

Modernization of the State

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Synopsis

The Idea of Modernization of the State

The state today is even more unformed than society and the economy. The contrast between the “brand-new” political and legal institutions imported from the developed democratic countries (the political system, the bulk of civil law) and the held-over vestiges of the Soviet administrative system that have continued to operate “by tacit consent” [this is the first of many periods in the text that are not complete sentences but simply noun phrases without grammatical predicates. – Trans.]. The reason is that in the West political democracy and a state based on the rule of law are supported by civil society. It counterbalances the power of the state apparatus and oversees the effectiveness of its performance from the viewpoint of society as a whole. **In Russia civil society does not yet exist; it needs to be formed, including with the help of the state.**

The weakness and corruption of the state. Today the defenselessness of citizens and enterprises vis-à-vis the government and vis-à-vis crime are leading them to invest in entities that serve as alternatives to the state in such areas as the settlement of economic conflicts, or in parasites that become deeply entrenched in times of a weakened state. Members of the public strive to avoid paying a useless state but, instead, to pay an official who can be of use to them.

This is the source of the important distinctive features of the state in today’s Russia and of its role in the economy and the organization of societal life. It also accounts for the areas of modernization of the state: its political and legal system, its administrative apparatus and the coercive functions that provide for the country’s national security.

We speak, specifically, of the **modernization of the state** because of the persisting archaic quality of a number of its elements. In this respect, the task facing Russia today is like the tasks that faced Peter the First and post-reform Russia in the 1860s. But modernization presupposes both the development of the political, legal and administrative institutions that have been created over the past decade, and their adaptation to the actual processes in society that they are supposed to regulate.

The Absence of a Civil Society in Russia and the Distinctive Features of the New Contract Between the State and Society. Reliance on ‘Natural Associations’

The restoration of **trust between the government and the public**. On what basis? Two such bases are possible: the restoration of state paternalism on a basis of constricted resources (an impoverished but strict and honest father), or a **contract between society and the state** that rather strictly codifies the rights and obligations (and, accordingly, expectations) of citizens and enterprises with respect their state, on the one hand, and the rights and obligations of the state (and its agencies and officials) with respect to society and the citizens, associations of citizens, and enterprises that make up that society, on the other. In Russia such a contract cannot be a contract between a boss (the people) and a hired secretary (the state), as it is in the tradition of many Western democracies. Rather, it should (at least at first) be more like a contract between two relatively equal parties. The initiative for this contract can belong to the country’s elected president, considering his constitutional place in the organization of political life.

What does the contract formula have to offer? First of all, it establishes, in the public mind, in statutes, and in political principles, the actual state of affairs in the country and the actual capabilities that citizens and enterprises, on the one hand, and the state authority in the person of legislative, executive and judicial bodies, on the other, possess. Second, it makes it possible to accurately spell out, for both parties, obligations and expectations that are in keeping, at the least, with their capabilities and, at the most, with their interests. The tradition of social and economic mythology with which Russian society existed for 70 years of Communist rule has proved to have been inherited by virtually every political force during the post-Soviet period as well – inherited and exploited. The choice today provides the opportunity either to finally discard this tradition or to find ourselves once again in its bosom. Third, it makes it possible to organize real oversight of the state (the ideology and guiding principles of such oversight) on the part of society. Only promises that are capable of being fulfilled can be verified.

Was the public asked when financing for education and health was cut by two-thirds? If it had been asked, if a dialogue had been initiated, an option would have been arrived at that was transparent, understandable and acceptable to the public, and subject to verification by all parties.

Granted, there is a serious question as to with whom and how such a dialogue should be initiated. Who has the authority, acknowledged by the public, to speak on its behalf? The legitimacy of the representatives invited by the State to speak for Society must be obvious for the vast majority of citizens, associations and enterprises that together constitute society. They should understand those people and trust them. Who are such representatives in Russia today?

