Transition Project

Securing Support and Buy-In from the Russian People

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Citing the failed experience of previous democratic reforms, pessimists claim that nothing good will happen in Russia after Putin: we couldn't do it then, so we won't be able to do it now. In fact, democracy does not always come the first time. In political science, there is a view that any democratic experience, even a failed one, increases the chances of successful democratization in the future. Samuel Huntington, for example, distinguished "second attempts" as a special type of democratization. The logic is that democratizing for the first time, countries and governments make mistakes that eventually lead to the fall of democracy and the establishment of authoritarianism. The second attempt, according to the researcher, is more successful in this sense, precisely because the modernizers of the next generation are able to take into account the mistakes of their predecessors and avoid repeating them.

Here is what Huntington wrote in his study of the third democratic wave: "23 of the 29 states that democratized between 1974 and 1990 had prior democratic experience. <...> Most of the countries that were authoritarian in 1974 and did not democratize until 1990 had no such experience. Thus, it can be said that in 1974, an excellent way to predict whether an authoritarian country would democratize in the future was to understand whether it had democratic experience at all."[1]

Or here is another one, also from Huntington: "In the 1970s, many authoritarian regimes faced problems with their legitimacy because of previous democratic experience. One could say that the public consciousness in them has been infected with the democratic virus, and even if the previous democratic experience in them cannot be recognized as successful, it has become ingrained in the minds of the people that a truly legitimate government must be democratic. Authoritarian rulers there are thus forced to justify their claims to power with democratic rhetoric and to prove that it is their regimes that are truly democratic".

Why can't the domestic authorities decide to cancel the elections, despite the fact that they would like to do so very much? Simply because it would be an extremely unpopular decision. Despite the apologists of the theory of

1 Huntington, S. The third wave. Democratization in the late twentieth century. University of Oklahoma press, 1993. P. 44.

“uniqueness of the Russian civilization” love for statements of the opposite kind, our public consciousness is also infected with this very “democratic virus”. People do not always understand how exactly the institutions of democracy and the rule of law should function, but they certainly have the desire to make their voices heard, to enjoy freedom of choice and a set of inalienable rights.

From time to time, the Levada Center conducts surveys to measure which rights are most in demand for citizens. Here is an important pattern: in recent years, the priority has begun to shift clearly from those rights that can be called material, in favor of those that are political in nature. Thus, if in 2017 70% of the population named the right to medical care among the most important rights, by the end of 2021 this figure fell to 62%. The number of people who prioritized the right to social protection and a decent standard of living fell from 57% to 52%. The right to work, good working conditions and fair pay fell from 56% to 51%, and the right to free education fell from 59% to 49%. At the same time, demand for freedom of speech rose from 34% to 61% over the same time. The number of respondents who prioritized the right to a fair trial increased from 50 to 62%; the right to receive information—from 25 to 39%; the right to freedom from violence, humiliation and arbitrariness—from 38 to 44%; freedom of conscience—from 22 to 36%; the right to participate in public and political life—from 16 to 26%. The number of people who prioritized freedom of peaceful assembly, marches, rallies and associations has exactly doubled—from 13 to 26%. The issues of inviolability of property and home, as well as the right to own private property are not political in the strict sense of the word, but in today’s Russian conditions, the growing demand for them can be safely linked to the growing problem of state arbitrariness. So, the importance of the first problem has increased from 46% to 53%, and the second one has grown from 40% to 46%. In general, the trend is quite telling: in the last years before the war, society was gradually politicized, demonstrating a clear bias towards the values of democracy and the rule of law. As for the simultaneous decline in the Russians’ interest in material rights, it proves that the country’s citizens live “not by bread alone” and are not strangers to a certain political romanticism—a thing absolutely necessary for democratic transit.

It also makes sense to familiarize ourselves with the data of the CIRCON survey conducted in the spring of 2021. At that time, sociologists specifically checked the attitude of citizens to some “anti-democratic” statements actively used by supporters of the current government, and found out that they are not as popular as is commonly believed. Choosing between the wording “to achieve a higher goal or public good it is sometimes possible to go beyond the law” and the statement that “it is impossible under any circumstances to step over the

existing laws", 33% of respondents agreed with the first option, and 55% with the second one. Choosing between the statement "the interests of the state are more important than the interests of individual citizens" and the wording "the interests of citizens are more important than the interests of the state", 26% of respondents spoke in favor of the state, and 59% in favor of citizens. When asked whether elections should always be alternative or in some situations non-alternative elections can be allowed, 87% stated that there should always be an alternative. Only 7% said they were committed to the opposite viewpoint.

