

EDITORIAL

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What the 30-Year Absence of a State Ideology Leads to: “The Enemy Is Not Only on the Other Side of the Frontline”



**Vladimir A.
ILYIN**

Vologda Research Center, Russian Academy of Sciences

Vologda, Russian Federation

e-mail: ilin@vscc.ac.ru

ORCID: 0000-0003-4536-6287; ResearcherID: N-4615-2017



**Mikhail V.
MOREV**

Vologda Research Center, Russian Academy of Sciences

Vologda, Russian Federation

e-mail: 379post@mail.ru

ORCID: 0000-0003-1396-8195; ResearcherID: I-9815-2016

Abstract. The paper analyzes the problem of the lack of a state ideology in Russia. The increasingly urgent need for state ideology is indicated by the regular appearance of “black swans” such as the attempted armed coup carried out by E. Prigozhin, head of the private military company Wagner Group (June 24, 2023), the arrest of Deputy Defense Minister T. Ivanov (April 23, 2024), the detention of ex-governor of the Kursk Region A. Smirnov (April 15, 2025), etc. Such events in the country’s life pose a real threat to national security, especially in the context of the special military operation and the ongoing “acute” phase of the civilizational conflict between Russia and NATO countries. Their consequences are difficult to overestimate, since human lives and the threat to the existence of Russian statehood are behind them. Our view (based on expert opinions, facts, analysis of the legislative activities of government bodies, public opinion polls) proceeds from the fact that the reason for the appearance of such “black swans” has deep

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socio-cultural and moral grounds: corruption at all levels of government, inability and unwillingness of the ruling elites to meet the agenda of the future dictated by SMO goals; they are a consequence of the deformation of the “cultural code” of the Russian civilization, which occurred as a result of almost 35 years of influence of the Western culture of the “consumer society” on the consciousness of Russian society. This is especially true with regard to the country’s ruling elites – in relation to them, we should talk about the almost 70-year period (since the time of the Khrushchev Thaw) of the penetration and dominance of Western values, which are based on the achievement of personal material gain. The experience of the Republic of Belarus, where Directive 12 “On the implementation of the foundations of the ideology of the Belarusian State” was adopted on April 9, 2025, also indicates that in the current extremely difficult geopolitical conditions, the need for a state ideology has objectively matured. At the same time, despite the active policy of the state to combat corrupt officials in the management system, to create educational conditions for the prevention of this problem in the long term, for future generations of Russians, it has not yet been possible to solve it. Many experts point out that this cannot be done without an appropriate “ideology of rejection of corruption”, both among civil servants and in society as a whole. Our contribution consists in analyzing the socio-cultural and historical foundations of the current state of the problem of corruption in power and, more broadly, considering it as one of the many manifestations of the value orientations of a significant part of the ruling elites formed under the dominance of the Western ideology of the “consumer society”.

Key words: ideology, culture, “cultural code”, civilizational conflict, ruling elites, corruption.

With the expression “the enemy is not only on the other side of the frontline”, A. Khinshtein, the Kursk Region’s governor-in-office, assessed the situation that is currently (late 2024 – early 2025) unfolding around the activities of the Kursk Region Development Corporation and the former governor A. Smirnov.

We recall that in recent months the veil has been increasingly lifted in answering the question of why the “**event, which is unprecedented in every sense**”¹, was possible, “the first invasion of Russia since World War II”² – invasion of the territory of the Kursk Region by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

In December 2024, V. Lukin, director general of the company Kursk Region Development Corporation (KRKO), was arrested, as well as his deputies I. Grabin and S. Martyanova. April 15, 2025 former governor of the Kursk Region A. Smirnov and former first deputy governor A. Dedov were detained... **All of them were connected with the activities of the Kursk Region Development Corporation. On its basis a criminal scheme was organized, with the help of which the embezzlement of budgetary funds, including those allocated for the construction of defensive structures, was carried out for many years and in different forms.**

¹ Dugin A. Something is happening that should not happen for sure. Available at: <https://dzen.ru/a/ZrNkRxJirVneMT9d?ysclid=m9qooboanq491707965>

² “The first case of invasion of Russia since World War II”. How does the world react to Ukraine’s attack in the Kursk Region? Available at: <https://dzen.ru/a/ZrXkdxJirVnevuRc?ysclid=m9qos8dxf763086902>

In his statement on April 19, 2025, vice-governor A. Khinshtein detailed the scale of this “abscess” uncovered in the Kursk Region³:

“It is important to explain that initially this structure [KRKO] (a JSC with 100% regional participation) was created solely as a project office to support investors, but **due to the efforts of officials it turned into a real super-monopoly.**

Along with defense facilities (₽19.4 billion), KRKO built rural health posts and aviation infrastructure in the region, obtained land for CRTs (we have already stopped one such construction project in Zheleznogorsk), **bought out brands of alcoholic beverages, and even almost became the only supplier of medicines for the needs of the region** (the corresponding resolution of the regional government was prepared just before my appointment, but I, of course, blocked it).

In total, tens of billions of budgetary rubles passed through KRKO. How much of it was stolen is an open question. Suffice it to say that the court of first instance has already satisfied the claim of the Prosecutor General’s Office to recover ₽4.1 billion from the budget. The funds were allocated for the construction of fortifications, but were embezzled by the KRKO management and their contractors (we fully supported this claim in court).

Since the end of last year alone, more than ten (!) criminal cases related to KRKO have been opened in Kursk Region (some of them were later consolidated). By now, along with the ex-governor, the Corporation’s director Vladimir Lukin, three (!) of his former deputies, and a number of heads of contracting companies have been arrested.

And there are also criminal cases being investigated in parallel in Ivanovo, where the same persons – managers and contractors of KRKO – were found guilty of embezzlement in the overhaul of apartment buildings (Lukin previously worked as an advisor on housing and utilities to the governor of Ivanovo Region, but after moving to Kursk in 2021, he took many of his subordinates with him, where they were already in full force. At least three of the defendants in the multi-billion dollar anti-corruption lawsuit filed by the Prosecutor General’s Office, not counting Lukin himself, have “Ivanovo traces”. Among them are the former heads of the Housing and Utilities Department and the Ivanovo Region’s Capital Repair Fund).

The former heads of the Kursk Region – Smirnov, Dedov and others – simply could not fail to see who was entrusted with billions in budget funds. On the contrary, they deliberately turned a project mini-office, which had neither proper competence, nor experience, nor elementary staff of specialists, into the largest state contractor.

The Prosecutor’s Office and other law enforcement agencies have repeatedly pointed this out to the region’s leaders, but there has been no proper response. The reason for this is clearly seen in the photo I have published, where the government and the director of KRKO are sitting in an embrace in frivolous poses.

Alas, the enemy is not only on the other front line. Bribe-takers and corrupt officials are undermining the country from within, especially when it comes to theft in the defense sector”³.

³ Ivanov A. The enemy is not only on the other side of the frontline. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/events/hinshtejn_vrag_nahoditsya_ne_tol_ko_po_druguyu liniyu fronta

Against the backdrop of arrests and detentions, many experts ask the following questions:

✓ **How can one assess the damage caused to the state, society, people, families, by the corrupt officials in power? After all, “this is not just stealing. It is a conscious weakening of the State from within – at a time when there is a struggle for external stability...”⁴ This should be equated with high treason.**

✓ **How did it happen that an organized crime group consisting of government officials operated in a border region for a long time? Who allowed this to happen?**

✓ **How deep does the network of systems corruption go into the public administration system? Which federal, regional and municipal authorities are subject to the same problem that is now being uncovered in the Kursk Region? Which other Russian regions is it covering?**

“We can no longer treat such crimes as economic crimes. **This is not just stealing. It is a conscious weakening of the state from within - at a time when there is a struggle for external stability. That is why I believe it is necessary to equate large-scale corruption with high treason...** The question here is not about formal qualifications – it is about the essence of what is happening. If defense lines are not completed as a result of theft, **it is not economic damage, it is a threat to national security. It is not negligence, it is a conscious weakening of the country, its borders, its military potential**”⁵.

“**Where will the thread of corruption stretch from Smirnov himself?** And those who stole thousands of Russian lives, **and these are not AFU terrorists, but Russian officials**, must not only be found, but also punished according to the laws of wartime. So who are they?”⁶

“So far, everything is going to the fact that this is not the last process within the framework of the “flight investigation”... Actually, up to May 2024, the region was headed by Roman Starovoit, the current minister of transport of the Russian Federation. And the protective structures have been erected since May 2022; 19.4 billion budgetary rubles for the construction of protective structures (dugouts, firing points, strongholds, anti-tank pyramids and moats) to protect the country from military aggression of Ukraine were allocated in 2022–2023... The amount of embezzlement of a billion rubles stated by the Interior Ministry, despite its impressive size, is only a part of what was stolen and embezzled... **First of all, how can we measure the colossal damage that corrupt officials inflicted on the state and people – the population, the fighters who died because there were no properly equipped facilities? And we are not talking about billions now. We are talking about human lives. Second, how did it happen that this organized crime group of officials was operating in the border region for a long time? Who screwed up this case? And finally, it is very interesting to know where the chain of revelations will lead...**”⁷

⁴ In Smirnov’s footsteps. In Russia it was proposed to equate corruption with state treason. Available at: <https://360.ru/news/crime/po-sledam-smirnova-v-rossii-predlozhili-priravnjat-korrupsiju-k-gosizmene/?ysclid=m9th7ruq36901014323> (opinion of political scientist A. Yaroshenko).

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ Thousands of lives stolen: Who “let” the enemy into the Kursk Region – ex-governor Smirnov’s face explained everything. Available at: https://tsargrad.tv/investigations/ukrali-tysjachi-zhiznej-kto-vpustil-vraga-v-kurskuju-oblast-lico-jeks-gubernatora-smirnova-objasnilo-vsjo_1226710

⁷ Ivanov A. Ex-governor of the Kursk Region and his first deputy were detained. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/events/zaderzhani_eks-gubernator_kurskoj_oblasti_i_ego_pervij_zamestitel_?ysclid=m9mjk15vmu91697405

We should note that it is not the first time these questions have been raised. We recall that a year ago, in April 2024, the same thing was said about former deputy defense minister T. Ivanov, whose arrest (as experts noted) “leads to the underworld of the Russian corruption system”.

Indeed, according to analysts, “until spring [2024], law enforcers almost never conducted operations to detain heads of government agencies. Everything changed on April 24, when deputy defense minister Timur Ivanov became a suspect... **After Ivanov’s criminal case, current and former officials began to be detained regularly throughout Russia. They were arrested with a frequency of every 2.5 days...** According to open data for 2024, there are **110 chiefs, managers, mayors, deputies, ministers, deputies, heads of state-owned enterprises and officers who became the subjects of criminal cases because of bribes**”⁸ (*Insert 1* presents some “high-profile” detentions and high-profile cases that occurred in late 2024 – early 2025, except for the detention of ex-governor of the Kursk Region A. Smirnov, whom we have “bracketed”).

As the facts presented in *Insert 1* show, episodes of corruption in public administration continue to be uncovered on a virtually daily basis, and this indicates at least two things.