First of all, they are **not** the deputies. No matter how hard Berezovskiyy might try to give assurances that he now also represents the interests of the rural electorate that voted for

his rival from the Russian Federation Communist Party, that electorate still will not believe him. Given the strongly segmented condition of society that has emerged at this time, the public cannot be effectively united along territorial lines.

Second, there are no stable occupational and social associations in Russia, or they encompass only a narrow spectrum of enterprises and citizens. It's necessary to engage in dialogue with them and to do everything possible to foster their development, but they do not represent the majority of even the socially and politically active population.

Human Rights and the Goals of the State

At present, one can attest to an absence of **obvious state goals** (and of societal goals expressed in them). Consequently, a civil servant has no internal, guiding moral principles for his work. At best he works for his agency (defending its interests against both other agencies and citizens), while at worst he works for his superior, for himself, or for an outside employer. To a certain extent this is a problem of ideology. Looked at another way, it is a problem of the existence of a long-range state strategy. In any event, such a strategy needs to be developed, discussed in society, and made obvious for everyone. The goals of the state and of society should be spelled out concretely for each and every time period, each and every territory, and each and every area of regulation.

The state as the guarantor of justice. The question is how it understands that justice and how it guarantees it. Provide equal initial opportunities to everyone at the outset of their working lives. For children, equal access to education. An educational program.

Movement toward a state based on the rule of law. The supremacy of the law over administrative regulations, a strengthening of the judicial system and of the profession of attorney. This is also the protection of individual rights.

Human rights: social, political and economic. The obligations of the citizen (a citizen is a person who recognizes his obligations and rights).

A central problem is **the lack in Russia today of a civil society** as a stable basis for a democratic state based on the rule of law and as a partner of the state in every sphere of the latter's responsibility.

The years of reform have confirmed that the public possesses a very high degree of receptivity and social adaptability, against the backdrop of its gradual loss of hope for any help from the state. In this sense the changes in recent years have stimulated an increase in social activeness, although it has, to be sure, been directed primarily toward survival. This activeness has occurred in the context more of family and clan structures, rather than of enterprises and the institutions of civil society. At present more than 60 percent of the country's population classifies itself as active (surviving independently). People's activeness that is directed toward survival usually implies their adaptation to the existing (frequently

ineffective) system of organizations and markets, while development presupposes their formation of new organizations and markets. Over the last 10 years entrepreneurial initiative has largely been directed toward tapping the potential for “pulling apart” former enterprises. Only to a small extent have the resources thereby obtained been utilized to establish and develop efficient new production operations, while for the most part they have been consumed or taken out of the country.

Thus, one of the main problems is to reorient social activeness on the microlevel from the goals of survival and consumption to the goals of development. This demands, first and foremost, realism in the actions of the state itself. It must develop mechanisms for detecting social interests and constructing its social and economic programs with those interests in mind.

In this connection, special attention should be called to the new social segment that has in large part been formed over the past decade. These are people whose adult lives began in a situation of economic and political freedom. They were less weighed down by the burden of the Soviet past. They were distinguished by a high degree of social mobility. Because of that, they were the ones who joined the new entities in both business and the state apparatus. And to a considerable extent, it is they who have been able to take advantage of the opportunities for *development* that have emerged during the years of reform.

Their main problem, however, was an orientation toward short-term goals (the “grab it and run” principle) – an orientation that was, to a great extent, determined by the policy of the state itself. Nonetheless, in our view these people today, relying on their own experience, are capable of giving priority to the long-term interests of development and of agreeing to play by honest “rules of the game” – if the state proves capable of guaranteeing compliance with these rules for its part.

This social segment constitutes an important societal resource, a resource that must be intelligently used by telling these people the truth and giving them the opportunity to believe in the government – while, at the same time, creating the sort of *democratic institutions* that will not subsequently allow the government itself to turn its words and promises into empty chatter.