I will also refer to my personal experience. In 2015, at the height of the "Crimean consensus", we conducted a series of focus groups in one Russian region. Among other things, we asked the respondents: should local authorities—and they were quite highly rated—always be guided by people's opinion, or should they be able to sometimes go against public opinion, especially in situations where they have to make a strategically correct but unpopular decision? All the participants said that the authorities should always follow the wishes of the residents. The moderator began to clarify: "But sometimes there are situations when the decision proposed by people is populist. At first glance it looks good, but in the end it turns out to be wrong". He gave an example: "A couple of years ago you were building several interchanges, and people were dissatisfied. If you had asked them then, they would have stopped the construction, but now everyone is happy—the traffic jams are less. Does it mean that the authorities, who insisted on their own way at that time against the opinion of the local population, were right?" The majority remained in their opinion: the authorities should not make decisions that ignore people's opinion under any circumstances.

In general, democracy—at least at the normative level—has already sprouted in Russia. I find Huntington's comparison with a virus apt. Many viruses work like this: they are invisibly present in the organism and, while the organism is strong, do not manifest themselves in any way. However, when the organism weakens, the virus comes into action. The Russian government is weakening now.

Do not mix political and economic reforms

Speaking about the upcoming democratic reforms, it should be remembered that they do not start in a vacuum, but in the conditions of a specific political situation, so the attitude of the population to them will be determined not only by their content, but also by the specifics of the moment. It is one thing if democratization is undertaken by a retreating regime, which will try to adapt to public demand and preserve itself in this way, and quite another if reforms are proposed by a new, not yet discredited power. In the first case, the reformers

will have no margin for error; in the second case, people are likely to agree to delay the result and give them some latitude for exercise of their judgment.

What matters is who will be part of the ruling coalition: whether it will be moderate politicians in the spirit of Alexander Kerensky, or whether radicals like the Bolsheviks will seize power. Who starts the reforms will also determine who will be among its critics. If the changes are launched by the notional Mikhail Gorbachev, he will be pressured from the right by the notional Boris Yeltsin. He will discredit the reformers' actions as half-hearted, insufficient, and too slow. It will not be easy to consolidate public support for the moderates in this situation═much more difficult than for the new Yeltsin, against whom only "former"[2] power-holders will be opposed.

It will be crucial how the war with Ukraine ends. If it ends in an obvious and irrefutable defeat for the Russian army, the demoralized supporters of authoritarianism will not be able to raise their heads for a long time. They will literally go to their kitchens and drink bitter liquor, complaining about "what a country they missed". If the results of the war are not crushing and allow for a double interpretation, there will be no complete demobilization of the z-camp. In this case, the reformers will have a much harder time.

In general, it is impossible to outline the exact scenario, according to which the transformations will take place. However, we can try to outline some general patterns and give some recommendations.

What we can be sure of is that the **organizers of the upcoming transformations will have a much easier time than their predecessors from the 90s**. First, such unpopular steps as mass privatization are not expected now. If redistribution of property does happen, it will not be a transformation of public property into private property. Rather, it will be a movement in the opposite direction - the unjustly acquired property of Putin's oligarchs will be seized from them by means of court decisions either in favor of the state or in favor of those owners from whom they took it away under Putin. The citizens of the country will have no reason to be indignant about this. To defend the Kovalchuk's and Rotenberg's? Please! Moreover, it will not be difficult to add popularity to what is happening. In his book "How to Slay the Dragon?" Mikhail Khodorkovsky proposes that part of the money confiscated from Putin's entourage be used to fill a special fund to finance social expenditures. There is no doubt that if this step is taken, it will

2 Of course, moderate supporters of reform will also criticize the radical reformers, but it will be easy to dismiss their criticism by counting the critics among the ranks of the "former".

significantly increase the stock of the reformers[3].

In general, most of the upcoming reforms will respond to public demand. Creation of an independent judiciary and abandonment of the telephone law? People have been dreaming about this for a long time. Decentralization of the country's governance system in the form of a return to the principles of federalism and filling the institution of local self-government with real content? It is hard to think of anything more popular.

As noted above, at the normative level, the ideals of democracy and the rule of law have been practically internalized by Russians. It will not be necessary to impose values that are incomprehensible and alien to the people. In addition, from the institutional point of view, the situation now is much easier than in the early 90s. The basic structures of democracy═competitive elections, multi-party system, separation of powers═have been formed long ago, there is no need to create them from scratch. All that is needed is to fill them with real content. There are some stumbles to be anticipated here, but it is not at all like in the case of the USSR, when the reformers had no opportunity to rely on the previous institutional environment at all.

