



My Struggle: The Explosive Views of Russia's Most Controversial Political Figure

By Vladimir Zhirinovskiy

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Combining autobiographical reflections along with his personal views, Russia's iconoclastic political figure shares his nationalistic goals for Russia, from a reconstruction of the Soviet Union to the annexation of Pakistan, and his views of world politics.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Despite a sugarcoating in the rhetoric of global peace and multiparty pluralism, Zhirinovsky's disjointed, paranoid ravings leave no doubt that he is a dangerous man. The leader of Russia's misnamed Liberal Democratic Party, the ultranationalist Zhirinovsky calls for a massive military push to extend Russia's borders to the Indian Ocean, the "liquidation of Pakistan" and the "dismemberment of... Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan." He also advocates Russia's takeover of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and other former Soviet republics that make up what Russians call the "near abroad." Massive resettlement of Russians into vast southern and Central Asian regions will follow, making Russian the dominant language, in his scenario. Zhirinovsky condemns "wicked" free-market reforms, praises Stalin for restoring personal morality, urges Russia to reclaim Alaska, spews anti-American venom, drops blatant anti-Semitic remarks and envisages a Russia cleansed of the "infection and evil" of "alien religions." Although he briefly sketches his unhappy, fatherless childhood and early career, this tirade is really a campaign speech, spiked with name-calling: migrants to European Russia are "cockroaches," provincial politicians are "pseudocommunist scum." Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From [Booklist](#)

Zhirinovsky seems to have received some 6 percent of the vote in Russia's June presidential election, but Western readers would be unwise to assume that he--able to appeal to Russians' deepest fears and anger--will simply disappear. *My Struggle* is as remarkable for the whining self-pity of the author's description of his youth (we were poor, we were discriminated against, nobody hugged me) as for the blind sense of destiny with which Zhirinovsky paints his vision of Russia's future: a "last bid for the South" (giving Russia an opening to the Indian Ocean; destroying Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iran; recombining India and Pakistan) and a four-ocean Russia, recognizing just one nation and one language but "respecting" the many cultures within. Zhirinovsky's book is full of troubling echoes: balance of power, *cordon sanitaire*, resettlement of peoples, hints of biological racism, and a North-South division of the world that takes Islam as its enemy. U.S. readers will consider his attitude quite belligerent--which is one reason we need to understand just who Zhirinovsky is. *Mary Carroll*

From Kirkus Reviews

Depending on the outcome of the upcoming presidential elections in Russia, this political manifesto will prove either ridiculous or frightening. Zhirinovsky burst onto the political stage and into the world's focus when his wildly misnamed Liberal Democratic Party won 25 percent of the vote in Russian elections of December 1993. Since then, he has been called a populist, a demagogue, a rabid nationalist, a fascist, a neo-Stalinist; what is abundantly clear from this thin, rambling tract disguised as an autobiography is that he is all of the above and a megalomaniac as well. It is no coincidence that the title is a direct translation of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, and as in that notorious work, another potential dictator lays out his master plan based on delusions, fantasies, irrational hatreds, and persecution-mania. Zhirinovsky wallows in bathos as he portrays himself (a Russian) as a victim of ethnic nationalism in the former Soviet Union. After a stint in the Institute of Oriental Languages in Moscow and a career as legal counsel for the Mir Publishing House, Zhirinovsky entered politics. Most of this short book describes a geopolitical vision containing equal parts banalities, clichés, and outrageous demands, the key being Russia's "bid for the South." According to Zhirinovsky, Russia must expand its territory to the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea for the benefit to all humankind. In the process, Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkey will have to be dismembered. Another prescription in his global vision calls for a rapid-action force of Russians, Chinese, and Germans to keep the peace in Eurasia.

He casts himself in the role of savior and martyr, echoing Nazi demands for Lebensraum, or "living space." Fantasy, utopia, and apocalyptic visions combine in a frightening call to rearrange borders and resurrect the Russian Empire, including demands that the USA return Alaska. If Zhirinovskiy does well in upcoming elections, the West and the world will have to deal with yet another fanatical nationalist whose grip on reality is tenuous at best. -- *Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

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