The first is that corruption in the government is system-wide. It has penetrated so deeply into the layers of the ruling elites that they are not stopped even by fear of the law, not to mention any norms of morality and ethics; responsibility for the implementation of their official duties in the position of a public (!) servant entrusted to them; not to mention the awareness of the scale of threats to national security that Russia faces after

Yu. Sovetov (political scientist): “The detention of the deputy defense minister is a serious blow to the “elites”. The person who was entrusted with such an important matter as the reconstruction of Mariupol, the construction of hospitals and so on, did not hesitate to steal. And, excuse me, but **this was happening largely in front of the eyes of those who are obliged to control it...** He was buying mansions on Rublyovka in front of everyone. I mean, it’s in full view of everyone. His wife traveled abroad, took Israeli citizenship with their children. Everyone saw it. **Why did everyone turn a blind eye on it? Why did he get away with it?** He was considered to be an effective manager, as they used to say about Anatoly Chubais. **This issue of connivance led to this kind of scandal**”⁹.

A. Prokhanov: “**The arrest of Timur Ivanov leads to the underworld of the Russian corruption system...** Timur Ivanov is a beak, which can be used to identify and draw **the entire giant mysterious bird of Russian corruption. Names of corrupt officials, corrupt connections, all sectors of the Russian economy, individual ministries and enterprises, Russian and foreign banks, offshore, sums of money comparable to the state budget...** The bird of Russian corruption is terrible. Its beak is made of stainless steel. With this beak it pecks out Russia’s eyes, torments the liver, tears the Russian heart”¹⁰.

February 24, 2022; responsibility for the safety of life of the people living in border areas, etc. **All motives, criteria, values are ultimately dominated by only one – the thirst for profit and personal material enrichment.**

⁸ Smolentsev K. The year of purges. In 2024, 110 officials, military and law enforcers were arrested. Available at: <https://66.ru/news/politic/278122/>

⁹ How the arrest of Deputy Minister Ivanov and the message of Putin’s are connected: Experts talk about a red line. Available at: https://tsargrad.tv/news/kak-svjazany-arest-zamministra-ivanova-i-poslanie-putina-jeksperty-zagovorili-pro-krasnuju-liniju_994120?ysclid=lxszhly2b8970336897

¹⁰ Prokhanov A. Great expectation. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/velikoe_ozhidanie?ysclid=lx4fuap3bl928027715

According to Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation I. Krasnov, “in 5 years, prosecutors have filed **more than 400 lawsuits**, recovered from corrupt officials **more than 11,000 items of movable and immovable property**, as well as sums of money amounting to **more than 760 billion rubles...** this is the whole rottenness and abomination of corrupt officials. Instead of building schools, buying medicines, helping large families – they fill their bottomless pockets”¹¹.

G. Zyuganov: “From 2023 to 2024, the number of Russian billionaires in the Forbes world ranking **increased from 110 to 125 people. This is a record-breaking figure.** In the first year of the SMO, the total fortune of billionaires in our country **increased by 43% to 456 billion dollars.** This growth trajectory continued.

In 2024, the wealth of the 25 most successful Russians **grew by 18.5 billion dollars.** In the first two months of 2025, they become richer **by another 8 billion dollars.** Since the beginning of the SMO, some of the lucky ones have increased their fortunes by 100–200%. And this is at a time when the country was collecting things “from scratch”, helping the liberated territories and fighters on the front line”¹².

This is logically followed by a second fact: apparently, “a hidden, veiled intervention against our country”¹³ (which the RF President spoke about on November 7, 2024 at the Valdai Forum) did not pass without a trace, but had a devastating effect on the “cultural code” of the Russian civilization, its “genotype”. At least, this applies to that part of society, which is commonly referred to as the “ruling elites”.

After all, the absolute priority of achieving personal material gain is a direct characteristic of capitalism, which was clearly formulated by Thomas Joseph Dunning back in the 19th century: “Capital eschews no profit, or very small profit, just as Nature was formerly said to abhor a vacuum. With adequate profit, capital is very bold. A certain 10 per cent. will ensure its employment anywhere; 20 per cent. certain will produce eagerness; 50 per cent., positive audacity; 100 per cent. will make it ready to trample on all human laws; **300 per cent., and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged**”¹⁴.

¹¹ In five years, property worth 760 billion rubles has been seized from corrupt officials (interview with Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation I. Krasnov). Available at: <https://tass.ru/proisshestiya/22607027?ysclid=m9moffpxtn977280334>

¹² G. Zyuganov’s report “On the work of the CPRF branches on the social protection of workers in the conditions of the special military operation and the system-wide crisis of capitalism” at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Party on April 12, 2025. Available at: <https://kprf.ru/party-live/cknews/233519.html>

¹³ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Valdai International Discussion Club meeting on November 7, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/75521>

¹⁴ Dunning T.J. (1860). *Trade’s Unions and Strikes: Their Philosophy and Intention*. London. Pp. 35–36.

Insert 1

Some high-profile arrests and high-profile cases in late 2024 and early 2025

On December 11, 2024, former governor of the Ryazan Region Nikolai Lyubimov was detained in a bribery case. The court sent the former governor under arrest for two months. Lyubimov served as governor of the Ryazan Region in 2017–2022, after which he became the region’s representative in the Federation Council. The criminal case against Lyubimov was based on the testimony of his former deputy I. Grekov and I. Petina, who represented the Ryazan Region in the Federation Council from 2020 to 2022, and before that for nine years held the position of deputy minister of health of the region. They were detained in the summer of 2023 on charges of taking bribes on a particularly large scale¹⁵.

On February 25, 2025, vice-governor of the Vologda Region D. Alekseev and head of the regional representative office in the capital K. Bocharov were detained. According to the investigation, they extorted 100 million rubles from timber producers of AO Bereznik for general patronage and extension of the lease agreement of forest plots for felling. The Vologda officials were charged, both were placed in custody. “According to political analyst K. Kalachev, the double detention is *“a serious blow to Governor Filimonov’s positions.”* **And not on his controversial initiatives, but on his personnel policy...the detainees were let down by their arrogance, which is connected with the notion that Filimonov, and thus his team, are untouchable.** They were so engrossed in the fight with Severstal that they **stopped noticing all the others...**” According to M. Vinogradov, president of the Petersburg Politics Foundation, the arrest of high-profile officials of the regional government as a whole intensifies the intrigue over **whether Filimonov has some kind of grand mandate to implement his own ideas of beauty or whether it is a matter of his arbitrary program and not everything is still predetermined**”¹⁶.

On March 3, 2025 in Nizhnekamsk, two families were awarded housing certificates, including a family of migrants from Central Asia - Mukhiddin Kholzoda and Malika Toirova with four children. This caused a wave of discontent among local residents. Social media users rioted after the news about the certificates was published on the mayor’s official channel. Among the comments there were questions about the reasons why this particular family received the certificate. One of the city residents expressed bewilderment as to **why local citizens left without housing are not provided with similar assistance.** Other commentators also **questioned Kholzoda and Toirova’s merits and achievements, as well as how long they have been Russian citizens and what special skills might justify their priority in obtaining housing.** “*And don’t you want to provide housing to the residents of the defeated Kursk Region, the citizens of the Russian Federation who have been left homeless?*”, one of the residents asked. Some local residents noted that they had waited a long time for their turn to receive the certificate and were native residents of Nizhnekamsk.

The public drew attention to the different surnames of the spouses - Kholzoda and Toirova. This raised questions about the legal status of the family: are they registered under our laws or do they act according to Shariah. According to sources, **Mukhiddin Kholzoda has dual citizenship, while his wife, Malika Toirova, has no Russian citizenship at all.** Kholzoda is also the founder of the Koran School in Nizhnekamsk, where he teaches children how to read the Koran and Arabic. Moreover, it became known earlier that the “hero” of the story is a **successful businessman with numerous bank accounts**¹⁷.

¹⁵ What is known about the case of the ex-senator who resigned on the day of detention. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/14/12/2024/675c518c9a79471f72f9ac10?ysc lid=m9mnp8h7i959034458>

¹⁶ Tulupov V. Deputy governor of the Vologda Region suspected of extorting 100 million rubles. Available at: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/strana/northwestern/articles/2025/02/26/1094557-vimogatelstve-100-rublei>

¹⁷ Mukhiddin got the housing. And people in the defeated Kursk Region did not: How did people react to the scandal in Nizhnekamsk? Available at: https://spb.tsargrad.tv/dzen/muhiddin-zhijjo-poluchil-a-ljudi-v-razgromlennoj-kurskine-net-kak-ljudi-reagirovali-na-skandal-v-nizhnekamske_1177470

On April 1, 2025, at the request of the Prosecutor General's Office, S. Simonenko, former deputy head of the EMERCOM Main Directorate in the Krasnodar Territory, had "corrupt assets" worth almost 360 million rubles seized. "In fact, the EMERCOM employee was the owner of 55 real estate properties, including commercial ones, as well as 32 expensive motor vehicles, on the purchase of which he spent more than 300 million rubles." Simonenko, working in the Ministry of Emergency Situations, "used his official position for illegal enrichment," the Prosecutor General's Office representatives said. To conceal this, he registered the purchased property on relatives and trusted persons¹⁸.

On April 2, 2025, details of a lawsuit filed by the Prosecutor General's Office against an official of Rosprirodnadzor for conversion of property and income worth over 480 million rubles into the state income. We are talking about the former head of the South Siberian Interregional Department of Rosprirodnadzor Andrei Frolov. It was established that Frolov concealed expensive real estate belonging to him and his wife. In fact, he was the owner of 50 real estate properties in the Altai Territory, Novosibirsk Region, Turkey and Georgia, as well as 49 expensive motor vehicles, including trucks, on the purchase of which he spent more than 300 million rubles. In addition, according to the Prosecutor General's Office, Frolov was beneficiary of 4 companies and beneficiary of 3 entrepreneurs, from whose activities he illegally received more than 147 million rubles. At the same time, it was established that for the purpose of personal enrichment Frolov demanded from his subordinates to enter false information in the documents, due to which the enterprise, which fulfills the state defense order, was refused to issue licenses for waste management. As a result, the enterprise suffered damage of more than 7 million rubles¹⁹.

On April 15, 2025, former minister of education of Penza Region A. Komarov was detained. A criminal case under Article 286 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation was launched against the former high-ranking Penza official. He is suspected of abuse of power. According to federal telegram channels, the detention of Aleksey Komarov is associated with lobbying business interests for kickbacks as minister. Allegedly, we are talking about 16 million rubles. A. Komarov held the post of minister of education of the Penza Region from November 2021 to December 2024²⁰.

On April 16, 2025, A. Sergeichev, head of the administration of Gavrillov-Yamsky District of the Yaroslavl Region, and A. Golitsyn, deputy of the local council and director of a commercial organization, were detained on suspicion of abuse of power. According to the investigation, in 2023, the head of the district and the deputy created favorable conditions for the victory of controlled companies in the ongoing procurement for construction and installation work on socially important, sports and educational facilities. The Prosecutor's Office notes that there were other co-conspirators as well²¹.

