western Europe and elsewhere that elites tend to be more "liberal." It does mean, however, that the collective correspondence between Russian public opinion and the views of the Russian elite is an imperfect one.

Dyadic correspondence varies significantly by region, but, overall, the match between the public outlook within a given Russian region and the views of the representatives elected from that region compares well to those found in studies of Western democracies. The Russian elections of the early 1990s did not fail to create a moderately representative elite. Obviously, such dyadic correspondence does no good for the consolidation of democracy without norms that limit intra-elite conflict and the eventual acceptance by the populace of the electoral system's legitimacy. Still, experience with a representative electoral system was gained during the crucial early years of post-Soviet Russia. If the December 1993 elections—which produced quite different legislative elites in response to dramatic changes in citizens' lives since 1990—and subsequent elections strengthen the attitudinal resemblance and dyadic correspondence between Russian citizens and their leaders, the public's commitment to representative democracy will, *ceteris paribus*, grow.

## APPENDIX 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEYS

The data employed herein come from a survey of mass public opinion, conducted in June and July of 1992, and a survey of political elites conducted in May 1992. The mass survey involved interviewing a representative sample of adult citizens living in the portion of Russia west of the Ural Mountains. The elite survey involved personal interviews with a sample of Russian legislators and governmental officials. A copy of either questionnaire can be requested from the authors.

The target sample size for the mass survey was 1,300. The overall response rate was 87.4 percent. The sample size allowed for inclusion of both rural and urban respondents. The sample approach used for selecting respondents was a four-stage stratified sample. At the initial stage European Russia was divided into strata reflecting the following criteria: the extent of urbanization, geographic region, the distribution of nationalities, and population density. These criteria produced eight strata. The second stage of the sample involved listing

the places that fell into each stratum and selecting with probabilities proportionate to size, a number of sampling places (PSU) from each stratum. The mass sample had 81 PSUs. The third stage of the sample involved enumerating all the voting districts for each of the primary sampling units. Between 4 and 23 voting districts were randomly selected for each primary sampling unit depending on the size of the place.

The final stage of sampling involved selecting specific individuals from the voter lists, cross-referenced with residence records, for each of the selected voting districts. The procedure involved the calculation of a sampling interval ( $n$ ) for each particular list, selecting a random number between 1 and ( $n$ ) as the starting point and then selecting every ( $n$ th) person from that starting point. The advantage to using the voter residence lists for the final selection of individuals is that specific, named individuals and their addresses can be identified. The disadvantage is that the lists may be incomplete. Our collaborators report, however, that the combination of voting and residence lists provide fairly complete enumeration of the population. These lists are used for a number of bureaucratic purposes including voting, issuing internal passports, registration for military service, rationing goods, and keeping track of housing availability. Given this wide use, the lists are regularly updated.

The interviewers were recruited and initially trained by staff from the ROMIR, Ltd., under the supervision of Dr. Elena Bashkirova. All the interviewers and supervisors had previous experience working on surveys. In addition, the U.S. investigators provided further interviewer training sessions prior to and during the study period. They also traveled to various sample points and accompanied interviewers while on interviews to be certain that appropriate interviewing procedures were being followed. Neither the questionnaire nor the interviewers gave any indication that the survey was part of a collaborative project involving American researchers. A maximum of 10 completed interviews per interviewer was allowed, although some supervisors did conduct a few more than 10 interviews. The average interview with a respondent in the survey of the mass public took 45 minutes. The possibility of falsification of interviews was systematically checked by randomly selecting one interview per interviewer and having a supervisor verify that the interview had been conducted. No instances of falsification were discovered. All questionnaires were later transported to the University of Iowa Social Science Institute, where they were used to code open-ended questions and correct any data-entry errors.