But the state’s goals cannot be solely to protect the interests of the politically and socially active segments of the population. Support for the elderly and children. Support for the weak and the unfortunate. The only problem is not, under the guise of supporting the weak, to contribute to the preservation of social parasitism on the part of those who can and should work.

Areas of State Responsibility

Areas of state responsibility for the present, transitional state of Russia, its society and economy.

The difference from Soviet paternalism. The state must intervene in development and support survival. The state does not regulate everything – it supports positive tendencies. It reinforces efficient institutions of the market and civil society, regardless of whether they have emerged spontaneously or were deliberately formed. It guarantees citizens a minimum subsistence living.

The difference from the minimal state in the United States. (1) The Russian state cannot abandon the financing and regulation of education, science, culture and health care. (2) The Russian state cannot leave it to participants in the market to support its basic institutions: the registration and guaranteeing of property and contracts. What is needed here is even an expansion of the state, up to and including the restoration of its monopoly on certain types of actions and services (notarizing, the registration of property, the protection of life and property). Transferring authority to regulate special or local problems to professional or local associations.

Is the state prepared to share power with Russian business? In what sectors? On what terms? The answer will also be a question: Is business capable of ensuring that it operates in a competitive environment? For all practical purposes, what we have had so far is a situation of oligarchic and mafia-based regulation through the state. In part, this can be blamed on the internal ineffectiveness of the state. But at the same time, it can be attributed to the logic of development of business itself.

Forms: (1) The state must regulate self-regulating associations and guarantee the rights of participants in the market to have access to these associations; (2) the state must consult with these associations when making important decisions that pertain to their members and must strive to reach common ground with them; (3) the state may “farm out” its functions; and (4) the state may transfer the functions of founder or property owner, or admit business as a co-founder and co-property-owner.

The Internal Consolidation of the State

The internal strengthening and consolidation of the state, and the elimination of its privatization by bureaucrats.

Today we need to regularize the state’s zones of responsibility. Depending on sector, its powers may be:

(a) restored and backed up with resources. This includes the regulation and guaranteeing of life and property (the state’s monopoly on the registration of property and on the use of force). All private security agencies must be disbanded. **Law must not be the law of the rich.**

(b) transferred vertically downward, while remaining within the system of state authority. Most enterprises belonging to the state that cannot be effectively privatized.

(c) transferred to self-regulating public associations and associations of participants in the market. Organized markets.

(d) abolished, that is, transferred to the market and private initiative. Privatization.

Self-limitation of the state. Narrowing of the spheres of direct responsibility (in the form of obligations to regulate or arbitrate), and the transfer of that responsibility to self-regulating associations of participants in various forms of economic and social activity and to territorial associations of local residents. Experience in several spheres where such a delegation of authority has occurred indicates that state interests (if they consist in the effective development of the market and the enhancement of its stability) have not suffered.

Transferring some of the regulatory powers of the state to voluntary professional associations of participants in a market. Such powers would include, for example, the regulation of the given market's activities and initial arbitration. In this connection, the state would establish the general rules for such associations' activities and serve as the guarantor of the implementation of their decisions and as an appellate body. The state would also guarantee freedom of admission to an association and the observance of democratic procedures within it.

The Political System

Today in Russia a tradition of political democracy is being established. It is important not to destroy the forms that it has assumed and not to engage in political experiments. Therefore, we must speak not of constitutional reform but of the development of the constitutional system, and not of a new political system but of a search for forms that will bring out the resources of the existing political system to the greatest extent possible. The principle of evolution and completion, not of destruction.

Given the possible options for the development of the political mechanism, we need to achieve the main goal – eliminating the present situation of constitutional stupor, whereby the government is forced to resort, as a matter of course, to off-the-record (by nature, corrupt) methods of political dialogue with the opposition. It is also necessary to avoid a situation in which the powers of the branches of government are not backed up with responsibility (for example, no one is responsible for the state budget that is adopted: It is submitted by the government and revised by the Duma, so ultimately the budget has no authors).