On April 21, 2025, M. Vasiliev, former deputy of the Kursk Regional Duma, was arrested (the matter concerns embezzlement of funds for the creation of fortifications on the border with Ukraine).

¹⁸ Property worth 360 million rubles was confiscated from the former deputy head of the Krasnodar EMERCOM. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/society/01/04/2025/67ec0e619a79472530f283d8>

¹⁹ Egorov I. 50 real estate objects and 49 motor vehicles. The Prosecutor General's Office has disclosed details of a lawsuit against an ex-Rosprirodnadzor official for 480 million rubles. Available at: <https://rg.ru/2025/04/02/v-genprokurature-raskryli-sut-iska-k-eks-chinovniku-na-480-mln-rublej.html>

²⁰ The former minister of education of the Penza Region was detained by the FSB officers. Exclusive details from former colleagues. Available at: <https://mediapenza.ru/2025-04-15/byvshij-ministr-obrazovaniya-penzenskoj-oblasti-zaderzhan-sotrudnikami-fsb-eksklyuzivnye-podrobnosti-ot-byvshih-kolleg/>

²¹ Chizhova A. Bargaining at the last moment. Available at: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/7659198>

And it is not only about the “appetites” of corrupt officials who own dozens of real estate properties, billions of dollars in stolen funds, palaces, yachts, etc., which is revealed during the search; but also about the fact that **corrupt officials are organically “woven” into the fabric of the public administration system.** They were all appointed by someone. They all have an impressive track record, i.e. many years of practical experience in different managerial positions in different regions²². And, apparently, the system of public administration has created such conditions under which corrupt officials continue to abuse office for personal enrichment for many years (while holding responsible positions for the implementation of national development goals and fulfillment of direct orders of the RF President).

This is a question of culture, “cultural code”; awareness of the responsibility of a public official for the realization of national interests and the fate of specific people who depend on the performance of their official duties in the position entrusted to them.

During the period when our country was under the influence of the Western ideology of the “consumer society” (and for the ruling elites this period began 40 years earlier than for the majority of Russians; not in 1991 after the collapse of the USSR, but in the mid-1950s, after the death of Stalin and the onset of the “Khrushchev thaw”), a certain “genotype environment” was created in Russia, which is currently “reproducing” destructive “genes” for the statehood. As experts write, **“legal nihilism is the main feature of Russian society. And officials in this sense are no exception”²³.**

²² For example, here is a brief reference about the arrested ex-governor of Kursk Region A. Smirnov (Source: *Zavtra*. 17.05.2025. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/events/zaderzhani_eks-gubernator_kurskoj_oblasti_i_ego_pervij_zamestitel_?ysclid=m9se7duucz274550190):

A. Smirnov graduated from Ivanov Kursk State Agricultural Academy obtaining a specialty “organizational economist” (1995) and the Kursk branch of the Orel Regional Academy of Public Service with a degree in “state and municipal management” (2001).

From 1998 to 2004 he held various positions in the Kursk Region Housing and Utilities Committee: consultant of the department for the development of domestic and communal services and licensing, head of the economic department, deputy chairman of the committee, first deputy chairman of the committee.

In 2004–2010 he was deputy mayor of Kursk – chairman of the Kursk Housing and Utilities Committee, deputy mayor for housing and utilities, transportation, property and land relations.

In 2010–2011 he was director of the Kursk branch of the non-profit partnership “Association of Construction Organizations of Medium and Small Businesses”. As the publication “Bloknot” recalled, **“at that time, several criminal cases were initiated against him. The situation was so critical that Smirnov had to leave the Kursk Region and hide out in the Moscow suburbs”.**

In 2011 for several months he was deputy head of the administration of Sergiev Posad urban settlement.

In 2011–2012 he was advisor to the minister of housing and communal services of the Moscow Region, head of the Department of Standardization and Reconstruction of Housing and Communal Facilities.

In 2012 he was appointed deputy minister of construction complex of the Moscow Region, in 2015 – first deputy minister.

In 2016 he became first deputy director general of the Fund for Capital Repair of Apartment Buildings in Moscow.

November 3, 2018 he was appointed deputy governor of Kursk Region under Roman Starovoi, on March 16, 2021 – first deputy governor (simultaneously from August 2022 he was chairman of the Government of the region). He was in charge of the economy, transportation, road infrastructure, internal and youth policy, information sphere, as well as state property management.

From May 12, 2024 he was acting governor of the region due to Starovoi’s transfer to the Government of the Russian Federation, on May 15, 2024 this decision was confirmed by a decree of the President of Russia.

In June 2024 he joined the United Russia party, later he was elected secretary of the Kursk regional branch of the United Russia.

On September 8, 2024 he was elected governor of the Kursk Region in the direct election (with 65.28% of votes), on September 16 he officially took office.

He was a member of the State Council of the Russian Federation. A protégé of the Rotenberg group, like Starovoi. He is an honorary worker of the housing and utilities sector of the Russian Federation. He was awarded the Certificate of Honor of the President of the Russian Federation, the Belarusian badge “80 Years of Liberation of the Gomel Region from Nazi invaders”.

²³ Ideology as the main way to fight corruption. Available at: <http://uraldaily.ru/april/2/ideologiya-kak-glavnyi-sposob-borby-s-korruptsiei>

And this “environment” was not “suddenly” created after the start of the SMO. Experts spoke about daily arrests and their futility in the fight against corruption **without the formation of an “ideology of rejection of corruption”** in society and among civil servants back in 2011.

The above facts and the consequences that follow from them point to the importance of paying attention to the issues of culture and the “cultural code” of Russian society; to the issues of preserving

what scientists call “genotype”²⁴ of the Russian civilization. And, accordingly, it is important to pay attention to the question of forming a state ideology in Russia – not just as the only possible way to fight against corruption in power, but also as a formulation of the **Image of the Future, a certain “self-portrait of society”, “an Idea that will be common for the most diverse categories of citizens – regardless of age, profession, status or place of residence”**²⁵.

“Every newspaper today publishes information about the exposure of one or another corrupt official. **Every day we hear about new arrests of bribe-takers and bribe-givers.** Some of them even receive real prison sentences. At the same time, most experts agree that **punitive measures cannot be called an effective tool in the fight against corruption. As long as there is no change in society’s attitude toward this phenomenon, we cannot expect any significant results.**

One of the main tasks of the state in this regard is **to create an ideology of rejection of corruption not only on the part of the public, but also on the part of civil servants themselves. Propaganda of universal and social values should become an indispensable component of public policy in the sphere of civil service.**

At the same time, it should be noted that **democratization of society in our country is accompanied by its de-ideologization... Legal nihilism is the main feature of Russian society. And officials in this sense are not an exception.**

The mixture of traditions and cultural stereotypes, **uncontrolled bureaucracy, as well as political irresponsibility contribute to the fact that today the basic ideological values are highly deformed. Many officials view public service solely as an opportunity to improve their financial situation.**

The formation of a generation of civil servants who meet the demands of modern society **is possible only on the basis of a purposeful change in the legal consciousness of society as a whole. Otherwise, nothing will change: some bribe-takers will be replaced by others, and so it will be endless, no matter how strict punitive measures are taken by the State... Alas, but to date there are no effective programs to improve the moral and ethical standards in the behavior of domestic employees. This indicates the lack of attention of the government to this problem. The norms enshrining the rules of behavior, as a rule, are of a recommendatory nature and are declarative, not viable”**²⁶.

²⁴ Gorshkov M.K., Komissarov S.N., Karpukhin O.I. (2022). *Na perelome vekov: sotsiodinamika rossiiskoi kul'tury: monografiya* [At the Turn of the Century: Sociodynamics of Russian Culture: Monograph]. Moscow: FNISTS RAN. P. 7.

²⁵ “It is a self-portrait of society”: An analyst at the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research on Directive 12 and the role of ideology in the life of the State. Available at: <https://belta.by/society/view/eto-avtoportret-obschestva-analitik-bisi-o-direktive-12-i-rol-i-ideologii-v-zhizni-gosudarstva-708206-2025/>

²⁶ Ideology as the main way to fight corruption. Available at: <http://uraldaily.ru/april/2/ideologiya-kak-glavnyi-sposob-borby-s-korruptsiei>

Here we should note that an important event for the Union State took place on April 9, 2025: President of the Republic of Belarus A. Lukashenko signed Directive 12 “On the Implementation of the Fundamentals of the Ideology of the Belarusian State”. This document enshrines the notion of “state ideology” at the state level, lists the “foundations of the ideology of the Belarusian State”, its “components”, main goals, principles, subjects, mechanisms of “ideological work”, etc. According to V. Pertsov, deputy head of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus, “*the time for such a document has objectively come... In brief, such a document was necessary in order to: 1) to describe the concept of statehood in clear and comprehensible language, to make unified approaches to organizing and conducting ideological work with people; 2) to convey the state agenda to the citizens employed in the private sector of the economy*”²⁷.

**S. Aleynikova, analyst at the Belarusian Institute
for Strategic Research, on Directive 12:**

“This is a very important event in the public life of the country. **Belarus has been working toward it for more than 20 years** – starting from the first seminar of ideological workers with the participation of the head of state. Why such a long time? **Because neither the national idea, nor the principles of ideological policy and ideology of the Belarusian state as a whole can be formulated overnight. They have to be crystallized.** This was preceded by a great deal of analytical, expert, and scientific work to identify the values of the Belarusian society, its demands, expectations, and needs. **It is with such an approach that any ideological concept can become a unifying, consolidating link. An idea that will be common for the most different categories of citizens – regardless of age, profession, status or place of residence.** This is the very unifying factor, to which the country has really been moving for quite a long time...

The document reflects our reality. Its development was preceded by a really long way of studying public opinion. The document contains the results of large-scale scientific research, sociological surveys... But it should be understood: like any normative legal act, **the Directive is not just a fixation of some theses. It is a guideline. It is a vector of work – for society, for all categories of citizens.** Those goals and ideals, which are outlined in it, are not realized by themselves. It is a great labor. The labor of the whole society...

No society, no State can exist without ideology, even if it claims that it has no ideology. Because ideology is a set of values, expectations, and people’s requests: to the State, to the authorities, to society. It is, if you like, a self-portrait of society. It is a mirror that reflects its best qualities, traditions that have been formed not just for decades, but for centuries. Therefore, ideology is not just a necessity. It is a property of any society, any State. It is a permanent property, inseparable from the life of society. A living social organism cannot exist without ideology, no matter what anyone says”²⁸.

²⁷ Pertsov commented on Presidential Directive 12 “On the Implementation of the Fundamentals of the Ideology of the Belarusian State”. Available at: <https://www.sb.by/articles/pertsov-prokomentiroval-direktivu-prezidenta-o-realizatsii-osnov-ideologii-beloruskogo-gosudarstva.html?ysclid=m9h36zfq9q610471293>

²⁸ “It is a self-portrait of society”: An analyst from the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research on Directive 12 and the role of ideology in the life of the State. Available at: <https://belta.by/society/view/eto-avtoportret-obschestva-analitik-bisi-o-direktive-12-i-rol-i-ideologii-v-zhizni-gosudarstva-708206-2025/>

Perhaps, we can agree with some experts that for our country the adoption of the foundations of the state ideology by the Republic of Belarus is “***a landmark event that cannot be passed by... Minsk sets an example for Moscow***, shows that the time has come to be seriously concerned about the creation of an ideological document for the Russian State...”²⁹

There are several reasons that make it necessary for Russia to seriously address the issue of ideology.

