

These have substantial resources and face limited interference in their activities. On the other hand, there is a broad group of parties who constitute a more obvious challenge to Nazarbaev's view of the future in Kazakhstan. The electoral system was used to limit their prospects for success.³² And when the law was insufficient to limit the prospects of the opposition, it was simply broken.³³ When they became too troublesome they were essentially suppressed.³⁴ Outsiders helping to assist smaller Kazakh parties in organizing were also actively harassed.³⁵ Some 220 candidates were denied registration in the lead-up to the elections. This combination produced a situation in which only Popular Unity, the National Congress, the Socialist Party, the Republican Party, and Lad effectively contested seats in the election.

By early 1994, the independent press was predicting that in the March 7 elections, at least 100 candidates supported by the president would win, turning the parliament into an "administrative department" of the presidency.³⁶ Not surprisingly, the elections produced a parliament strongly supportive of the president. In addition to 42 seats reserved for presidential nominees, Popular Unity received 33 seats, and

³² For example, the presidential election law was finally published on October 21, 1991, with a requirement that candidates for president collect 100 000 nomination signatures. The closing date for nominations was October 31, 1991. The advantage obviously lay with those who controlled deep political organizations. Not surprisingly, Nazarbaev was the single candidate. In the recent elections for the new national legislature, the registration requirement of 3000 signatures obviously favoured those parties, including the president's, with substantial organizational and financial resources.

³³ In a pre-election press conference by representatives of the Green Party, the independent trade unions, and the Russian movement Lad, it was claimed that local election commissions were arbitrarily pushing aside the instructions of the Central Election Commission and the electoral code. See "Nachalas' predvybornaya kampania," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (January 12, 1994), p.3.

³⁴ This was the fate of Edinstvo. Alash militants are plagued by arrests of their leaders, secret police surveillance, and police interference with their assemblies.

³⁵ Local representatives of both the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the International Republican Institute (American organizations funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] involved in the promotion of democratic political development in other countries) have had serious problems in registering their offices, have had their power and water interfered with, have had great difficulty in arranging meetings within Kazakhstan, and have been threatened. The local director of the International Republican Institute was severely beaten in early 1994. As a matter of course, they both now hold training seminars and other activities for Kazakh party activists in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

³⁶ "Nachalas' predvybornaya kampania" (note 33). See also *Le Monde* (March 9, 1994), p.5.