

Khodorkovsky Warns of a Revolution

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Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's government will be toppled by a revolution, jailed former Yukos CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky said in remarks released Tuesday, a day after he decided not to seek parole on the grounds that Putin's government would block it.

Khodorkovsky, once Russia's richest businessman, fielded dozens of questions dealing with matters from the liberal reforms of the 1990s to whistleblower Alexei Navalny, collected on Ekho Moskvyy radio's [web site](#) and passed to him in his Karelian prison.

Putin "has passed the point of no return" and will stay in power as long as he can, facilitating stagnation that will erupt in a revolution, Khodorkovsky said, the radio station reported.

Russia is lagging some 50 years behind Western European countries in terms of development but could catch up within two decades, if the government stops rebuilding an authoritarian empire that is putting the country on the brink of "national suicide," he said.

Navalny, who exposes government corruption on his blog, and other activists like opposition

politician Boris Nemtsov and Khimki forest defender Yevgenia Chirikova play a vital role in changing the current public climate, Khodorkovsky said. But he admitted that he could not comment on Navalny's agenda at length because he does not have access to the Internet.

He again denied accusations that he ordered rivals killed during his tenure at Yukos. Putin accused Khodorkovsky, jailed until 2016, of having "blood on his hands" last year.

Khodorkovsky on Monday announced that he would not seek parole even though he has served two-thirds of his sentence, which qualifies him for early release. He spoke after a district court in Karelia upheld a decision by prison officials to slap him with a formal reprimand for sharing his cigarettes with inmates, a violation of penitentiary rules. The reprimand gives the authorities a valid pretext to deny him parole.

Khodorkovsky, however, seems resigned to remaining in prison for the foreseeable future.

One question that Ekho Moskvyy submitted to Khodorkovsky asked: "Mikhail, so does woe come from wit or money?" — a paraphrase of the title of Alexander Griboyedov's classic 1823 play, "Woe from Wit."

"Who am I to argue with Griboyedov?" Khodorkovsky replied.

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