The first reason is global and consists in the aggravation of cultural issues, the preservation of the “cultural code” in the conditions of the civilizational crisis faced by the world community in the 21st century.

At present, the whole world is in the “hot” phase of a civilizational conflict, which scientists predicted 30 years ago, based on the analysis of the very logic of the unipolar world development, established after the collapse of the USSR in 1991.

For example, the famous American sociologist and political scientist Samuel Phillips Huntington in his article “The Clash of Civilizations” (1993) wrote that “*the clash of civilizations will become a dominant factor in world politics*”, because even “*at the peak of Western power*”, “*among non-Western civilizations there is a return to their own cultural roots*”.

Relying on S. Huntington’s ideas, the Russian philosopher, political scientist, and public figure A.S. Panarin in his book *The Reversal of History: Russian Strategic Initiative in the 21st Century* (1998) wrote about “*the unprecedented and final loneliness of the happy frontrunners of progress, who will have to eat their food under the jealous gaze of those who are forever excommunicated and therefore ready to explode in despair. It is thus not so much*

S. Huntington: “The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural... The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.

The growth of civilizational consciousness is dictated by the bifurcated role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at the pinnacle of its power, and on the other hand, and perhaps precisely because of this, **there is a return to their own roots among non-Western civilizations... In many non-Western countries there is an intensive process of de-westernization of elites and their return to their own cultural roots... At the height of its power, the West is confronted with non-Western countries that have the drive, will and resources to give the world a non-Western image**³⁰.

a conflict of civilizations as a conflict between the “golden billion” and the rest of humanity³¹.

Russian historian A. Fursov writes that “we are leaving the world of modernity and entering a new, post-capitalist world”³², and this period “***was fully programmed by the development of the world system in the post-war period, is the logical result of this development***³³.

In fact, the hegemons of the unipolar world (the USA and the Collective West led by it) were warned about the same civilizational crisis of the 21st century by the RF President Vladimir Putin when he said at the Munich Security Conference on February 10, 2007 that “the world of one sovereign is destructive to all who are in it”.

²⁹ Stepanov A.D. Belarusian ideology: Pros and cons. Available at: https://ruskline.ru/news_rl/2025/04/11/beloruskaya_ideologiya_plyusy_i_minusy

³⁰ Huntington S.P. (1993). The clash of civilizations? *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), p. 22.

³¹ Panarin A.S. (1998). *Revansh istorii: rossiiskaya strategicheskaya iniciativa v XXI veke* [Revenge of History: Russian Strategic Initiative in the 21st Century]. Moscow: Logos. P. 9.

³² Fursov A. The world of post-capitalism. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/kruglij_stol_fursov?ysclid=m9tkkjx3q161305128

³³ Fursov A. The 21st century will be won by the person who will be able to create a new science about human, about society. Available at: <https://dzen.ru/a/Yfzci0QqzmymRuhG>

“A unipolar world, no matter how the term is embellished, ultimately means only one thing in practice: it is one center of power, one center of strength, one center of decision-making. **It is a world of one master, one sovereign. And this is ultimately destructive not only for all those who are within this system, but also for the sovereign itself, because it destroys them from within**”³⁴.

Given the civilizational nature of the crisis (more precisely, its “hot” phase, which humanity faced in the first quarter of the 21st century), we should note that **culture (in the broad sense of the word, i.e. as a “cultural code” and “genotype of civilization”) acquires key importance in it.** In 1991, the English philosopher Arnold Joseph Toynbee wrote in this regard: *“Culture is the soul, blood, lymph, essence of civilization... As soon as a civilization loses the inner force of cultural development, it immediately begins to absorb elements of alien culture”*³⁵.

“It is culture as the center of humanity in man that is the **genotype of civilization**, therefore cultural contradictions are the driving force behind the clashes of civilizations. In culture there is a semantic and value awareness of reality, which **genetically determines and legitimizes all socio-political and economic transformations...**

Domestic culture, which is the bearer of traditional spiritual and moral values and the genotype of Russian civilization, **has now become the main obstacle to American hegemonism**”³⁶.

And, given the importance of culture as “the essence, blood and lymph of civilization,” we agree with contemporary experts who note that **cultural sovereignty is the main, “most important” component of full sovereignty; it is “with its absence that the road to nowhere begins”**.

“What is Full State Sovereignty? It consists of five sovereignties:

1. Recognition by the international community of the country’s territory, flag, coat of arms and anthem.
2. Diplomatic sovereignty - the ability to conduct independent international policy....
3. Military sovereignty.
4. Economic sovereignty.
5. **Cultural sovereignty. As our history has shown, it is the most important. Its absence starts the road to nowhere**”³⁷.

Thus, the first (global) reason for the need to adopt ideology in Russia is that ideology alone can protect culture as the “genotype” of civilization in the conditions of the “hot” phase of the civilizational conflict.

“The whole course of world history in recent decades clearly shows the importance of culture as the genotype of civilization in any of its existing forms. It is culture that represents the main meaning and the main value of the existence of individual peoples and small ethnic groups, as well as states. Without culture, their independent existence is meaningless”³⁸.

³⁴ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Munich Security Conference on February 10, 2007. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>

³⁵ Toynbee A.J. (1991). *Postizhenie istorii* [A Study of History]. Moscow. P. 285.

³⁶ Komissarov S.N. (2023). Russian culture in the clash of civilizations. Culture on the verge of otherness? *Gumanitarii yuga Rossii=Humanities of the South of Russia*, 12(4)(62), p. 32.

³⁷ Starikov N.V. Shortage of state sovereignty. Available at: <https://nstarikov.ru/defitsit-gosudarstvennogo-suverenite-6047>

³⁸ Gorshkov M.K., Komissarov S.N., Karpukhin O.I. (2022). *Na perelome vekov: sotsiodinamika rossiiskoi kul'tury: monografiya* [At the Turn of the Century: Sociodynamics of Russian Culture: Monograph]. Moscow: FNISTS RAN. P. 7.

The second reason is that the Russian Federation is facing a civilizational crisis not only at the global level (associated with the change in the form of the world order, with the transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world and with the need to occupy a worthy place in this new world), but also at the national level, associated with the beginning of recovery from the semi-colonial existence in which the country found itself after the collapse of the USSR in 1991.

This is also a civilizational crisis, and it is also connected with the threat to the existence of the “cultural code”, because in 1991 Russia became a victim of a new type of war – a “hybrid” war, a “war of meanings”. This new type of war, which emerged as a result of the emergence of nuclear weapons, is realized through “soft power” and, as E. Balatsky notes, has as its goal **“the destruction of the culture of the opposing nation”**.

Even the very reasons for the collapse of the USSR, in fact, prove the accuracy of the inter-

“Hybrid war is a war of meanings and nerves... the task of the war of meanings is to destroy the culture of the enemy nation – its traditional picture of the world, ethical and aesthetic coordinates, values, faith and other elements of the worldview.... The war of hybrid type is inherently informational, its “blows” are embedded in the national economy and culture, breaking their original format and direction of evolution... Its end, just as in a conventional hot war, ends with the victory of one side and the defeat of the other with all the ensuing consequences...

This is exactly what happened in 1991, when the Soviet Union, represented by its leadership, recognized its defeat in the Cold War and was subjected to post-war reparations in a new, modified form”³⁹.

pretation of culture as a “genotype of civilization”, because the phenomenon of the emergence in the history of the country of the “gravediggers of the Soviet Union” in the person of Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Burbulis, Yakovlev, Chubais and many others personally responsible for the collapse of the USSR, became (as J.T. Toshchenko writes) **“a crime that has no statute of limitations”⁴⁰**. The emergence of these “genes” destructive for the state organism did not happen by chance, but **precisely in the conditions of changes in the “genotype environment”**, which was observed since the mid-1950s and was characterized by the gradual liberalization of the ruling class, the penetration of the values of the Western “consumer society” into the ruling elites of the country.

In addition, as experts note, the collapse of the USSR was accompanied by *“social trauma”⁴¹* of the Russian society and had the deepest cultural implications. It *“ruptured the progressive development of the State and society”, “led to the emergence and consolidation of new traumatic features (characteristics) of public consciousness – disorientation and disorganization... split, bifurcation, contradictory and conflictual development”⁴²*.

Here it will be appropriate to recall what is meant by the term “genotype” proposed by the Danish biologist W. Johannsen in 1909:

“Genotype is the totality of all hereditary factors of an organism..., a carrier of hereditary information transmitted from generation to generation. It represents a system that controls the development, structure and vital activity of an organism... It is a unified system of interacting genes, so that the manifestation of each gene depends on the genotypic environment in which it is located”⁴³.

³⁹ Balatsky E.V. (2022). Russia in the epicenter of geopolitical turbulence: Accumulation of global contradictions. *Ekonomicheskoe i sotsialnye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz* = *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(4), p. 44.

⁴⁰ Toshchenko Zh.T. (2022). The abyss of betrayal – Aleksandr Yakovlev. *Pravda*, 91(31294), August 19–22.

⁴¹ Toshchenko Zh.T. (2020). *Obshchestvo travmy: mezhdru evolyutsiei i revolyutsiei (opyt teoreticheskogo i empiricheskogo analiza)* [Trauma Society: Between Evolution and Revolution (Experience of Theoretical and Empirical Analysis)]. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo “Ves' Mir”.

⁴² Toshchenko Zh.T. (2015). *Fantomy rossiiskogo obshchestva* [Phantoms of the Russian Society]. Moscow: Tsentr sotsial'nogo prognozirovaniya i marketinga. Pp. 19, 37.

⁴³ Great Soviet Encyclopedia. Available at: <https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/bse/78399/%D0%93%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BF>

“The roots of the collapse of the USSR can be traced back to the 1950s, i.e. to the time of Khrushchev. A successful command system creates its own gravediggers. First of all, it is the nomenklatura itself, which simply wants to live without fear of the dictator. The desire is reasonable, but in solving their small philistine tasks, the bureaucracy, in addition to their own will, jams the system of government”⁴⁴.

After the collapse of the USSR, for more than 30 years, Russia’s “cultural code” continued to be subjected to aggressive external influence, and only the special military operation announced by the RF President on February 24, 2022, became for our country “**a mechanism, a tool for a comprehensive transformation**”⁴⁵. By and large, this is exactly what Vladimir Putin spoke about (which some experts have called his words “revolutionary” for good reason⁴⁶) that Russia *should not* “**return to the path it was on before 2022**”⁴⁷.

We recall that the SMO began as Russia’s forced defensive response to the impossibility of diplomatically resolving with the United States the issue of NATO’s further advance to the East (this time into the territory of our nearest neighbor, Ukraine), which posed a direct threat to Russia’s national security⁴⁸.