Development of the political system. Against monopolization. Taking the minority's views into account and guaranteeing that they have a place in political institutions.

Combating extremist organizations. The criterion of extremism: programmatic documents and slogans contain an appeal to cast aside the fundamental human rights codified in the Constitution and to disobey laws.

Federal Relations

A single legal space; legislative federalism (limitation of the “body” of federal legislation); ensuring the sovereignty of the Russian Federation throughout its entire territory.

Restoration of the powers and sovereignty of the state throughout its entire territory. Overcoming the conflict between regional legislation and federal legislation, and restoring the priority of the latter. overcoming the “capital-city” image of federal authority and bringing it closer to [apparent omission]. Decentralizing the bodies of federal authority throughout Russia’s territory. It would be possible for the executive branch to remain in Moscow, the legislative branch to move to St. Petersburg, and the supreme judicial authority to move to Nizhniy Novgorod.

Within the state itself, following the principle that “I possess that which I am capable of controlling,” it is necessary to transfer a substantial portion of the powers of property owner from the federal center to constituent members of the federation, and from the latter to municipal entities. Relieve the state of a mass of trivial administrative and arbitration obligations (which, in actuality, are not fulfilled), while preserving its function as guarantor and ultimate arbitrator.

The delimitation of authority in matters of joint jurisdiction between the Federation and its constituent members. Administrative authority (executive and allocative) should be fully exercised by constituent members of the Federation. They should possess the corresponding legal capabilities and financial resources. The establishment of regulations (or of minimum regulations in the case of provision for the social and cultural sphere) and oversight over compliance with those norms would remain with the federal center. Such oversight should also presuppose the possibility of holding local executives personally accountable for the failure to enforce those regulations, or federal executive orders that are pursuant to those regulations.

Redistribute the powers of the state as property owner from the federal to the regional level for 80-90 percent of facilities under federal ownership, except for the largest enterprises. This will restore the severed link between power and responsibility in the state organism.

Conversely, in areas of the Federation’s exclusive jurisdiction (defense, security), all administrative and financial levers at the local level need to be consolidated in the hands of the president’s representative. It is he, and not the governor, who should handle coordination of the pertinent activities in the region.

Bring elective and executive authority closer to the individual. This requires that the governmental system at the municipal and submunicipal levels be built anew. Municipal authority should be endowed with tax, police and judicial powers. Great Britain (magistrates’ court). The result: restoration of the transparency of government and of the ability to monitor it, its objectives and promises, and the accomplishment of those objectives and fulfillment of

those promises. The development from the bottom up, on the visual level, of rational voter behavior.

The Structure of Executive-Branch Agencies

The structure of the executive branch at the federal level. Simplification and consolidation of the state apparatus. Reduction of the number of agencies, and enhancement of their powers and accountability. Elimination of duplication of the ministries by subdivisions of the government apparatus and the presidential administrative staff. For each executive agency, clear-cut, exclusive jurisdictional boundaries should be established, and specific mechanisms for exercising powers should be defined.

To do this, it is necessary to consolidate and simplify the state apparatus, combine agencies, and eliminate areas of dual and triple jurisdiction. For example, in the area of regulating the economy, only two agencies should remain: the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economics, as well as an independent antimonopoly service. The various tasks involved in implementing state industrial policy should be handled by state concerns and agencies, coordinated by the Ministry of Economics. The overgrown presidential administrative staff, including the institution of local representatives of the president, should be combined with the administrative apparatus of the Russian government. Our country is not wealthy, and it cannot afford to support two executive branches.

New budgets and principles of funding state institutions. Based on their tasks. Expense budgets should be added to staffing schedules and should include, on a mandatory basis, a bonus fund (up to 100 percent of basic payroll), a fund for the payment of outside experts (up to 200 percent of payroll), and a fund for official travel. During the reform period, only the budgets should be left, without the staffing schedules. This would help reduce the number of civil servants to the optimal level.

