

to intimidate the press, Mr. Putin has engaged in police-state tactics so crude that even his severest critics seem stunned. For those who wonder whether Mr. Putin's Russia will move toward joining civilized Europe, and whether it will nurture the legal protections that could attract investment and encourage prosperity, the latest news is ominous.

On Tuesday Mr. Putin's prosecutors summoned Russia's leading media tycoon, ostensibly simply to answer some questions about an ongoing case. When Vladimir Gusinsky appeared, without lawyers, the government threw him into the Moscow hellhole known as Butyrka Prison. He remains there, though he has not yet been formally charged with any crime.

The case has significance beyond the rights of any one person. Mr. Gusinsky heads a media company that owns the only Russian television network not under Kremlin control. The company also owns a radio station and publishes a daily newspaper and a weekly magazine (the last in partnership with Newsweek, which is owned by The Washington Post Co.). All of these properties have challenged official orthodoxy by reporting an official corruption and on Mr. Putin's savage war in Chechnya. The arrest will be seen, and no doubt was intended, as an attempt to silence President Putin's critics. "There is a pattern here, and we have seen it for some time," U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott told *The Post* yesterday. "It has a look and feel to it that does not resonate rule of law. It resonates muscle; it resonates power; it resonates intimidation."

Some Russian officials have presented the arrest as a normal, even commendable, sign of Mr. Putin's determination to fight corruption and establish a "rule of law." Mr. Gusinsky is one of a band of Russian businessmen who became wealthy after the Soviet Union's dissolution in 1991 in part by exploiting close ties to those in power. Whether a plausible case can be made against Mr. Gusinsky or any of the other oligarchs is something we cannot judge. But that Mr. Putin's government should choose as its first target the only businessman who has dared challenge Mr. Putin (and by far not the wealthiest of the oligarchs) shows that this affair is not about the rule of law.

Mr. Putin's KGB background is widely known, but when he ascended to power, many analysts expected him to wield power with some subtlety. The audacity of the government's assault is almost as stunning as the assault itself. The arrest is a slap at President Clinton, who recently in Moscow urged Mr. Putin to respect freedom of the press and who chose to speak on Mr. Gusinsky's radio station. With how much spine will Mr. Clinton and other Western leaders who have been even more eager to embrace Mr. Putin, such as Britain's Tony Blair, now respond? Many Russians will be watching.

[From the Wall Street Journal, June 15, 2000]
PUTIN V. GUSINSKY

The arrest Tuesday of mogul Vladimir Gusinsky is either the first salvo in a Kremlin war against rent-seeking oligarchs or a return to the Soviet-era practice of taking political prisoners. It was either carried out with the knowledge of the Russian President, or (as he says) it was done behind his back while he is on a foreign trip. However you serve it, it doesn't look good.

Mr. Gusinsky may fit the stereotype of a Russian oligarch, but his arrest is significant because his Media-Most group includes Rus-

sia's only independent national television channel, NTV. While state television in Russia often has all the objectivity of a broadcast in Castro's Cuba. NTV is regarded as relatively objective in its news coverage. In commentary, however, NTV and other Media-Most holdings have been fiercely critical of the Kremlin, President Putin and the war in Chechnya, which remains his main policy achievement to date. For this reason, any campaign against Media-Most, wittingly or not, sends a chill throughout Russia's free press.

The allegations against Mr. Gusinsky are unclear. A statement said he is accused of embezzling \$10 million from the state, though no details were given. Even taking the explanation of embezzlement at face value, one is left with the question of just what is the Kremlin's agenda. After all, as the chief of the oligarchs and Gusinsky rival Boris Berezovsky noted. "There is no doubt that any person who did business in Russia over the last 10 years broke the law, directly or indirectly in part because of the contradictory nature of Russia law." Mr. Berezovsky may be thinking, there but for the grace of the Kremlin go I, but he has a point.

The lack of precise laws and enforcement and the ease with which insider contacts could be parlayed into millions has contributed to the moral turpitude and general disregard for law and fair play in much of the Russian establishment. Now even Boris Yeltsin's daughters are under investigation by Swiss authorities for allegedly running up large credit card bills at the expense of a Swiss company that was awarded lucrative Kremlin building contracts.

In Moscow yesterday, 17 prominent businessmen, including Mr. Berezovsky, wrote an open letter to the prosecutor general, saying Mr. Gusinsky's arrest threatens to destroy confidence in Russian as a place to do business. "Until yesterday we believed we live in a democratic country," they wrote. "Today we have serious doubts about that."