However, it became clear almost from the very beginning that Russia’s struggle for its national security is not only about Ukraine’s neutral status and not only about the return of NATO military forces to the 1997 borders, **but about something much deeper, going far beyond political, military or territorial threats to national security.**

*Vladimir Putin: “I would not like Russia to return to the path it was on before 2022, as I said in my speech. And this was a path that involved such a hidden, veiled intervention against our country, aimed at subjugating it to the interests of some other countries that still thought they had the right to do so”*⁴⁹

It is no coincidence that in his address to Russians on February 24, 2022, when the President of the Russian Federation – Supreme Commander-in-Chief announced the beginning of the SMO, explaining its essence, reasons and compulsory necessity, he spoke not so much about Ukraine as about the aggressive imposition by the West of its “*pseudo-values*” that would “*corrode us, our people from within*”, leading them “*to degradation and degeneration*”; about the “*attitudes*” that “*contradict the very nature of a human*”, as well as

⁴⁴ Derlugyan G. (2013). *Kak ustroen etot mir. Nabroski na makrosotsiologicheskie temy* [How This World Works. Sketches on Macrosociological Topics]. Moscow: Izd. Instituta Gaidara.

⁴⁵ Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2025). Vladimir Putin’s 25 years of presidential terms: “Warrior”, “Ruler”, “Creator”. *Ekonomicheskie i sotsialnye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz=Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 18(1), 9–45.

⁴⁶ Popov D. Putin has recognized the betrayal of the elites: The revolution from above has begun. Available at: <https://www.mk.ru/politics/2024/11/08/putin-priznal-predatelstvo-ELIT-nachalas-revolyuciya-sverkhu.html?ysclid=m4mavltEb25960798>

⁴⁷ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Valdai International Discussion Club meeting on November 7, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/75521>

⁴⁸ On December 17, 2021, the Russian side officially presented the requirements to the U.S. and NATO countries to provide legal guarantees of national security, including the requirements to exclude further NATO expansion to the east and the accession of Ukraine to the alliance; to refuse any NATO military activities in Ukraine, Eastern Europe, Transcaucasia, Central Asia; not to establish military bases in post-Soviet countries, etc. (Source: On Russian draft documents on the provision of legal security guarantees by the U.S. and NATO). Available at: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1790809/.

Nevertheless, on January 26, 2022, U.S. Secretary of State A. Blinken stated that “the U.S. will not abandon the principle of ‘open door policy’ in NATO” (source: Blinken: The U.S. will not abandon the principle of “open doors” in NATO. Available at: <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/13535663>), and NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg said: “We cannot compromise on the principles on which our security has been based for decades” (source: NATO and the U.S. reject Russia’s security proposals. How will Putin respond? Available at: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/537506>).

⁴⁹ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the Valdai International Discussion Club meeting on November 7, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/75521>

about the “*powerful root system of own culture and values, experience and traditions of ancestors*”, on which “*the very existence of entire countries and nations*” depends. As Vladimir Putin emphasized, “*this concerns not only Russia... It concerns the entire system of international relations*”.

Further publicly voiced plans by representatives of the Western political establishment to inflict a “*strategic defeat*” on Russia⁵⁰, attempts to not only “*defeat Russia on the battlefield*”⁵¹ and “*tear apart the Russian economy*”⁵², **but also to abolish its culture, its place in history**, proved in practice the validity

of the President’s words that “*for our country, it is ultimately a matter of life and death, a matter of our historical future as a nation*”⁵³.

“**As of December 1, 2023, more than 3 thousand monuments to Soviet soldiers-liberators were demolished in the EU countries.** This was stated by the representative of the Russian Ministry of Defense Andrey Taranov at the round table “*Revenge of nationalists, or who in Europe is against the monuments to Soviet soldiers*”⁵⁴.

Excerpts from Vladimir Putin’s address to Russians on February 24, 2022, revealing the civilizational basis of the special military operation:

“What I am talking about now concerns not only Russia and not only us. **It concerns the entire system of international relations, and sometimes even the U.S. allies themselves...** it seems that almost everywhere, in many regions of the world, where the West comes to establish its order, the results are bloody, non-healing wounds, plagues of international terrorism and extremism...

Until recently, attempts to use us in their own interests, to destroy our traditional values and impose their pseudo-values on us, which would eat us, our people from the inside, the attitudes that they are already aggressively imposing in their countries and which directly lead to degradation and degeneration, because they contradict the very human nature... have not stopped.

For the U.S. and its allies, this is the so-called policy of containment of Russia, obvious geopolitical dividends. **But for our country, it is ultimately a matter of life and death, a question of our historical future as a nation.** And this is not an exaggeration – it is true. This is a real threat not just to our interests, **but to the very existence of our State, its sovereignty...**

The well-being, the very existence of entire states and peoples, their success and viability always originate in the **powerful root system** of their culture and values, experience and traditions of their ancestors and, of course, directly depend on the ability to quickly adapt to the ever-changing life, on the cohesion of society, its readiness to consolidate, to gather together all the forces to move forward”⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ *From the U.S. perspective, the ultimate goal is the strategic defeat of Russian President Vladimir Putin*, U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs V. Nuland said on March 9, 2022 (source: <https://russian.rt.com/world/news/973180-nuland-ssha-rossiya>).

⁵¹ On April 9, 2022, the EU high representative for foreign affairs and security policy J. Borrell, declared that “*this war will be won on the battlefield*”. Available at: <https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2022/04/09/17546431.shtml>

Later (May 22, 2023), European Council president Charles Michel stated that “*the EU will work with its G7 partners to strike at every pillar of the Russian economy*” (source: <https://www.rline.tv/news/2023-05-22-sammit-g7-v-khirosime-podtverdil-tsel-zapada-nanesti-strategicheskoe-porazhenie-rossii/>).

⁵² “*Sanctions against Russia will remain in place until its economy is ripped apart*”, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said in her annual report on the work of the European Commission to MEPs in Strasbourg on September 14, 2022 (source: Available at: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/news/2022/09/14/940737-glava-sanktsii-protiv-rossii-ostanutsiya-v-sile>).

⁵³ Vladimir Putin’s address to Russians on February 24, 2022. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/statements/67843>

⁵⁴ Arkhipov D. Defense Ministry reveals the number of monuments to Soviet soldiers demolished in Europe. Available at: <https://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2023/12/05/21855121.shtml>

⁵⁵ Vladimir Putin’s address to Russians on February 24, 2022. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/statements/67843>

And, as many times before in Russian history, threats to national security of **such a high level**, and coming from external enemies, made this conflict for our country (as V. Baghdasaryan writes) “*civilizational, value and worldview-related*”.

This means that in order to get out of the value and worldview-related conflict our country **will need value and worldview-related changes**: within the elites, within the general population, within the state and state policy in all its manifestations (in the economy, education, science, culture, etc.). Otherwise, how can a value and worldview-related conflict be completed without at least partial elimination of its value and worldview-related causes?

The threats to national security emanating from NATO countries have created a situation for Russia of a compulsory need to intensify the adoption of managerial decisions on a wide range of issues concerning both the continuation of the general course of national development and the regulation of everyday life of citizens (we have been monitoring these issues since the very beginning of the SMO; *Insert 2*).

However, along with activities aimed at supporting the participants of the SMO and their families, socio-economic support of the general population, increasing the efficiency of the Russian economy, military-industrial complex, etc., the State pays special attention to issues related specifically to culture and the creation of conditions for the upbringing of younger generations.

Vladimir Putin: “**Culture directly influences the solution of many social and economic issues and, above all, the tasks of educating the younger generations of citizens who will determine the future of Russia**”⁵⁶.

V. Baghdasaryan: “**Russia’s conflicts with external adversaries had a value and attitudinal dimension and can be defined as civilizational conflicts. Civilizational conflicts were, in particular, the periods of acute phases of confrontation between Russia and the West. At stake in these confrontations was the very civilizational existence of Russia, its sovereignty and fundamental values...** Signs of civilizational wars had, in particular, the confrontation of Russia to the aggression of the Crusaders to the East, the Livonian War, the Russian-Polish wars, the reflection of Napoleon’s aggression, the Crimean War, the reflection of the Entente intervention, the Great Patriotic War, the Cold War. **The confrontation between Russia and the forces of the Collective West, acting in the format of a proxy war with the focus of the theater of hostilities in Ukraine, has all the signs of a civilizational conflict...**”⁵⁷

For example, let us cite only some, in our opinion, the most important decisions taken by the President and the Government of the Russian Federation after the beginning of the SMO, which relate, first, directly to the formulation of the foundations of the “cultural code” of the Russian civilization, and second, to the creation of organizational mechanisms for their transmission to future generations of Russians:

July 14, 2022, Federal Law 261 “On the Russian Movement of Children and Youth” was adopted, which establishes the main goals of the youth movement’s activities, its organizational structure, opportunities for citizen participation, the role of mentors, etc. As the authors of the project noted, “*if we do nothing, in terms of monumental solutions in the field of education, there are great risks of losing a large number of people – young people, teenagers, who will go into extremist movements, who will simply go into the negative*”⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ Vladimir Putin’s speech at a meeting of the Council for Culture and Art on March 25, 2025. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/76525>

⁵⁷ Vardan Baghdasaryan: We are a civilization. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/26366>

⁵⁸ The authors of the law on the new children’s movement called its difference from the Pioneer movement. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/society/01/06/2022/62960b249a79473c080a122b> (opinion of State Duma deputy A. Metelev).

Insert 2

**The monitoring of regulatory legal acts (laws, decrees) signed by the RF President
in the period from February 14, 2025 to April 20, 2025⁵⁹**

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>MEASURES TO SUPPORT SMO PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS, TO DEVELOP THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, MEASURES RELATED TO MOBILIZATION, ORGANIZATION OF MARTIAL LAW, INCREASE IN THE ANTI-TERRORIST PROTECTION OF FACILITIES</i></p> <p>February 28 – Federal Law No. 15 “On Amending the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation”. Fines are established for banks for aiding extremist sponsors. Administrative liability is established for organizations conducting transactions with money or other property that obstruct inspections by supervisory bodies or fail to comply with orders issued by these bodies to counter extremist activity.</p> <p>March 10 – Decree No. 129 “On the Commission of the State Council of the Russian Federation on Supporting Veterans of Combat Operations - Participants of Special Military Operations and Members of Their Families.” The commission was formed to strengthen coordination of activities of federal and regional executive authorities, the Defenders of the Fatherland Foundation and other organizations. Also among the tasks of the Commission is the development of measures that will help veterans to adapt more easily to peaceful life and ensure the protection of their social interests. I. Babushkin, governor of the Astrakhan Region, was appointed chairman of the Commission.</p> <p>March 10 – Decree No. 137 “On additional social guarantees for certain categories of citizens of the Russian Federation”. It was decided to provide lump-sum payments depending on the disability group to the disabled participants of combat operations, who were part of the Armed Forces of the DNR, People’s Militia of the LNR, military formations and bodies of the republics since May 11, 2014. For group I - 6,054,415 rubles, for group II - 5,236,250 rubles, for group III - 4,418,086 rubles.</p> <p>April 7 – Federal Law No. 64 “On Amendments to Article 128 of the Labor Code of the Russian Federation”. The right to leave without pay for up to 14 calendar days a year was granted to parents, spouses and children, including those of full age, of dead or deceased servicemen, volunteers, members of the National Guard troops, employees of the internal affairs bodies, Federal Security Service, customs authorities, institutions and bodies of the penal enforcement system, and compulsory enforcement bodies. Leave without pay of up to 35 calendar days per year can be granted to parents, spouses and children, including those of full age, of wounded participants of the military service for their care in accordance with a medical report.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>MEASURES TO PROTECT INFORMATION SECURITY, REGULATE THE ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN AGENTS, AND UPBRING AND EDUCATE THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS</i></p> <p>February 28 – Federal Law 28 “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation”. According to the law, only the Ministry of Health will be able to develop and approve standard additional professional programs of medical education. Educational organizations must obtain the opinion of Roszdravnadzor on the availability of personnel and material and technical support. In the implementation of medical and pharmaceutical education programs, it is prohibited to use electronic and distance learning, except in cases established by FSEs. Additional professional medical education will be licensed by type of programs and specialties.</p>
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⁵⁹ The insert is a continuation of the monitoring of the most important regulatory legal acts signed by the President of the Russian Federation, which we have been conducting since June 2022 (the first issue of the monitoring is presented in the article: Ilyin V.A., Morev M.V. (2022). A difficult road after the Rubicon. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 15(3), 9–41).

