

THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE STATE

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Recent years have shown that the state has not disappeared anywhere. It became particularly clear when the largest global corporations and transnational companies (this very term, 'transnational,' resounds of negation of the state) ran for help to their governments. Of course, the state is still way more powerful than any transnational corporation. There are no other institutions in place that would be able to resolve serious problems. Nobody even talks about such institutions, if we don't take into account harangues about the global government. But, in a sense, this also means the state.

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The majority of citizens realize that there is no alternative to the state. Who will provide them with pensions? Undoubtedly, there is discontent towards specific agents of the state. But more often the citizens

demand that the state fulfill its functions. At least, it is like that in Russia. Take, for instance, the famous 'case of Egor Bychkov,' who, together with his friends, fought drug trafficking and abuse in Nyzhny Tagil. He took it upon himself only because the state was not doing its job, and so he tried to substitute the state. If the state fulfills its functions, he will only support this work. **The pathos of the last year, at least, is the demand for the state to do what it is obliged to do.**

The problem of dissatisfaction with some agents of the state could potentially be resolved by the emergence of new persons, but my attitude towards this solution is more negative than positive. New leaders are born only by new crises and new challenges. Vladimir Putin, for example, became the response to the challenges the country faced at the end of the nineties. Today, the country faces other challenges, ones that have not been fully perceived and formulated. As such, it is impossible to set the task of recruiting any new leaders. Roughly speaking, such a task can be set by the intellectual class, but it is too busy jostling around an erroneously perceived liberalism.

Hence comes the problem of preserving what we already have. Our attitude towards this process and to those who safeguard it depends on how we understand these terms. Here in Russia the custodians are primarily those who 'protect' the existing regime. It may be the case that they are viewed with certain irony. However, **many Russians, including the leaders of the current political regime, realize the need for change. But this does not mean that we should reject the state.** In this sense, I am a custodian. If we reject the state and stop protecting it, then we should agree with the most severe anarchy in the modern state. Our state should not roll 300 years back. Even Kropotkin complained about the state, which became extremely powerful after the Great French revolution and permeated all spheres of

human life, lamenting that one could not elude it any longer. He wrote about it 100 years ago. The state became total not in the Soviet Union, but in Western Europe after the Great French revolution. However, the totality of the modern state allows for an exceedingly high quality of life and ensures the development of Western states that we observe and envy.

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The lack of powerful dynamics is intuitively felt by many Russians in modern Russian politics. Some citizens perceive this problem by intuition, others are able to formulate certain requirements and new tasks facing the authorities. But there is no development. And the attempt of president Medvedev to launch the project of innovation is a correct way to proceed. However, it seems that the capacities for this innovation project, especially concentrated around Skolkovo, are not sufficient for the country to enter a development mode. Though, without this particular project, we would have nothing to discuss at all, so I believe the project should be supported in every possible way. But we should also seek for other zones of development in order to ensure a high-quality of social, economic, and political life.

As of now, we are not even trying to discuss regional development in a serious manner. There are only negative discussions of the issue — development is possible here, and here it is not the case, so you may as well perish! It seems to me that is absolutely the wrong attitude. If we look at Europe, we will see that, of course, there are also developing and stagnating areas. However, **it has never come to anybody's mind that a certain region populated by people can be turned into a desert.** Actually, the society and the state are trying to ensure a more or less decent life everywhere on that territory. ■

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