The establishment of an area of personal responsibility for each official. All administrative decisions should have identifiable, accountable authors who can be rewarded for success, censured for mistakes, and penalized for breaches of law or of their official duties. The impersonal collegiality of most administrative decisions (their identification with an agency as a whole) makes rewarding, censuring and penalizing all impossible.

Pass laws on regulatory acts and federal executive agencies.

Oversight and supervision. Today this is an area of arbitrary administrative decisions, which create one of the chief obstacles to the normal operation of enterprises. We need a law on oversight and supervision that would establish a minimal ultimate number of administrative agencies enjoying the right to conduct audits, clear-cut time frames for the auditing of organizations, and obligations for both the auditing and audited parties.

Reform of the Civil Service

Today the state treats its civil servants unfairly and contemptuously, and they feel socially and politically unprotected. Economizing on the state apparatus has become one of the most popular means of cutting budgetary spending for both the government itself and the opposition.

An effective and well-paid civil servant who recognizes and serves the interests of the state and society. Corporate spirit and discipline.

We must realize that a new class of civil servants constitutes the body of the state and personifies it to a far greater extent than policy does. Today many members of the civil-servant class retain loyalty to their own agencies. In a situation in which declared state interests are diffuse, nothing more could be expected. But from a culture of pursuing the interests of a specific agency it is easier to create a culture of pursuing common state interests.

An effective state cannot be obtained for nothing. To do so, society will have to put a fairly high price on the performance of the duties of *accountable* civil servants. Persistent efforts need to be made to develop a system of social guarantees for employees of the state apparatus. The underfinancing of the state apparatus, including the judicial system, is absolutely impermissible. Whereas other budget-funded organizations may earn money to make up for what budgetary funding fails to provide, underfunding pushes a civil servant toward corruption. It is possible and necessary to cut costs on the state apparatus by eliminating superfluous components of it. But civil servants must not be underpaid.

When the matter of civil servants' pay and incentives is discussed, one constantly encounters demagogic opposition to any qualitative improvement in this area. Let's take a look at its arguments.

There is no money with which to raise civil servants' pay if the state is failing to pay pensions, which are even smaller, the wages of the employees of budget-funded organizations, etc. But on these grounds one can easily go even further and demand, for example, that surgeons and university professors not be highly paid, since somewhere or other an orderly or auxiliary worker is underpaid. Wages and salaries must not be confused with social allowances: they have totally different objectives.

No matter how much a civil servant is paid, he will still steal. From every indication, a civil servant who is a thief will continue to attempt to steal. But higher salaries will attract more decent people to the civil service; competition will develop for jobs in the state apparatus; and in the course of such competition, the unseemly deeds of specific civil servants will have a considerably greater chance of being exposed. Finally, based on purely economic logic, the threshold of thieving from which a civil servant stands to benefit will rise, and he will find that he has something to lose as the result of a disgraceful expulsion from the civil service. If improved financial incentives for civil servants are combined with

enhanced transparency and oversight and an increase in the severity and inevitability of punishment, the “preventive” effectiveness of improving those financial incentives will be great.

The level of compensation of employees of the state apparatus must be sufficient for them to have a decent life without seeking additional sources of earning. Salary levels must be improved at least threefold or fourfold, and the resources allocated for paying bonuses and length-of-service premiums to higher-ranking officials of federal agencies and the judiciary must be increased. Even now a high-ranking civil servant costs the treasury some tenfold what his monetary compensation is.

Effective raises in the salaries of 10,000 to 20,000 higher-ranking civil servants would cost about 10 billion rubles a year. This is about \$400 million, or 0.25 percent of next year’s GDP. For the sake of comparison: Net losses as the result of capital flight from Russia come to \$5 billion to \$6 billion a year, including net losses to the budget of up to \$2 billion. Uncollected taxes from shadow-economy transactions inside the country are estimated at \$10 billion. Other sources of funds for improving salaries could be found in drastically reducing the number of the junior and middle-level administrative personnel of state agencies, and in reducing the number of agencies themselves.