February 28 – Federal Law 29 “On Amendments to Articles 19 and 20 of the Federal Law ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’”. For the purpose of participation of pedagogical and scientific workers in the development of federal state educational standards, federal state requirements for training programs for scientific and scientific-pedagogical personnel in graduate school (adjuncture), federal basic general education programs and model educational programs of secondary vocational education, coordination of organizations engaged in educational activities, federal and regional educational and methodological associations are created.

February 28 – Federal Law 31 “On Amending Article 167 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation on liability for intentional destruction or damage to other people’s property is supplemented with a qualifying feature of committing a crime on the grounds of political, ideological, racial, national or religious hatred or enmity or on the grounds of hatred or enmity against a social group.

March 20 – Federal Law 33 “On General Principles of Organization of Local Self-Government in the Unified System of Public Power”. The law is aimed at improving the legislation on local self-governance taking into account the provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which stipulate that local self-governments and state authorities are part of a unified system of public power.

The Law provides for three types of municipalities: urban okrug, municipal okrug and intra-urban municipalities in cities of federal significance. Regions with socio-economic, historical and other peculiarities may retain a two-tier system of local self-government (settlements (rural and urban) and municipal districts). The general structure of local self-governance bodies remains unchanged. The new law allows for the creation of territorial bodies of local government for the operational solution of LSG tasks.

April 1 – Federal Law 40 “On Conducting an Experiment to Expand Accessibility of Secondary Vocational Education”. It is envisaged to conduct the experiment in the federal cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg and in the Lipetsk Region. Within the framework of the experiment, the executive bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation shall establish special legal regulation of relations related to the conduct of the state final attestation under educational programs of basic general education and admission to training under educational programs of secondary general and secondary vocational education. The executive bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation participating in the experiment, together with the Government of the Russian Federation, shall monitor and evaluate the results of the implementation of the experiment and submit information on the preliminary results of the experiment to the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation no later than December 10, 2025.

April 2 - Decree 205 “On Improving State Management in the Migration Sphere”. According to the Decree, the Service for Citizenship and Registration of Foreign Citizens of the Ministry of Internal Affairs will be established on the basis of the Main Directorate for Migration Issues of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

April 7 – Federal Law 58 “On Amendments to the Federal Law, ‘On the Security of Critical Information Infrastructure of the Russian Federation’”. The government will establish requirements for computer systems, databases and radio-electronic equipment, as well as the procedure and terms of transition of critical infrastructure to Russian software. In financial spheres, this process should be coordinated with the Bank of Russia. In each industry, the Government will determine the types of information systems that should be classified as significant critical information infrastructure objects. Companies using critical infrastructure must comply with the requirements of the authorities and replace programs with domestic ones in time.

April 7 – Federal Law 72 “On Amendments to Article 12 of the Federal Law on Combating Extremist Activity and the Federal Law on Advertising”. From September 1, 2025 it is prohibited to distribute advertising on information resources of foreign or international organizations whose activities in Russia are recognized as undesirable. This also applies to other information resources, access to which is restricted in accordance with the law. In addition, advertising will not be allowed on the websites of public and religious associations or other organizations in respect of which a court has issued a legally enforceable decision on liquidation or prohibition of activity on the grounds provided for by the Law on Countering Extremist Activity or the Law on Countering Terrorism.

*MEASURES TO PROVIDE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO THE GENERAL POPULATION,
STRENGTHEN THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY, INCLUDING IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA*

March 10 – Decree 141 “On Amending the Food Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation, approved by Presidential Decree 20 of January 21, 2020”. The Food Security Doctrine has been supplemented. The strategic goal and main tasks of ensuring global food security are established. The main goal is to maintain stability in the world food markets, including through cooperation with countries that pursue a constructive policy toward Russia. The main objectives are to develop domestic production of agricultural products, raw materials, food and mineral fertilizers to increase export potential, to create favorable external conditions for the maintenance and progressive development of international trade, economic, transport, logistics and financial relations on the basis of mutual benefit and equality, as well as to provide humanitarian assistance to countries in need. Risks and threats include internationally illegal acts and unfriendly actions of foreign countries that hinder trade in Russian products and the development of the agro-industrial complex.

March 20 – Federal Law 39 “On Amendments to Article 121 of the Federal Law ‘On State Social Assistance’”. The federal law is aimed at optimizing interdepartmental interaction in the establishment of pensioners regional social supplement to pension. It provides for the possibility of transferring to the Pension and Social Insurance Fund of the Russian Federation the authority to establish and pay this additional payment on the basis of agreements concluded between the Fund and the supreme executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation.

April 1 – Federal Law 41 “On the Creation of a State Information System to Counteract Offenses Committed with the Use of Information and Communication Technologies, and on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation”. Provision is made for the creation of a state information system to counteract offences committed with the use of information and communication technologies in order to organize interaction between the Prosecutor General’s Office, the Investigative Committee, the Bank of Russia, credit organizations, telecommunications operators, as well as federal executive authorities and organizations, the list of which is approved by the Government of the Russian Federation. In order to protect citizens’ funds, measures are envisaged to counteract cash withdrawals using ATMs without the voluntary consent of the client, including the establishment of a cooling-off period. A number of measures are envisaged to protect citizens from fraudulent telephone calls.

November 9, 2022 – Decree 809 “On Approval of the Fundamentals of State Policy for Preserving and Strengthening Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values”. The document defines traditional values (*“moral guidelines that form the world outlook of Russian citizens, transmitted from generation to generation, underlying the all-Russian civil identity and the common cultural space of the country, strengthening civil unity”*). Traditional values are listed (*“life, dignity, human rights and freedoms, patriotism, citizenship, service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its fate; high moral ideals, strong family, creative labor, priority of spiritual over material, historical memory and continuity of generations, unity of the peoples of Russia”*).

January 25, 2023 – Decree 35 “On Amendments to the Fundamentals of State Cultural Policy approved by Presidential Decree 808, dated December 24, 2014”. It introduced for the first time the term “cultural sovereignty” among the concepts of state policy, where it is defined as *“a set of socio-cultural factors that allow the people and the State to form their identity, avoid socio-psychological and cultural dependence on external influence, be protected from destructive ideological and informational influence, preserve historical memory, and adhere to traditional Russian spiritual and moral values”*.

March 31, 2023 – Decree 229 “On Approval of the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation”, which contains the following text: *“more than a thousand years of experience of independent statehood, the cultural heritage of the previous era, deep historical ties with traditional European culture and other cultures of Eurasia, the ability developed over many centuries to ensure the harmonious coexistence of various peoples, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups on a common territory determine the special position of Russia as an original civilization-state, a vast Eurasian and Euro-Pacific power that united the Russian people and other nations, the components of the cultural and civilizational community of the Russian world”*.

November 20, 2023 – Letter of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation 08-2142 on the “Conversations about Important Things”, which *“initiated in Russian schools a cycle of extracurricular activities ‘Conversations about Important Things’*. The main topics are patriotism and civic education, historical education, morality, ecology and other socially significant issues”.

March 23, 2024 – Federal Constitutional Law 1 “On Amending Article 4 of the Federal Constitutional Law, ‘On the State Flag of the Russian Federation’”, according to which the State Flag of the Russian Federation must be permanently displayed on the buildings of educational organizations regardless of ownership or permanently installed on their territories.

May 8, 2024 – Decree 314 “On Approval of the Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of History Education”. The decree defines the goals, basic principles, tasks and mechanisms for the implementation of state policy in the field of history education. The latter is understood as state-regulated activities to disseminate reliable and scientifically substantiated historical knowledge in society. It is aimed at forming a scientific understanding of Russia’s past and present, which is one of the foundations of all-Russian civil identity and collective historical memory, as well as at countering attempts to belittle the feat of the people in defense of the Fatherland.

September 11, 2024 – Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation 2501 “On the Strategy of the State Cultural Policy for the period up to 2030”, which, in particular, points out that *“the State remains the main strategic investor of culture and cultural institutions in the Russian Federation... this makes the State a key subject of cultural policy, obliged to clearly formulate investment objectives in combination with a value-based approach”*.

December 28, 2024 – Presidential Decree 1124 “On Approval of the Strategy for Countering Extremism in the Russian Federation”. The new

Strategy analyzes the state and sources of extremism threats. Such concepts as xenophobia and Russophobia are formulated. The content of the terms “radicalism”, “countering extremism” and “subjects of countering extremism” has been revised. Special attention is paid to countering the spread of ideas of radical nationalism and neo-Nazism in the context of the SMO and the incorporation of new regions into the country. An important role is given to the participation of civil society institutions and educational organizations in countering extremist manifestations.

In addition to the listed (by no means all) legislative acts in the sphere of culture and upbringing of the younger generations, it is necessary to add a purposeful system-wide policy of the State to limit the possibilities of negative influence of foreign agents, to tighten migration legislation; the personnel program “Time of Heroes” (which is also aimed at making the elite from “*those who serve Russia, not those who filled their own pockets in the 1990s*”⁶⁰)...

At the same time, an important role is played directly by personnel appointments made by the President, as a result of which strong “statespeople”, such as M. Mishustin and A. Belousov, are appointed to key positions in the public administration system.

Perhaps, it is worth mentioning the joint decision of the presidents of the Russian Federation

and the Republic of Belarus (adopted on April 17, 2025) to appoint former advisor to the President of the Russian Federation S.Yu. Glazyev to the post of Secretary of the Union State. Some experts called this event “not just bright, but revolutionary”, first of all, because S.Yu. Glazyev is “a man with his own quite definite political and ideological position”, namely, “*a consistent critic of the vulgar-liberal doctrine of market fundamentalism*”⁶¹, “*a real scarecrow for systemic liberals and the most ideologized employee of the Presidential Administration of all time*”⁶².