One of the most important problems of the 1990s was the overlap between structural economic reforms and political transformations. The former triggered a process known in the literature as initial capital accumulation. The spirit of the era of such accumulation usually turns out to be very mercantile and cynical. The ideals of public service═essential for political reforms═are very difficult, almost impossible, to germinate in such situations. In a situation when everyone around "makes money", when billion-dollar fortunes appear overnight, and the nouveau riche become the idols of the youth and the new "masters of life", it is very difficult for politicians to refuse the temptation to direct their influence not to the realization of the vested interests of the groups of influence besieging them, but to the search for an ideal balance of power, the protection of the principle of freedom of speech, democratization and other abstractions.

Countries such as the USA or Great Britain were much luckier in this sense than Russia. Their processes of formation of democratic institutions and capitalist

3 Finding the optimal balance between the theme of democratic reforms and the ideals of redistributive justice will be the greatest test of political skill for a future democratic government. It will have to walk a razor's edge: to give the major groups of the population a sense of restoring justice through redistribution of national wealth from the rich to the poor, without alienating the core of democratic supporters who may perceive such steps as populism.

relations were not compressed into a few years. They occurred gradually, over a relatively prolonged period of time. The periods of dominance of the values of wild capitalism alternated there with more “romantic” epochs of democratic reforms, rather than overlapping and blocking them, as was the case with us in the 90s. The latter grew very organically out of the former. The progressive era in the United States, for example, was made possible precisely because of public demand, which was formed as a reaction to outrage over the numerous abuses of the “gilded age”. The same can be said of the democratic reforms of the Victorian era, which grew out of the excesses of the enclosure period and the Industrial Revolution of the late eighteenth century.

The post-Soviet elites were, in fact, children of the democratic revolution, and a certain “romanticism” could be expected from these people. Revolutions always bring a considerable number of romantics to the surface. Actually, this is how societies renew themselves═by bringing to power people who share the lofty ideals of democracy and human rights. In our country, unfortunately, these people have not established themselves in politics, at least not in leading roles. In addition to the lack of lustration vis-à-vis the prior regime, they were hindered by the fact that economic reforms were launched simultaneously with political transformations in the country. State property was becoming private, the smell of fabulous wealth was in the air, and this prevented them from engaging in selfless politics. The temptation of big money was too great, and there was simply no room for idealism to establish itself in its presence. As Vasily Klyuchevsky said on another occasion, “the clash of political ideas was accompanied by a struggle of economic fortunes”.

I think it makes sense for the new Russian regime to learn a lesson from all this for the future. Of course, it will not be possible to completely separate the topics of democratic reforms and redistribution of accumulated wealth. Both will have to be dealt with. But the authorities will have to demonstrate their intention to distance one from the other as much as possible. A veritable “Chinese wall” will have to be erected between people and institutions that will be involved in these things, much like the one used in investment banking. Perhaps it would make sense to create a system of specialized tribunals, which would be separate from the courts of general jurisdiction, to hear lawsuits to confiscate the property of Putin’s entourage and return it to its former owners. This idea may seem absurd to the current Russian establishment, but, strictly speaking, going into politics does not necessarily imply personal enrichment as a goal. Political corruption exists in all countries, but in many it is the exception, not the rule.

The public must see that the new government recognizes the problem and is trying to fight it. Given the fact that Putin's regime has a reputation for being very corrupt, it will be easiest for the new government to gain public support by demonstratively addressing the abuses of its predecessor on this very topic. Various anti-corruption programs, projects, inspections, and the constant demonstrative implementation and use of the world's best practices in this area should become a constant backdrop for the actions of the post-Putin regime.

Keep a strong center under democratic control

Perhaps the most explosive problem that the new authorities will face will be the national question. The Soviet-era reformers once slipped on this very issue. And the Putin phenomenon also largely grew out of it. The fight against regional challenges, which the new president characterized as "stitching Russia together," became one of the Kremlin's key projects during Putin's first term.

There is no doubt that as soon as Russian regions feel the weakening of federal power, they will immediately swing sharply away from it. The pent-up impulse to criticize Moscow is enormous, both in the elites and among the population. Putin's supercentralization is so annoying to everyone that it will definitely not be possible to keep the situation within the current framework. In the course of the above-mentioned CIRCON poll, pollsters asked Russians whether most of the taxes collected should go to the center at the federal level or whether they should remain in the regions and be distributed by the regional authorities. Only 14% spoke in favor of the center, while 77% supported the regions.

In national republics, such sentiments inevitably acquire an ethnic coloring. As soon as the ethnic intelligentsia feels that there is a little less metal in Moscow's voice, they will immediately start "reviving national cultures" and "preserving national identity". The imperial ideology has discredited itself and holds on solely through forceful administrative efforts. As soon as the power weakens, it will become clear that the "scruples" are rusty. As in the late 80s, an ideological vacuum will emerge, and ethno-nationalists will fill it in the same way. Their activation will definitely lead to the growth of discontent of a significant part of the Russian population: the latter will oppose such steps as the inclusion of national languages in school curricula as a compulsory subject, and this will certainly lead to the growth of bitterness of the most ethnically concerned groups of the local population. Contradictions as a result of such escalation can quickly escalate into violent inter-ethnic confrontation.

