

Putin's Campaign Manager Calls Liberals 'Filth of the Nation'

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Vladimir Putin's campaign manager Stanislav Govorukhin quoted Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin in calling the liberal intelligentsia "the filth of the nation" in an interview published Monday on Internet news site Lenta.ru.

"I would recommend that he [the president] not depend on the liberal intelligentsia. At all. Insofar as it is, by its very nature, treacherous. [It is] the part of the intelligentsia that Lenin called not the brain of the nation but the filth of the nation," Govorukhin said.

"I would recommend not depending on all these liberal writers, Booker laureates, authors of these books that are impossible to read. We have a real intelligentsia that should be depended on," he said.

Govorukhin also said that those in occupations traditionally associated with the intelligentsia are less deserving of the descriptor "creative class" than engineers and laborers.

"Who is the creative class? All the office plankton? All our journalists, including you — that is the creative class? And those who create, who build underwater cruisers, who construct pipes

along the floor of the Baltic Sea — that is not the creative class?" he said.

"Those who create — that is the creative class. And the crowd from Bolotnaya [Ploshchad]" — the site of two recent opposition rallies — "unfortunately, does not create. That is in fact not the creative class," he said.

The 75-year-old Govorkhin, also a film director, has made a number of controversial comments in recent weeks. In an interview published Friday in the newspaper Trud, he said corruption during Putin's stint as president was "normal" and "civilized." Transparency International ranked Russia in 143rd place out of 183 countries for the worst corruption in its 2011 Global Perception Index.

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