“Glazyev’s appointment to the post is not just a smart decision, but a revolutionary one, because this is not just an official who, once appointed, will follow some instructions. **This is a person known for his clear position**, a consistent supporter of integration both in the post-Soviet space and within the framework of the Belarusian-Russian union, **a person with a quite definite political position, and an economist-professional, who, in all likelihood**, will try to promote his own agenda. In this case, this is a revolutionary appointment, because it is **the first time that such a bright person with a definite ideological and political face has been appointed secretary of state of the Union State**”⁶³.

⁶⁰ Address of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly on February 29, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73585>

⁶¹ Academician Sergey Yu. Glazyev celebrates his 60th anniversary. Available at: <https://www.ras.ru/news/shownews.aspx?id=69bee026-94c1-4d33-a0fa-900a57f72c4b>

S.Y. Glazyev is author of more than 200 scientific papers (including more than 20 monographs). Here are some of his papers:

✓ **Restoration of the empire is salvation for Russia**. Available at: <https://izborsk-club.ru/26125?ysclid=m9sfvzvlql219787497>);

✓ **A crime without a statute of limitations**. Available at: <https://glazyev.ru/prestuplenie-bez-sroka-davnosti/?ysclid=m9sfx4pmuj327756237>);

✓ **Economics of Russian victory**. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/ekonomika_russkoj_pobedi);

✓ **Central Bank dooms Russia’s economy to further lagging behind**. Available at: <https://argumenti.ru/economics/2021/12/752908?ysclid=m9sfzqluwe319341960>);

✓ **Ideology or death!** Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/ideologiya_-_razmishleniya) and others.

⁶² Ivanov A. Sergey Glazyev will become State Secretary of the Union State of Russia and Belarus. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/events/dolzhnost_gossekretyarya_soyuznogo_gosudarstva_rossii_i_belorucii_zajmet_serzej_glaz_ev

⁶³ Sergei Glazyev’s appointment is a revolution in integration. Available at: <https://sputnik.by/20250417/shimov-lusch-naznachenie-sergeya-glazeva--eto-revoljutsiya-v-integratsii-1095499797.html> (Vsevolod Shimov, Candidate of Sciences (Politics), Senior Researcher at the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences).

“Glazyev early formed an image of a **patriotic statesman, firm and principled, who does not trade his convictions**. This has been the case since September 1993, when he was **the only minister in the Chernomyrdin government to oppose Yeltsin’s decree to dissolve parliament and resigned in protest...**

Sergey Glazyev is a loyal member of Putin’s team, **not a member of his inner circle, not an old acquaintance, but a like-minded person, a man who has been tested many times over**”⁶⁴.

Thus, faced with the need to liberate the country from semi-colonial dependence on Western liberal dogmas in the cultural sphere and to strengthen national cultural sovereignty, the President and other authorities are implementing measures that are multifaceted and comprehensive. **In fact, the State is trying to create conditions for changing the very “genotype environment” that once gave birth to the “Chubais” and “Gorbachevs” who took a direct part in the collapse of the USSR. Because only if the “genotype environment” is changed can we expect that new “genes” will appear in the state “organism” (for example, from the “Time of Heroes” personnel program), capable of returning Russia to its original “cultural code”; of cleansing its genotype from 30 years of exposure to a culture that is essentially alien to it.**

However, as experts noted even before the beginning of the SMO, **“a hostile ideology can only be countered with an alternative ideology. Ideas can only be effectively countered by counter-ideas”**⁶⁵.

Nevertheless, until now, according to V. Fadeev, advisor to the President of the Russian Federation, chairman of the Presidential Council for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights, “the constructors of modern Russian ideology” face an **“insoluble problem”**: “they easily explain against whom and what it is necessary to fight”, but **they cannot “formulate a clear, precise, ideal or at least desirable picture of the future for the majority of the population”**.

“This is the unsolvable problem of the designers of Russia’s new state ideology. **Based on a fairly broad public consensus, they easily explain who and what to oppose**. This could be Russophobia, “unpatriotic” historical assessments, propaganda of unconventional values, or disrespectful attitude toward religion. Media resources, cultural and scientific centers can be widely labeled as “pro-Western,” “anti-patriotic,” or ideologically harmful. **But it is quite difficult for them to formulate a clear, positive program that unites the majority of society, to outline a clear and comprehensive system of views, to offer a picture of an ideal or at least desirable future. It is even possible that they do not really need it yet.**

This purely defensive, reactive approach leads to the fact that the main instrument of ideological policy is censorship, protection of minds from “dangerous” trends. **This situation does not seem to pose any threat to the constitutional provision on the prohibition of state ideology, since there is no state ideology itself**”⁶⁶.

⁶⁴ Why Sergey Glazyev was given a second chance as Union State Secretary. Available at: https://dzen.ru/a/aAZC8JmDBXmr3gE_

⁶⁵ Can violence, extremism and separatism be defeated without ideology? Available at: https://tsargrad.tv/articles/mozhno-li-pobedit-nasilie-jekstremizm-i-separatizm-bez-ideologii_245164

⁶⁶ There is no state ideology yet, but ideological censorship is already in place. Available at: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2023-06-08/2_8745_red.html

G. Zyuganov (Chairman of the CPRF Central Committee): **“The ruling class does not see itself outside the world system of capitalism. A significant part of it is satisfied with Russia’s role as a peripheral “power”. Their position is frankly vicious: to supply the “first world” with raw materials and import finished products, including high-tech products... The ruling class always subordinates national interests to its own benefit. The Russian oligarchy wants the West to take its interests into account. In the conditions of capitalism, this means the desire to protect its sphere of influence and have privileges in it. It does not need to change its economic model. The bourgeoisie is not ready to change its internal liberal-market policy either. Its essence is the enrichment of oligarchs at the expense of the exploitation of the labor force and natural resources of the country...”**⁶⁷

S.A. Markov (political scientist, director general of the Institute for Political Research): **“Does Russia need a new ideology? It is needed, but... our elite is unable to create an ideology, because one of its characteristics is cynicism. Cynicism contradicts ideology, because ideology is a system of values. That is, people who spend huge amounts of money on consumer behavior hate any ideology because it limits their behavioral style”**⁶⁸.

A. Dugin (philosopher, publicist): **“It is quite obvious that we need very serious changes. And here it is not about the course, but about speed and passionarity. It is about honesty and sincerity. The course is right, and everyone agrees with it. But our elite frankly does not pull it. Even acting in the right direction, following the President, it is barely keeping up, not forgetting about itself along the way and hoping that everything will return to the way it was... The rotation of elites is necessary. The cadres that have been in office since the 1990s, even with all their loyalty, are simply unfit for the profession. The President has begun to call for a new elite, but here point steps will do nothing, the element will swallow them up. Something more radical is needed”**⁶⁹.

Perhaps that is why the main internal problem of the modern Russian society and state remains unresolved – **the inability and unwillingness of a significant part of the ruling elites to meet the requirements of the time, the tasks of national security and national development.**

Such “black swans” (i.e., “events that initially appear to be rare, difficult to predict, but after the fact often turn out to be quite logical based on the current situation”⁷⁰), as an attempted armed coup carried out by the head of the PMC “Wagner Group” E. Prigozhin on June 24, 2023, corruption in the Ministry of Defense (revealed after the detention of T. Ivanov on April 23, 2024), the

Kursk “anomaly” in the form of the activities of the “Development Corporation” (which became known after the detentions that began in December 2024) – all of these are just private manifestations of the problem, but each of them entails not “private” consequences, but consequences of such a scale, which are almost impossible to overestimate: we are talking about lost human lives and the existence of the Russian State.

The solution of the problem of overcoming corruption in the government, which is quite a natural consequence of the worldview and system of values formed in the ruling elites during the period when it was subjected to the aggressive

⁶⁷ G. Zyuganov’s report “On the work of the CPRF branches on the social protection of workers in the conditions of the special military operation and the system-wide crisis of capitalism” at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Party on April 12, 2025. Available at: <https://kprf.ru/party-live/cknews/233519.html>

⁶⁸ Our elite is incapable of creating an ideology because one of their characteristics is cynicism. Available at: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/659313>

⁶⁹ Dugin A. Russia needs a radical rotation of elites. Available at: <https://www.discred.ru/2025/02/22/aleksandr-dugin-rossii-neobhodima-radikalnaya-rotatsiya-elit/>

⁷⁰ Zuikova A. A “black swan” – what it is and how to prepare for it. Available at: <https://trends.rbc.ru/trends/futurology/60be57219a794724c40c369a>

influence of Western ideology of liberalism and “consumer society”, certainly has a direct connection with the success of Russia in achieving the goals of the special military operation and its beneficial exit from the civilizational crisis as a whole. “Beneficial” – that is, guaranteeing it the possibility of safe sovereign development in the new conditions of a multipolar world in the strategic perspective.

Vladimir Putin: “What we need is not a ceasefire, **we need peace – long-term, lasting, with guarantees for the Russian Federation and its citizens**”⁷¹.

However, without an ideology; without a clear idea of the image of Russia’s future, not just cultivated by the State, but shared by the majority

“Everyone knows the words, “education does not tolerate emptiness”, it will certainly be filled, only the question is by whom and with what”⁷².

of all segments of Russian society, this task is extremely difficult to realize, because one of the main lessons that the era of “liberal fog” taught us is that **there is no such thing as a State without an ideology; if the State does not have its own ideology, something else is bound to take its place.**

Especially if we take into account the fact that in the 21st century “managerial wars” and “soft power” with their focus on the “destruction of the culture of the “opponent people” have become a common reality, a new type of warfare that has replaced “hot” hostilities.

“Today, under the conditions of the most brutal hybrid war not only in the military, but, most importantly, in the economic and social spheres, declared by the United States and the Collective West against Russia, **the country is objectively, whether we like it or not, at a fork in the road of choosing the further direction of political and economic movement.**

Either Russia continues its course on the basis of economic liberalization, market fundamentalism, external financial management – **and this is a direct path to disaster and even with the possible subsequent collapse of the Russian Federation**, which is what the Collective West seeks.

Or, based on the theory of development of socio-economic formations, the practice of the USSR and the current socialist-oriented countries, Russia develops further along the renewed socialist path, based on the positive socialist experience of the USSR, China, Vietnam, Cuba and India. Based on the world experience, **the model of socio-economic socialist development based on the state planning-market mechanism** could be the most acceptable for the Russian Federation. Planned-market on a state basis!

Russia needs a state nationwide ideology of renewed socialism, enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation, on the basis of which citizens, especially young people, develop genuine statehood, internationalism, love for the Motherland and pride in its past, patriotism, not a desire to leave it, an ideology that should contribute to rejecting the flawed ideology of the West, including neo-Nazism, the ideology of the liberal fifth column, corrupting the minds and souls of young people.

⁷¹ “Direct Line” with Vladimir Putin on December 19, 2024. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/75909>

⁷² Kireev M., Koreneva E., Kireeva N. (2024). The cultural code of Russia and its evolution. *Nauka, iskusstvo, kultura=Science, Arts, Culture*, 3(43), 22–35.