If Mr. Putin really want to tackle corruption, he may have to put the worst offenders in jail. But more important, he will have to overhaul the Russian legal system and its enforcement mechanisms and reduce the bureaucracy and regulation that give rise to so much graft and make government more transparent. Since most successful or powerful people in Russia have something to hide. It is not hard for the Kremlin to wield the "law" as a political weapon to badger its enemies. But that's not cracking down on corruption; that's just cracking down.

[From the Financial Times, June 15, 2000]
PUTIN'S PRESSURE

A move by Vladimir Putin, Russia's new president, to clip the wings of his country's formidable business barons was widely anticipated. If he is going to reassert the power of the state over the financial oligarchs who usurped much of its authority during the Kremlin rule of Boris Yeltsin, that is necessary. But the decision to arrest Vladimir Gusinsky, the media tycoon, raises a number of questions.

He is neither one of the most powerful nor one of the most notorious of that group. His real claim to fame is that his Media-Most group owns the television station NTV and *Sevodnya* newspaper among others—outspoken critics of Mr. Putin's government. In particular, they have questioned the conduct of the war in Chechnya. They have undoubtedly reflected the inclinations of their owner but they have also been healthily outspoken.

In so doing, they have been helping ensure that the press acts as a critic of government—an essential element in Russia's slow progress towards democracy.

Mr. Gusinsky now appears to be paying the price. Although his arrest is ostensibly on suspicion of fraud and the illegal acquisition of state property worth \$10m, the action follows a particularly heavy-handed raid by security police, armed to the teeth and wearing balaclava helmets, on his headquarters—all suggesting a deliberate campaign of intimidation. Other actions by Mr. Putin's administration indicate a similarly harsh attitude to any sign of media opposition. The TV station controlled by Yuri Luzhkov, Moscow's mayor, is having to fight in the courts to renew its license. The registration system for new publications has been greatly tightened.

The president does not appear to be a believer in glasnost, the openness introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev into the Russian media. More than any other reform, that probably guaranteed the end of Communist rule and the Soviet Union. By allowing exposure of the iniquities, incompetence and corruption of the previous regime, glasnost ensured there was no going back. By definition, however, glasnost was inimical to the old KGB security service—Mr. Putin's secretive former employer.

President Bill Clinton has already expressed his concern about signs of restrictions on press freedom in Russia. When Gerhard Schroeder, the German chancellor, meets Mr. Putin today, he should do the same, in strong terms. The Russian president has said he knew nothing of Mr. Gusinsky's arrest. He should have done, particularly in view of the widespread protests that followed. An unfettered press is an essential part of a market economy. He has a lot to learn.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WEST VIRGINIA DAY

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today we celebrate West Virginia's 137th year as a state. West Virginia joined the Union in the midst of the Civil War when President Lincoln admitted it to the Union as the 35th state on June 20, 1863.

The spirit of pride and determination that gave the first West Virginians the courage to start anew can still be seen in the ever-innovative and evolving ways that West Virginians have adapted to changing economics and culture. This is apparent in the transitions of the coal and steel industries as well as in the increasing cultivation of the tourism industry. However, through the continual change, West Virginians have held a heritage that remains rich in song, craft, and tradition. It is as visible at the State Fair of West Virginia in Lewisburg, the Appalachian Heritage Festival in Shepherdstown, and the Tamarack Arts Center in Beckley as it is at Bob's Grocery in Lindside. The state has an abundance of coal, steel, forests, rivers, and mountains, but her greatest resource has always been her people.

This natural charm of West Virginians is reflected in the scenic treasures that crown the state. Though born

during a time of turmoil, present-day West Virginia is an emblem of peace and tranquility. Ernest W. James captured it perfectly:

There autumn hillsides are bright with scarlet trees;
And in the spring, the robins sing,
While apple blossoms whisper in the breeze
And where the sun draws rainbows in the mist
of waterfalls and mountain rills,
My heart will be always in the West Virginia hills.

So on this, West Virginia's 137th birthday, I am enormously proud to invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating this West Virginia Day.●

ALASKA RECIPIENTS OF PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TEACHING

● Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have come to the Senate floor today to congratulate three exceptional teachers in Alaska—Douglas Heetderks of Anchorage, Lura Hegg of Palmer, and Gretchen Murphy of Fairbanks. President Clinton named these Alaskans as recipients of the 1999 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. This is our Nation's highest honor for mathematics and science teachers in grades K through 12.

Each year, a national panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians and educators recommends one elementary and one secondary math teacher and one elementary and one secondary science teacher from each state or territory to receive a presidential award. The 1999 recipients were selected from among 650 finalists.