What will the new authorities be able to do in this situation?

The first hypothetical option is maximum concessions to the regions and decentralization. The problem is that the regions will not feel any sense of gratitude towards the reformers. As always happens in such cases, they will decide that they have achieved everything themselves and will demand more and more. At the same time, the "movement toward the collapse of Russia" will lead to growing dissatisfaction in the field of federal public opinion. There will be a very serious risk here: the threat of Russia's disintegration, having been put on the agenda, is capable of mobilizing the supporters of authoritarianism who have fallen out of politics again[4]. It will be difficult for them to consolidate significant groups of voters by fighting against democratic reforms per se, but a narrative calling for a halt to the country's disintegration is quite capable of doing so. In addition, it should be borne in mind that new "sultanates" may start to emerge in the regions═undemocratic regimes that rely on local nouveau riche PMCs, which are now being actively created═and this will also work against the reformers. All this will contribute to the strengthening of the demand for "restoring order" and "restoring the rule of law.

Of course, the new government may try to take a tough stance: economic and cultural decentralization in certain amounts═yes, political═no. The problem is that there will surely be regions that will insist on their own way. What to do with them? Will the new government have the resources to use force against them? Hardly. First of all, the majority of the country's citizens will not approve of such a scenario, and it will be difficult for the new democratic government to ignore public opinion. Even if they try to "pound their fist on the table," the result will be unconvincing═like Yeltsin's during the First Chechen War. You will not gain the votes of supporters of the "united and indivisible", but you will lose the support of a significant part of the liberal camp.

But even if the new authorities ignore public opinion, they will still not be able to motivate the army. Attempts to use force may lead to something like

4 To imagine how this could happen, it is enough to recall the history of Hitler's entry into politics. As is known, the first step in it for the future Führer was to join the newly formed German Workers' Party, which he later led and transformed into the NSDAP. He was invited to join after a passionate speech against the idea of secession of Bavaria, which he delivered at a party meeting in a beer hall in Munich. As the future creator of the Third Reich later recalled in "Mein Kampf": "I had had enough and was about to leave, when suddenly it was announced that there would now be a free discussion. I decided to listen <...> the professor suddenly declared that he was ready to stand "on the ground of facts", but nevertheless advises the young party most strongly that it should add to its program one important point, namely the separation of Bavaria from Prussia. <...> Here I could not stand it and also signed up among those who wished to speak. I sharply reprimanded the learned professor and as a result, even before I had time to finish my speech, my learned professor ran away like a watered-down dog." After the speech, the party members invited Hitler to join their ranks, he agreed, and what happened next is well known.

what happened during the Chechen campaign: the military did not understand the logic of what was happening, because from their point of view Chechnya did almost nothing that Tatarstan and Bashkortostan did not do, but the federal authorities not only did not touch those people, but even encouraged them, while ordering them to be killed. In this situation, the army was completely incapable of doing anything convincing. Its actions made sense only in 1999, when terrorists tried to invade Russia. If the new separatists do nothing of the sort, it will be extremely difficult to hold them back by force.

If we take the power scenario out of the picture, the only way to convince the supporters of secession to remain within Russia remains bribery. They would have to give them so many resources and powers that the federal center would retain only one name in its relations with them. At the same time, there is a risk that other regions will follow the pioneers. "If they can do it, why can't we?"—it is hard to argue with this logic. All this will quickly discredit the new government, and at the same time discredit the reforms it is carrying out. Power that does not manage anything is not respected.

This scenario should be avoided at all costs. It is better not to go further than a certain level of reasonable decentralization in their concessions to the regions. If one of them announces its intention to secede from the country, it is not necessary to give permission to do so. It is possible to take a position of non-recognition of such a step (strictly speaking, from the point of view of the law, it cannot be recognized), but refuse attempts to keep the separatists within Russia by force. Negotiations on the fate of the region can be postponed for 5 or 10 years. Faced with the difficulties of independent existence, it may change its mind. The world knows the history of such reversals: for example, Scotland, with its centuries-old tradition of fighting for independence, voted in the 2014 referendum to remain part of the United Kingdom.

When solving the problem of ethno-separatism, it is important not to fall into pathos and emotions. It is necessary to realize that the national republics demand secession not out of malice, but because they, in fact, judge that they have no choice. The logic is roughly as follows: "We could stay within the united Russia on the terms of real federalism, but we already know that Moscow gives us federalism today and takes it away tomorrow. To stay with it means to depend on its mood, and we do not want that.