For the elite survey, 113 elites were interviewed. The response rate was 85.5 percent. Roughly three-quarters of the sample—88 respondents—consisted of members of the legislature (i.e., deputies to the Supreme Soviet). The legislative respondents were chosen according to three criteria. First, they had to come from constituency areas that corresponded to the sample sites

from which the mass survey was drawn. Second, they had to be currently active members of the parliament. Third, they were selected in proportion to the size of electoral districts. When respondents could not be obtained using the area-based sampling approach, replacement was made from a randomly selected set of legislators from electoral districts outside the mass survey areas. The sample of administrators was drawn from assistants to the heads of the various executive departments in the government: one from the Prime Minister's office; two each from the ministries of Defense, Security and Foreign Affairs; eight from the economic ministries and six from the different humanitarian bodies (such as Health, Education and Culture). The selection of specific respondents from within these units was random.

## **APPENDIX 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE INDICES EMPLOYED IN THE ANALYSES**

(The initial numbers refer to the question numbers in Table 2)

1. On this card is a scale ranging from extremely radical (1) to extremely conservative (7). How would you place yourself on this ideological spectrum?

*Index of political Reformism:*

2. Now we would like to get your feelings toward certain groups using a five-point scale, where 5 indicates a very positive view and 1 a very negative view. You may use any number between 1 and 5 to tell me how favorable or unfavorable your feelings are for:

–the Communist Party

Respondents could fully agree (1), agree (2), not be able to say exactly (3), disagree (4) or disagree fully (5) with the following statements:

3. Political reform in this country is moving too rapidly.

4. It is better to live in an orderly society than to allow people so much freedom that they become disruptive.

5. These days, Stalin is not given adequate credit for his positive role in our history.

To create the index, we reverse scored #2 so that, for all four variables, a low score indicated a less reformist orientation. Then we added the four 5-point variables together and subtracted 4, creating an index ranging from 0–16. In the mass sample, the average inter-item covariance is .464; Cronbach's alpha is .65. In the elite sample, the average inter-item covariance is .318; Cronbach's alpha is .59.

*Other Political Orientations:*

Respondents could fully agree, agree, disagree or disagree fully (or not be able to say exactly) with the following statements:

6. Popular participation is not necessary if decisionmaking is left in the hands of a few trusted, competent leaders

7. Competition among many political parties will make the political system stronger.

8. Any individual or organization has the right to organize opposition or resistance to any governmental initiative.

*Index of Market Indoctrination:*

9. Now we would like to get your feelings toward certain groups using a five-point scale, where 5 indicates a very positive view and 1 a very negative view. You may use any number between 1 and 5 to tell me how favorable or unfavorable your feelings are for:

–people who work in cooperatives [non-state businesses].

10. Respondents were asked to indicate whether businessmen have too much (1), the right amount of (2), or too little (3) influence on life and politics.

Respondents could fully agree, agree, disagree or disagree fully (or not be able to say exactly) with the following statements:

11. "There should be a mechanism regulating income such that no one earns very much more than others."

12. "Economic Reform must be pursued even if it means significant hardship for the people."

13. Respondents were asked to choose where to place himself or herself on a 7-point scale:

"Some people say the government of [country of interview] should guarantee everyone work and a high standard of living, others argue that every person should look after himself. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 signifies that the government guarantees everyone work and 7 that every person should look after himself, which position corresponds to your position?"

The index was created by adding these variables together (with #13 reverse scored) and subtracting 5, creating an index ranging from 0–18. In the mass sample, the average inter-item covariance is .429; Cronbach's alpha is .67. In the elite sample, the average inter-item covariance is .223; Cronbach's alpha is .52.

*Measures of Economic Insecurity:*

What in your view is the most dangerous, that is, leads toward destabilization in our country. For each item I will now mention, evaluate the degree of danger with numbers from 1 to 5, where 1 means no danger at present and 5 means the highest danger:

		No Danger				Highest DK/ Danger NA
14. The growth of economic inequality among citizens .....	1	2	3	4	5	8
15. Rising prices/inflation .....	1	2	3	4	5	8

*Measure of Preference for Representational Style:*

Respondents could fully agree, agree, disagree or disagree fully (or not be able to say exactly) with the statement:

16. "A legislator is obligated to follow the wishes of his constituents [i.e., voters from his electoral district] even if he thinks his constituents are mistaken."

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Received: January 25, 1995

Accepted for Publication: July 10, 1995

*Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (March 1996): pp. 77–101

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