Civil servants’ supplemental income should be strictly limited not only to two authorized areas of activity – teaching and research – but also by an earnings ceiling that must not exceed double the average salary of the supplemental-income-earner at the given educational or research institution.

Career strategy and nonmaterial incentives. At present a civil servant’s career lacks clear-cut reference points. The unity of the state apparatus must find expression in the establishment of a system of ranks for civil servants that is uniform for all agencies, and a uniform system of bonuses and awards for special accomplishments and length of service. The system of ranks (titles) must be transparent and linked to the holding of specific positions. A package of financial benefits and services corresponding to each rank (title) must be defined and strictly adhered to. The monetary compensation that corresponds to a given rank would be paid regardless of the position held, including in periods during which a individual is “without position” (in the reserves) or retired. In the latter case, it would replace a pension. A system of state awards must be revived; at present that system has been destroyed and does not even play the role of a rough guideline in the civil servants’ incentive system.

A new competitive selection of civil servants. What sort of system will we have? Lifelong careers or competitive selection for high-ranking positions? In the Russian situation these forms should be combined (it should be taken into account that, for a career civil servant, benefits in the form of added pay for length of service would be retained even in the case of a competitive system). Civil servants should be allowed to retain their seniority, but without their salary or regular promotions, when they are detailed to jobs outside the state apparatus. Move from promotion based on seniority to promotion based on qualifications and

performance. The role of seniority is the retention of good employees and improvement of their pay, status and social guarantees, even without any change in their official positions. The maximum difference in the pay of specialists employed by state institutions on the basis of length of service should be no greater than 100 percent. The mechanism should be ranks and awards.

The procedure for expulsion from the civil service and deprivation of rank (title) should be taken out of the hands of a civil servant's superiors and turned over to special honor courts consisting of retired civil servants with lifetime appointments. The executive branch could, by arbitrary decision, choose not to make use of an unfit civil servant, but it could not, through such a decision, expel him from the civil service.

The Legal System

An Effective State = a State Based on the Rule of Law. Predictability

The law must be realistic. The state and its citizens must not deceive one another. The state must not deceive its citizens and force them to deceive themselves. Eliminating the double standard with respect to procedures: the formal procedures and the "gray" procedures.

Enhancing the stability of the legal system. This means not making any unessential changes. Change a law only when it cannot be correctly interpreted.

Improve legislation and the judicial system in three areas:

complete the codification and systematization of laws, and eliminate conflicts among them;

consistently reduce all legislative acts to unambiguous and long-term direct-action provisions. Given a low level of legal sophistication, the relative simplicity of statutory provisions is exceptionally important from both the standpoint of their assimilation by the participants in political and economic life and the standpoint of oversight. In this connection, the "end" provisions of law must be as specific and realistic as possible, which makes it possible to narrow the leeway for their arbitrary interpretation by civil servants;

organizationally and financially ensure the completion of judicial reform. That means the accessibility of legal justice. **Legal education in secondary schools** should give every citizen of Russia a knowledge of his rights and freedoms, and the necessary skills to defend them in private life (purchase contracts, employment and lease agreements, the protection and guarantee of property), in relations with the government (election rights, the jurisdiction of governmental bodies and the rights of citizens in relation to them), in court (the basic principles for bringing lawsuits, judicial proceedings, the rights of prosecutors and defense attorneys, the rights of witnesses and suspects). **Professional legal education** should provide the country with a sufficient number of lawyers and eliminate the shortage of legal services. **Judicial reform** should increase the productivity and efficiency of courts (the provision of

information, enhancement of the role and status of decisions serving as precedents, an increase in the number of courts of the first instance, and the formation of a system of magistrates' courts (municipal courts). A government program for the support of attorneys and notaries, promotion of the formation of philanthropically funded independent legal consultation services (philanthropic legal aid foundations), including those based at legal educational institutions;