The only thing that can be done in this situation is to try to explain to the representatives of the regions that reasonable decentralization can be preserved only together, through joint efforts. The formula is simple: if you demand too much for yourselves, you will wait until another Putin comes to replace us and

nail you. The leaders of the national republics of the 90s made this mistake—they dismantled the country practically into spare parts and provoked a powerful surge of demand for centralization, to which their republics fell victim. Do not repeat their mistakes.

We can try to negotiate with the leaders of the federalist movement something like the Moncloa Pact, through which Spanish politicians were once able to ensure a relatively smooth transition from authoritarianism to democracy. The builders of the new regime must agree to self-restrain their appetites. The problem here is not only that compromise is not honored in Russian politics (it used to be so in Spain, just remember the Civil War), but also that Russian liberals tend to recognize only the individual rights of citizens, considering the collective rights of nations and other social groups to be empty sounds. Liberals will certainly be tempted to ignore the demands of the ethnic intelligentsia, a scenario best avoided because ignoring them will alienate regions and build up the potential for an explosion.

In general, it will be necessary to strengthen those institutions that "centralize" the political process, such as parties, and, where possible, weaken those players working to promote centrifugal forces. One potentially serious problem is the underestimation of the role of political parties by representatives of the Russian opposition movement. In his aforementioned book, Khodorkovsky criticizes parties for being weak, suggesting that they should instead rely on federalism and regions. But if parties remain weak, neither federalism nor regions will save democracy. It is necessary to create conditions for strengthening the institution of parties, not to look for something to replace them with. The first thing that can be done is to abandon single-member districts and switch to a proportional system of electing Duma deputies. Perhaps it would make sense to implement a similar measure with regard to regional legislative assemblies.

At the moment, regional elites are the key instrument for weakening parties. By controlling the local electoral process and ensuring the election of the necessary single-mandate candidates, they make the latter dependent on themselves and further on the Kremlin. A single-mandate candidate is loyal to the one who ensured his election, and this is an administrative resource. The party is secondary for a single-mandate candidate.

This state of affairs will continue for some time after the fall of the regime. It should be understood that in the Russian provinces, in many parts of the country, local elites have a rather tight control over the electorate. Replacing Putin with a democratic government will not automatically change this situation. If you are the director of a city-forming enterprise, and there is no other work in

the district, then regardless of what happens in Moscow, here in the hinterland, you will win any election for a long time to come. Especially if in the conditions of general chaos you have managed to get your own PMC.

We should be prepared for the fact that even after the fall of the current regime, for some period of time the province will send local “masters of life” or their proxies to the parliament. If they join forces, they can create serious problems for the reformers and block many of the necessary changes.

To avoid such developments, it is better to centralize the mechanisms for nominating candidates and forming the electoral agenda. This is why we need to abandon single-mandate constituencies and switch to party list voting. The first post-revolutionary elections should be elections on key issues of big politics, and local barons with their promises to solve all the problems of the district should have no place there. The parliament that will reform Russia will need lawmakers, not lobbyists for local interests. After all, the population has governors to take care of the latter.

Yes, nowadays it seems strange to talk about the need to centralize the political process. In conditions of total centralization, it seems relevant to think about exactly the opposite. But the need for decentralization is so obvious and the demand for it so strong that it will happen anyway. Thousands of agents all over the country will demand and organize it. The center will not be able to oppose it. This is when the threat will arise that we will throw the baby out with the bath water.

In keeping with Russia’s long-standing tradition of going from extreme to extreme, the supporters of reforms will rush to break up the hated system, eventually bringing it to collapse. Only fans of abstractions—people unable to feel the dynamics of the political process, unable to realize that this is the moment when the main threat to post-Putin democratic reforms will emerge.

As I have already mentioned, putting the issue of the country’s disintegration on the agenda will mobilize conservative groups of the population and give Putin-type politicians a chance to once again tread the path to their hearts (“the fatherland is in danger”). This very activation of conservatives may bury the hope for successful democratization of Russia. To prevent this from happening, the reformers themselves must be concerned about its territorial integrity. The electoral system must also be appropriate. Only in this case will decentralization have a meaningful character and will not turn, as happened with the USSR, into a rampage of destructive elements. Then a new “collector of Russian lands” will not appear in the end.

The dismissive attitude towards the institution of political parties (they are unpopular and outdated), which is so typical of contemporary Russian politics, is completely unacceptable. Obsolete, yes—they have been talking about it in the West for a long time, 30 years at least—but mankind has not yet come up with anything else to replace parties. Certainly, other institutions, such as the media, can perform some of their functions, but in general, there is nothing to replace them.