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Program is administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House. The program was established in 1983 and is designed to recognize and reward outstanding teachers. In addition to a presidential citation and a trip to Washington, DC, each recipient's school receives a NSF grant of \$7,500 to be used under the direction of the teacher, to supplement other resources for improving science or mathematics programs in their school system.

Douglas Heetderks, Lura Hegg and Gretchen Murphy are exceptional and highly dedicated teachers. Douglas Heetderks teaches Elementary Science at Susitna Elementary in Anchorage; Lura Hegg teaches Secondary Science at Colony Middle School in Palmer; and Gretchen Murphy teaches Elementary Math at University Park Elementary School in Fairbanks. In addition to having extensive knowledge of math and science, they have demonstrated an understanding of how students learn and have the ability to engage stu-

dents, foster curiosity and generate excitement. Mr. Heetderks, Ms. Hegg, and Ms. Murphy have displayed an experimental and innovative attitude in their approach to teaching and are highly respected for their leadership.

Mr. President, our nation's future depends on today's teachers. Currently, 40 percent of America's 4th graders read below the basic level on national reading tests. On international tests, the nation's 12th graders rank last in Advanced Physics compared with students in 18 other countries. And one-third of all incoming college freshmen must enroll in a remedial reading, writing, or mathematics class before taking regular courses.

If we are to turn these dismal statistics around we are going to need more and talented teachers like Mr. Heetderks, Ms. Hegg and Ms. Murphy. I applaud them for their hard work and dedication to our children. They are educating those who will lead this country in creating, developing, and putting to work new ideas and technology.●

LIEUTENANT GENERAL RONALD B. BLANCK

● Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to honor Lieutenant General Ronald B. Blanck as he retires from the United States Army after more than thirty-two years of active duty service. For the last four years, General Blanck has served as the United States Army Surgeon General and Commander, U.S. Army Medical Command General. During his tenure, he had significant oversight of eight Department of Defense activities as well as the management of the Army's \$6.6 billion, worldwide integrated health system.

Beginning his career as a general medical officer in Vietnam, General Blanck went on to hold a variety of executive positions that include: professor and teaching chief in graduate medical education at the Uniformed Services University; medical consultant to the Army Surgeon General; Commander of Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command; and finally as the U.S. Army's 39th Surgeon General. General Blanck has met every challenge with enthusiasm and zeal. His team-building, compassion, and vision have resulted in greater cooperation among the Federal Health Services and improved delivery of medical care to our nation's military, past and present.

General Blanck guided the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) through a period of re-engineering and instituted collaborative missions with the Department of State, Department of Treasury, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Agency, National Aeronautic and Space Admin-

istration, National Transportation and Safety Board, and the Veterans Administration. These partnerships have fostered unparalleled advances in science and facilitated the reputation of AFIP as being known as the "People's Institute."

He re-energized the Army Medical Department and instituted best business practices to ensure the provision of comprehensive, quality healthcare to service members, retired and active, and their family members. Faced with a military medical end-strength reduction of 34%, a reduction in Army medical treatment facilities of 45%, and medical force structure requirements reduction of 77%, General Blanck met the challenge. His brilliant leadership, compassionate vision and unprecedented achievements will guide the Army Medical Department and the entire federal health care system into the new millennium.

General Blanck's contributions to Persian Gulf Illness and Anthrax programs, his interactions with Congress and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), and his commitment to the delivery of world-class medical care in support of contingency operations, national emergencies, and potential weapons of mass destruction scenarios are unsurpassed. Mr. President, while General Blanck's many meritorious awards and decorations demonstrate his contributions in a tangible way, it is the legacy he leaves behind for the Army Medical Corps, the United States Army, and the Department of Defense for which we are most appreciative. It is with pride that I congratulate General Blanck on his outstanding career of exemplary service.●

PACENTRO, ITALY, REUNION 2000

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on July 2, 2000, a very special event will take place in Sterling Heights, Michigan: the first reunion of United States citizens who trace their roots back to the town of Pacentro, Italy. Over 800 people will attend the event, some of them with ancestors who immigrated to the United States over 150 years ago. In addition, the Mayor of Pacentro himself, Mr. Fernando Caparso, will be attending the event. I rise today to welcome Mr. Caparso to the State of Michigan.

Pacentro is a small town located east of Rome. It sits in the Abruzzo region in the province of L'Aquila. Born in medieval times, the town is famous for its three castle towers, the oldest of which was built by Count Boarmondo and dates back to the thirteenth century. Another dates from the fifteenth century, and is recognized as the loveliest castle in the region. More recently, Pacentro has gained fame as the birthplace of the rock star Madonna's grandparents.