the independence of courts. Reform of the territorial structure and of the financial and material support and coercive-enforcement capability of agencies of the court and the prosecutor's office, as well as investigative agencies of the FSB [Federal Security Service]. Complete the formation of a mechanism of funding and material support of the judicial branch that is independent of the executive branch, and strengthen the institution of court bailiffs as a separate force-wielding agency that executes court judgments and ensures the security and independence of judges. In addition to budgetary funding, the judicial system should have transparent additional financing through the collection of mandatory court fees and assessments, as well as deductions from attorney's fees and from the payment of legal consultants. The courts and the prosecutor's offices should be organized in territorial districts that are not coterminous with administrative territorial divisions of regions and large municipalities;

the execution of court decisions;

the institution of a system of magistrates' courts and municipal courts (for petty lawbreaking and civil cases) and of professional arbitration panels that base their decisions, in the framework of current law, on consideration of the context of a case, with the possibility of appeal to an "ordinary" court.

The Openness of the State in Terms of Information. The Institution of Public Oversight

The state must be predictable. The transparency and predictability for society of the actions of the state.

The openness of the government in terms of information.

The accessibility of all nonsecret information. The system of classifying information as secret, the main features of which were inherited from the Soviet period, is in need of serious revision. During that period it not only performed the function of protecting national security but also safeguarded the Communist state ideologically. Now we are seeing a dangerous profanation of secrecy. For example, practically all information that goes through the Foreign Ministry channels is classified as secret. Consequently, the border between merely technical state secrets and real ones is blurred. Peter and the wolves.

Establish by law procedures for the publication of all nonsecret information concerning the work of the state apparatus and the legislative and judicial branches, and

penalties for not providing such information. The accreditation of journalists with all government agencies and governmental bodies.

The state should establish and permanently support public oversight institutions to monitor its own activities. Foster development of the elements of a civil society.

Legally, ensure the right of citizens, upon depositing the appropriate pledge, to bring action in court against the state, an agency or a specific government official.

Develop a mechanism for public consultation on all key state decisions. Organizationally and economically – (1) set aside space for “open forums” in all media under state control and adopt procedures for the nationwide public discussion of principal draft laws (including the draft law on the state budget) before they are voted on in the State Duma; (2) a law on the independent expert review of regulatory acts. Such expert reviews should become mandatory, and funds should be provided in all agency budgets for carrying them out. In this connection, as a rule two expert groups should be formed: one by the government or supporters of a decision, and the other by the opposition or opponents of the decision.

For the whole period of state reform and development of new democratic institutions in Russia, budgetary support for all media must be guaranteed in amounts sufficient to ensure the independence of the fourth estate.

Development of the Institutions of Civil Society

Civil society can only be build from the bottom up, out of the activeness of citizens themselves. But the state should foster the development of its institutions, for example: It should guarantee the rights of the individual, the family, the enterprise and the public association. It should support all forms of social activity that go beyond the framework of commercial initiatives [and it should? – omission] rely on established structures of self-government and the representation of group (occupational, territorial) interests.

Listen to the voices of various groups of the population. For example, Public Advisory Councils made up of representatives of all officially registered public associations could be set up under municipal government bodies, while Public Advisory Councils comprising both municipal-level representatives and representatives of regional public associations could be set up under the government bodies of constituent members of the Federation. A condition for membership on such councils should be the nonpolitical status of an association. In particular, it must not take part in elections.

New opportunities for consultations with public are offered by the Internet. Interest-based discussion clubs and Internet conferences should be organized at official web sites of the government, governmental agencies and committees of federal and regional legislative assemblies.

Civilized lobbying.

The state should be free of the influence of the Church, no matter how tempting it might be to use the indisputable authority of religion for building a new ideological bond for society. If that happens, it will happen without the efforts of the state. An alliance of state and church is capable only of perverting the freedom of moral and social choice. Along with faith, it is necessary to cultivate religious tolerance – as the basis of both ethnic and political tolerance.