It should be understood that the democratization of Russia will lead to the growth of political participation of the masses, and parties are the main organizational form of such participation. After all, a party is nothing more than an association of concerned citizens who share certain values and have similar political ideas. Why, for example, did England and America 100 years ago avoid revolution, but Russia did not? Industrialization and the formation of the working class took place there during the 19th century. It too was exploited and sought social and then political rights. There were strikes and armed clashes with the police, but there were no revolutions. Because in these countries, unlike in Russia, strong party systems had already been formed by the time the new groups began to enter politics. The political infrastructure of these countries was able to integrate the new participants in the political process, channeling their energy in a peaceful direction.

The formula for the sustainability of modernizing societies has long been known: the rate of institutionalization of political systems must exceed the rate of politicization of the population. Before granting political rights to the previously deprived subjects, it is necessary to create an infrastructural environment within which their politicization will take place. The most important element of this environment is parties.

It is extremely important to understand that for the reforms to succeed, it will be necessary to maintain the country's governability, not only in terms of relations between the center and the regions, but also in terms of the distribution of power at the national level. It will be very difficult to do this, because preserving governability will contradict the naturally dominant desire to weaken the political center as much as possible after the fall of authoritarianism.

One should keep in mind that after the regime change, it will not be easy to speak on behalf of the state institutions that discredited themselves under Putin. In any conflict between the federal bureaucracy and representatives of civil society, the media, intellectuals, Russian regions, Ukraine, the international community, and so on, public opinion will always side with the latter. Literally everyone will proceed from the presumption of the state's guilt—even a

significant part of the bureaucracy. The latter will literally have complexes.

This moment will be the most dangerous trap that will arise in the path of the Russian government and Russian society. The temptation to cure the headache with the guillotine will be very great. The number of those willing not only to disassemble Putin's shabby establishment, but also to smash the very building in which it sat, will be enormous (remember the peasants' age-old love of pogroms at the baronial estates). It will be very difficult to defend the legitimate interests of the state in such an atmosphere.

The key question to be answered by future Russian reformers is how centralized the country's next political system should be. On the one hand, if the society wants to avoid a revival of authoritarianism, it seems natural to decentralize as much as possible and create numerous counterbalances to the main subject of power. On the other hand, Russians have gotten used to a "strong hand" and if they do not see it for a long time—especially if its absence coincides with a decline in living standards—they may desire it again. Then there will be a risk of the emergence of a new Putin, demanding "order".

In order to avoid such a scenario, there should not be a feeling of "powerlessness" in the country. For this purpose, a strong political center will have to be preserved, while ensuring strict democratic control over it.

In order to understand what we are talking about, it makes sense to compare two states between which we tend to equate, although we should not do so in any case—the USA and Great Britain. In their search for an optimal balance between the principles of democratic representativeness and managerial efficiency, they took completely different paths. The Americans preferred to decentralize the system, basing it on the principle of checks and balances; the British put the ideals of governability at the forefront.

At the height of the 2008 financial crisis, British Treasury Chairman Alistair Darling, who had just approved the issuance of government guarantees to local banks, publicly commented on how pleased he was that "unlike many of my foreign colleagues, I have the power to make such decisions—despite the Bank of England's opposition—without having to seek parliamentary approval."5 Former American ambassador to Britain Raymond Seitz described it all as follows: "Thinking back to divided, factionalized American politics, a U.S. resident coming to Britain is surprised to see how free the British government feels. When I first started living here, in the 1970s, it took me a long time to

5 Wright, T. British politics. Oxford University press, 2013. P. 52.

realize that the British government, backed by a simple majority in the lower house, was free to do as it saw fit. <...> I looked for constitutional checks and institutional balances that might limit the power of the British government, but I couldn't find them"6 .

In the United States, the case is exactly the opposite. For example, Francis Fukuyama wrote about it in his famous article America in Decay: "The institutional priority of the United States, based on a long tradition of distrust of government characteristic of this country, has been the formation and development of institutions that limit the state, such as courts and legislatures. The author elaborates that those governmental functions "which in Europe are realized by the efforts of a bureaucratic apparatus managed by the executive branch, in America are performed by courts and legislators". Discussing the American state structure, Fukuyama uses the concept of vetocracy. He writes that the U.S. has historically been fixated on forming a system of checks and balances, which eventually led to a marked decline in the efficiency of the state machine, at times resembling paralysis. The researcher contrasts America with Britain: "The complete opposite is the so-called Westminster system, which developed in England in the years following the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It is one of the most determined in the democratic world, and in its purest form contains very few restraints. On a large scale, the people of Britain have only one serious formal tool by which they can limit the omnipotence of their government-the right to elect a parliament from time to time (the tradition of a free media is another serious informal constraint). For everything else, the system does not so much distribute power as concentrate it. A pure Westminster system has only one all-powerful legislative chamber—no separate president, no strong upper house, no written constitution against which the courts can test existing legislation, no federalism, no constitutionally enshrined powers of local government. Plus a majoritarian electoral system, which, multiplied by strong party discipline, reproduces a two-party system and a strong parliamentary majority".