...Russia’s political leadership should finally realize that even if we achieve decisive successes on the military field of the SMO, even if a compromise is found as a result of the negotiation process, the economic war declared by the U.S. and the Collective West against Russia, unfortunately, as foreign experts and specialists persistently say, will be continued and intensified, will be very, very tough. Without socialist ideology, Russia has no future, no chance to resist the powerful economic potential of the West, preserving the old model of oligarchic capitalism, which generates enormous social inequality and division of society”⁷³.

If we follow the logic proposed by some experts, which is that the civilizational confrontation between the unipolar and multipolar world in the 21st century is a continuation of the confrontation between liberalism and socialism of the 20th century, then the outcome of Russia’s development **without ideology, but with the understanding of the need to strengthen national sovereignty**, is as follows –

when answering the question “What society would you like to live in?”:

1) representatives of all major socio-demographic groups are significantly (almost 2 times) more likely to say that **socialist society is better than capitalist society** (34 vs 19% in the poll as a whole; *Table*);

2) however, the most widespread answers are “in some other” and “I’m unsure” (46%).

Distribution of responses to the question “What society would you like to live in?”, %

Indicator	Socialist	Capitalist	In some other; I’m unsure
Gender			
Men	34.4	19.5	46.1
Women	34.2	19.2	46.6
Age			
Under 30	29.2	17.7	53.1
30–55	33.8	18.9	47.4
Over 55	36.7	20.5	42.8
Education			
Secondary and incomplete secondary	33.1	20.1	46.8
Secondary vocational	34.8	17.4	47.9
Higher and incomplete higher	34.9	20.8	44.2
Income group			
Bottom 20%	33.0	18.7	48.3
Middle 60%	34.9	19.0	46.1
Top 20%	38.5	22.0	39.6
Territory			
Vologda	34.1	17.4	48.6
Cherepovets	40.2	22.7	37.1
Districts	31.0	18.5	50.4
Region	34,3	19,3	46,4

Source: data of the VoIRC RAS survey (December 2024).

⁷³ Voronin Yu. Russia has no future without socialist ideology. Available at: <https://argumenti.ru/opinion/2025/03/942344> (Yu. Voronin – Doctor of Sciences (Economics), Professor, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Tatar ASSR, chairman of the State Planning Committee of the TASSR; first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation; deputy of the State Duma (second convocation); auditor of the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation).

“The confrontation between capitalism and socialism, which was **the main ideological contradiction in the 20th century**, can be regarded as **the first stage of the confrontation between Western civilization and a number of non-Western civilizational poles**... Therefore, the civilizational confrontation between supporters of a unipolar world and supporters of a multipolar world is, in a certain sense, **a continuation of the confrontation between capitalism and socialism**”⁷⁴.

“**We are doing something – obviously, but it is quite clear that we have not yet decided what we are doing.... I don’t think we have a master plan...** economists, unfortunately, most of them – I know them, I’m a former economist myself, although there are no former economists, of course – **are stuck in the old model... do we know what model we are building?** I would say that the ideal model for Russia is **authoritarian social capitalism, so that it would be clear where we were going. Because we are supposedly going the right way, supposedly we used to go the liberal way – I don’t get it...**”⁷⁷

We should note that this survey⁷⁵ was held not in the capital, but in one of the most traditional Russian regions – the Vologda Region⁷⁶.

Perhaps, these rather contradictory data we obtained in December 2024 most accurately reflect the current state of society and the question that has been repeatedly addressed to the President of the Russian Federation, including by S. Karaganov, who directly asked Vladimir Putin: “**Do we even know what model we are building?**”

In conclusion, we note that the outcome of the “hot” phase of the “confrontation of civilizations”, which we have been observing in recent years and which is getting a little closer together with the beginning of the negotiation processes between Russia and the United States⁷⁸, as experts rightly point out, will depend “*not only on the balance of power and interests in the world arena, but also on the*

⁷⁴ Volkonsky V.A. (2023). The logic of withstanding between civilizational poles. *Ekonomicheskie i sotsyalnye peremeny: fakty, tendentsii, prognoz*=*Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 16(1), p. 41.

⁷⁵ The sociological survey was conducted by Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences in November – December 2024 as part of the public opinion monitoring. Monitoring parameters: surveys are conducted 6 times a year in Vologodsky, Cherepovetsky, Babaevesky, Velikoustyugsky, Vozhegodsky, Gryazovetsky, Tarnogsky, Kirillovsky, Nikolsky municipal okrugs and in Sheksninsky Municipal District of the region. Survey method is questionnaire poll based on the place of residence of the respondents. Sample size is 1,500 people aged 18 and over. The selection is targeted and quota-based. Representativeness of the sample is ensured by observing the proportions between the urban and rural populations, the proportions between residents of various types of settlements (rural settlements, small and medium cities), and the gender and age structure of the adult population of the region. Sampling error does not exceed 3%.

⁷⁶ According to the 2020 All-Russian Population Census, the Russian population in the Vologda Region is 975,683 people (85.38% of the total population).

⁷⁷ Plenary session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum on June 7, 2024 (words of S. Karaganov). Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/74234>

⁷⁸ February 12, 2025, a telephone conversation took place between President of the Russian Federation V. Putin and President of the United States D. Trump. As a result, the presidents agreed to continue contacts.

February 18, Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) hosted the first (since the beginning of the SMO) meeting of representatives of Russia and the United States on the restoration of bilateral diplomatic relations. The delegation from Russia was represented by Foreign Minister S. Lavrov, Presidential Aide Yu. Ushakov and head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) K. Dmitriev.

March 24, the second negotiations took place. The main topic was the Black Sea grain initiative. Russia was represented by G. Karasin, head of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs, and S. Beseda, advisor to the FSB Director.

April 2–3 (for the first time since the beginning of the conflict), K. Dmitriev, special representative of the President of Russia for investment and economic cooperation with foreign countries, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), visited the United States. In an interview, he noted that Russia and the United States had made “three steps forward on a large number of issues”, in particular, they had begun “active work on restoring direct flights” (source. Available at: https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/67eef5039a79473cb4cd8c1f?from=article_body).

April 10, at the next round of negotiations in Istanbul, the issue of the return of seized diplomatic property and the resumption of direct flights was discussed. The Russian Federation was represented by Russian ambassador to the United States A. Darchiey, and Washington – by deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs S. Coulter.

*internal stability of the most important States*⁷⁹. Of course, we are talking about political, economic and military stability... But given the civilizational nature of the crisis that Russia and the whole world are experiencing; and the fact that in 2022 our country is facing this crisis **at two levels at once** – not only at the external level (related to the objective process of forming a multipolar world and the need to find its place in it), but also at the internal level (related to the West’s attempts to abolish Russian culture, language and place in history, as well as Russia’s own attempt to rethink the epoch of the previous 30 years and return to the roots of its own “cultural code”), **this is, first of all, a question concerning civilizational self-determination and the achievement of cultural sovereignty.**

“In the coming decades we will see a new stage when some societies, deprived of passionarity, will perish, while others will form collective and individual forms of responsibility...

Russia was one of the first to embark on this search for itself in the future... Unlike everyone else, we are not limited by resources, technology and passionarity. The coming victory in the war with the West and the ongoing processes of psychohistorical, mental purification create favorable conditions for an evolutionary, social breakthrough. A big victory in the past, a big project in the present and a big goal in the future”⁸⁰

As experts say, *“a country that has forgotten its past and abandoned its traditions will sooner or later perish, disappear”⁸¹, and “cultural sovereignty is the cornerstone of any statehood, which is at the forefront of ideological and information-psychological confrontation and global competitive struggle”⁸².*

The system-wide nature of corruption, which has affected a significant part of the ruling elites, is a consequence of the deformation of the “cultural code” of the Russian civilization, which, in turn, was a consequence of the “hidden, veiled intervention against our country” observed for decades before the special military operation.

And, as practice shows, even with all the activity of decisions taken by the authorities aimed at correcting the “cultural code”, without ideology, they still remain largely fragmented, non-systemic, reacting to the fact, rather than ahead of time.

In this case, the issue of time is of fundamental importance (which, in fact, reminds us of the decision on Directive 12 “On the Implementation of the Fundamentals of the Ideology of the Belarusian State”, which the country “has been working on for more than 20 years”, which has been “maturing” for a long time, but was eventually adopted in the Republic of Belarus”⁸³). As experts say, *“the world is entering a new era. A dangerous and unpredictable one. Only those countries and politicians who demonstrate the strength of strategic thinking, the strength of principles and willpower will be able to survive it without losses and, moreover, to take a favorable position in the future...”⁸⁴*

⁷⁹ Evstafiev D. Vladimir Putin’s “New Yalta”: A strategic perspective for Eurasia. Available at: <https://eurasia.expert/novaya-yalta-vladimira-putina-strategicheskaya-perspektiva-dlya-evrazii/>

⁸⁰ Shkolnikov A. Third demographic transition. Available at: https://zavtra.ru/blogs/tretij_demograficheskij_perehod

⁸¹ Hendus G. Cultural sovereignty of Russia. Available at: https://ruskline.ru/analitika/2023/05/02/kulturnyi_suverenitet_rossii

⁸² Dzyatkovskaya E.N. (2022). Cultural sovereignty of the country: The role of ecological culture. *Vestnik mezhdunarodnoi akademii nauk (Russian section)*, special issue 1, p. 8.

⁸³ “It is a self-portrait of society”: An analyst from the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research on Directive 12 and the role of ideology in the life of the State. Available at: <https://belta.by/society/view/eto-avtoportret-obschestva-analitik-bisi-o-direktive-12-i-rol-i-ideologii-v-zhizni-gosudarstva-708206-2025/>

⁸⁴ A. Chesnakov (head of the Scientific Council of the Center for Political Conjuncture). Time of the strong. Available at: <https://actualcomment.ru/vremya-silnykh-2504101152.html>

Vladimir Putin, speaking at the Plenary Session of the Future Technologies Forum on February 21, 2025, noted: “*To be successful, we need to play ahead of the curve*”⁸⁵. Perhaps, this can be attributed not only to the development of technologies, but also to any other areas of government activity aimed at addressing the key tasks of national development:

- ✓ working out ideological foundations of the Russian society,
- ✓ overcoming corruption at all levels of government (federal, regional, municipal),
- ✓ changing the elites hindering Russia’s further development toward strengthening national sovereignty.

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⁸⁵ Vladimir Putin’s speech at the plenary session of the Future Technologies Forum on February 21, 2025. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/76304>

Information about the Authors

Vladimir A. Ilyin – RAS Corresponding Member, Doctor of Sciences (Economics), Professor, Honored Scientist of the Russian Federation, scientific director, Vologda Research Center, Russian Academy of Sciences (56A, Gorky Street, Vologda, 160014, Russian Federation; e-mail: ilin@vscc.ac.ru)

Mikhail V. Morev – Candidate of Sciences (Economics), Leading Researcher, Vologda Research Center, Russian Academy of Sciences (56A, Gorky Street, Vologda, 160014, Russian Federation; e-mail: 379post@mail.ru)