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Communist Lawmaker Slams 'Out-of-Touch' War Management Ahead of Fall Duma Elections

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A lawmaker from Russia's systemic opposition has broken ranks and issued a scathing criticism of the Kremlin's mismanagement of its war in Ukraine, saying the war risks plunging the country into social upheaval.

Vyacheslav Markhayev, a member of the State Duma's second-largest faction, the Communist Party, wrote a blistering online post as the country gears up to hold parliamentary elections this September.

"The same team has been running the political system for a quarter of a century now, and they seem to have completely lost touch with the needs of regular people," Markhayev said.

He compared the ruling elite's entrenched corruption, the oligarchs' continued enrichment and growing wealth gap to a "foreign invader" seeking to "seize resources, plunder the

manufacturing sector, jack up utility rates and build personal mansions."

"But there was no invasion, the authorities managed to do all of this on their own more effectively than any foreign aggressor ever could," Markhayev said.

He slammed the Kremlin for shifting goals in its war in Ukraine, as well as "taking it" as Russia's young male population dies on the battlefield and Ukrainian attacks reach deeper and deeper inside Russian territory.

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"If this situation continues, a social explosion and total chaos will become highly likely," Markhayev wrote, warning that "all responsibility will be borne by the irremovable authorities."

"We need a clear public plan for ending the [special military operation] based on Russia's national interests," he said, using the official term for Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Markhayev, 71, is up for re-election after his third term ends in September.

Despite his rare public critique, source-based independent media reporting has indicated that the Communist Party does not intend to put forward strong candidates that would have posed a challenge to the ruling United Russia party.

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