Speaking of the powers of the first person in America, one cannot help but quote its former president Harry Truman: "All I do all day long is try to persuade people to do what they really ought to do without me. That's the only right I have." Commenting on General Eisenhower's election as president, Truman said: "Poor Ike, he'll sit behind a desk and start commanding: do this, do that ... and nothing will happen. This isn't the Army, after all.»7

6 Ibid., PP. 12—13.

7 Cited in: Brown, A. The myth of the strong leader. Political leadership in the modern age. Basic books,

I have allowed myself such long quotes because I believe it is extremely important to convey to the Russian audience the idea that the problem is much deeper than the choice between democracy and authoritarianism. Democracies also come in many forms, and how convincing it will be in the eyes of the country's citizens depends on how well Russian reformers choose the appropriate form of democracy.

In conclusion, let me remind you that even in America, with its long tradition of distrust of bureaucracy, the structures least controlled by society—the military, intelligence agencies, and the Federal Reserve - are the most favored by the population. They are respected for their ability to get things done. The House of Representatives, the most democratic structure, enjoys the least support of citizens precisely because it is mired in discussions and is not capable of doing anything.

Fukuyama's point, quoted above, about the long tradition of distrust in government, which he uses to explain why the American political system is the way it is, is important in one sense. In shaping a system of political institutions, one must take these traditions into account. Yes, they are often outmoded and unnecessary, so sometimes you have to be able to discard them. But even in this case, they should be kept in mind, if only to realize that this is where the problem with public opinion will arise. If a tradition can be not discarded, if it can be taken into account at least in some small part, if it can be built into a new system without a great damage to its quality, then it is better to do it.

Reforms will have to be explained not only through "it's better this way," but also through "this is the way things have always been done in Russia. The builders of post-Putin Russia will need to glorify the Russian democratic tradition. If you look, for example, at how Reagan justified the need for his "right turn" and compare it to how Russian liberals of the 1990s explained their reforms, you will see that the former promoted their ideals not so much because they were right, but because they were native American. Reagan said that by a fateful coincidence the US had once veered to the left, but now it was time to return to its roots. Russian liberals appealed not to history, but to logic. It doesn't matter how things used to be, it's important to do it the right way; this social order is right, and this one, on the contrary, is wrong. **The failure of the Russian liberals of the 1990s showed that history has a greater appeal in the eyes of voters than logic**. Russian liberals of the future will have to broaden the range of arguments

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they use by emphasizing their own history. After all, Russia is not just Ivan the Terrible and Stalin. Our past has seen the very democratic Novgorod Republic, the Zemstvo Sobors, the Boyar Dumas, the Nestiazhatels (Trans-Volga Elders, or "Non-Possessors"), and the reforms of Alexander II. After all, it is about our ancestors that Procopius of Caesarea wrote: "These tribes, Slavs and Ants, are not governed by one person, but from ancient times live in the rule of law, and therefore regarding all happy and unhappy circumstances they make decisions together. There are many such things, and they will have to be brought to the surface, inflating their importance in every way possible. Liberals will have to give conservatives a fight for their own version of Russian history.

In general, it is necessary to keep in mind one important psychological feature of a successful revolution. The majority goes into it not so much for the sake of building a new society as in order to restore the trampled "ancestral order". The narrative of this trampling is an important part of revolutionary discourse. During the English Bourgeois Revolution, its leaders explained to their followers that the royalists were the descendants of the Normans who had destroyed traditional English liberties, while the revolutionaries were the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons whose time for revenge had finally arrived. The leaders of the French Revolution said that the common people in their country were descended from the freedom-loving Gauls and Romans, while the aristocracy was descended from the usurping Franks. These interpretations made the revolutionaries appear to most people not so much as creators of something unprecedented, but as people fighting to restore the "golden age" that had once existed in their countries.

By popularizing this view of history, revolutionaries gain a "moment of strength" because they have the "laws of nature" on their side. This should never be neglected, because the majority of voters, all other things being equal, always favor those whom they consider to be the future winners. It is worth remembering the attention paid to the introduction of the thesis of the "historical predetermination" of the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie by the Bolsheviks. In general, the creation of a feeling of naturalness of the chosen path is the most important factor of success, so it should not be neglected.

Lustrations must be Carefully Considered and Implemented

Another important factor that will influence the public's attitude towards the new government will be the issue of restoring justice—that is, the punishment of the former leadership for crimes committed while in power and subsequent lustration. During the previous round of democratic reforms, in the 90s, the issue

of punishment was not so acute, because in the years preceding its fall, the Soviet nomenklatura was democratized and eventually gave up power almost without a fight. Why punish those who realized everything themselves and took the path of correction? The opposite is true of the current Kremlin: it is not softening, but is moving toward outright dictatorship. Therefore, the question of responsibility of the current officials for the committed atrocities will come to the very center of the agenda after the democrats come to power.

