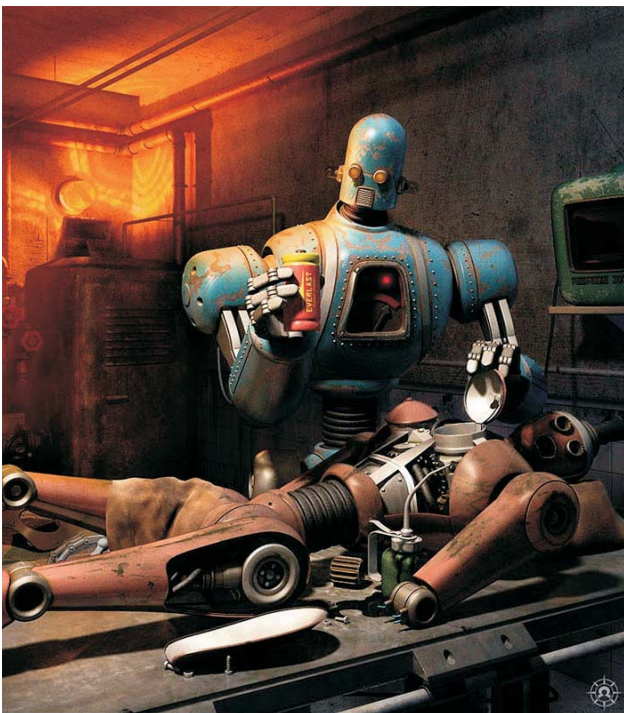


who can suppress its private interests. It reduces the situation entailing a war of everybody against everyone to a framework that is more acceptable. Russia needs Putin or another bureaucrat who has similar abilities, in order to ensure that representatives of the ruling class will not detriment each other and will not rip the country to pieces. One should be happy if a new mechanism of governance should emerge. Currently, there is no other mechanism other than the existing centuries-old tradition of state management.

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Bureaucracy is a government-formative class, which has always exploited Russia, while, at the same time, maintaining the country's unity. Who was it that restored the unity of Russia in the 1920s? Can this be credited to the unity of the masses? Of course, they also strived for this, but the organisational decisions were actually being made by the bureaucracy of that time. It was the bureaucracy that considered this territory necessary and that it would be common. Bolsheviks preserved the state with their iron hand. This sharply contrasts to the situation today, when the ruling class is not succeeding in consolidating the country, but ends up splitting it more and more. We can also speak about the existing and imaginary contradictions between Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin for a long time. Vladimir Putin is a stronger figure, as his political experience and history is greater than Medvedev's. Putin has been in big politics for eleven and a half years. The country needs Putin or a similar figure before the Russian ruling class finally stops tearing Russia into pieces. ■

Vitaly Tretyakov was speaking with Liubov Ulianova



PEOPLE AT THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN



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Exclusively for RJ

Bureaucracy is a system for the division of labor within a sphere of decision making. It was initially created by the government for its own sake, and only later did bureaucratic mechanisms spread widely. Bureaucratic methods are characterized by a division of privileges, a hierarchy, that acts according to the directions in the framework of instructions on service, the account of state documents, control of activity, as well as other functions. All of these methods are used everywhere and any management activity today is impossible without them.

This is not the case with Russia. This is about the other side of the fence. Unfortunately, on this side of the fence everything is more complicated.

For the Soviet man, the word 'bureaucracy' meant procrastination, endless waiting in dusty corridors, incomprehensible documents that needed to be completed, dreadful certificates available only from very distant institutions, and a whole host of Soviet nonsense. **Nowadays, the amount of small, everyday inconveniences have been reduced, but the power of bureaucrats has increased incomparably.** This fact is so great and so obvious that nobody dares to dispute it. 'They can do anything. Just anything.'

Of course, there are people in such a system — those at the bottom of the food chain — who are eaten by

everybody, the so-called 'common people.' There is the predatory 'cop shop' and secret services able to kill or rob anyone. There are 'authorities' of different levels that possess 'immovable property' and 'budgets.' **But the backbone and the soul of the mechanism is the hierarchy of bureaucrats, who possess the most deadly weapons of all — stamps and signatures.** The results of every robbery and obscenity need to be formalized sooner or later, and the bureaucratic line has a right to formalize them. Moreover, while it may be possible to come down on a specific bureaucrat, it is impossible to come down on the whole organizing system. The bureaucratic system can ask as much as it pleases for official registration and its price is only limited by the price of the legalizing resource. Legalization is unavoidable and necessary as nobody will pay two rubles for what costs one ruble, no one will even pay fifty kopecks. But the price of bribery can be low, especially if everyone needs the same legalization and the resource is passed constantly from one person to the next.

Of course, the word '**debu-reaucratization**' in such a system has absolutely no meaning. If the state machinery profits from its ruling position, the load on society will remain the same no matter how you reduce the bureaucratic apparatus. ■