It is very important to separate the topics of punishment and lustration. They are often confused, and this confusion can cause a lot of problems. The main task of lustration is not to punish criminals. If someone has committed a specific crime, he must be brought to justice. Lustration has nothing to do with it. The **purpose of lustration is to ensure that as few people as possible who share the values of the old regime end up in state bodies**. In order for the measure to work, it is necessary to understand which structures of the former government are filled with above-average carriers of the Kremlin's ideology in order to restrict their rights without restricting the rights of other citizens. In my opinion, membership in United Russia should not serve as such a criterion. People were forced into the party against their will. In some cases, they were signed up in bulk, by entire labor collectives. During the 2011 Duma election campaign, while working as deputy head of the administration of the head of Bashkortostan, I and my colleagues organized an anonymous survey of rank-and-file members of party organizations in two cities of the republic about their electoral preferences. United Russia's rating among party members turned out to be roughly equal to the average for these localities and amounted to just over 30%. That is, out of three party members, only one was going to vote for the United Russia party, and two were in opposition. If we restrict the rights of all unanimous activists, it will turn out that two out of three will suffer innocently.

There is a widespread view among American experts that the failure of democratic transition in post-Saddam Iraq was largely due to the hasty and rather arbitrary implementation of the program of "de-Baathification" of the country (the name is derived from the name of the ruling party of the Saddam era, the Baath Party). The interim coalition administration that took over the country after the overthrow of the Hussein regime fired not only the heads of all government agencies, but also a huge number of mid-level employees, including 40,000 school teachers who had once joined the party simply because there was no other way for them to keep their jobs. The result was a paralysis of the public administration system, because of which many of those fired had to be brought back. This was the worst possible scenario: first, the new authorities demonstrated "injustice" and unseemly "haste," and then "weakness" - backsliding. According

to the expert community, decree number two was an even bigger mistake. With it, the interim government dissolved the Iraqi army. Half a million people who could handle weapons were left without means of subsistence and decided that it was not worth relying on the justice of the new authorities. It was the former military men who made up a significant part of the militants of those groups that plunged the country into years of chaos and civil war.

Many opponents of the current Russian regime believe that the phenomenon of Putinism was possible precisely because no lustration was carried out in Russia. This is a very strong oversimplification, and it is not at all certain that lustration—had it been carried out—would have made a return to authoritarianism impossible. Of the three domestic policy supervisors who worked under Putin, only one—former Komsomol leader Sergei Kiriyenko—would have been subject to lustration. Neither Vladislav Surkov nor Vyacheslav Volodin could be lustrated in any way.

If we look at the post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe, we see that the greatest risk to democracy there is posed by Viktor Orban in Hungary and the Law and Justice party in Poland. Neither Orban nor the Kaczynski brothers, who founded Law and Justice, were subject to the lustration law. They were not representatives of the communist regime. On the contrary, they came from the ranks of the opposition. They were the ones who once overthrew the Communists. “Law and Justice” is still demanding the broadening of the law on lustration from the civil service to the private sector.

Lustration does not necessarily imply a priori restriction of rights. In some Eastern European countries, such as Poland, when applying for a job in the public administration, applicants were for a long time required only to fill out a declaration in which they had to describe their relationship with the former regime. He was disqualified from holding public office only if it turned out that he had concealed something from his past. After 2015, however, the lustration legislation in Poland was slightly tightened, for which the country was criticized by the European institutions.

At the same time, it is also impossible to say that lustration is not necessary at all. Both the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights have supported the right of states to organize lustration processes. The latter, in its ruling, even gave the following analogy: “The fall of the Weimar Republic was caused, among other things, by the fact that the state, having misinterpreted the principles of liberalism, paid insufficient attention to the political views of civil servants, judges and military officers.

Cynthia Horn of Western Washington University, who studied lustrations in

12 post-communist countries in Eastern Europe, concluded that fully organized lustrations increase the chance of building successful democracies by 30% compared to countries that did not have lustrations.

The attempt to shield the spheres of politics and public service from people capable of supporting the destruction of democracy in a country that was recently authoritarian seems quite logical. After all, there are many other occupations in life besides politics, so people who have been stained by the disreputable deeds of the former regime and have fallen under suspicion can look for themselves in something else. But it should be understood that by restricting the passive suffrage of those whom the new authorities suspect of anti-democratic aspirations, it simultaneously restricts the active suffrage of other people who have done nothing wrong before the new authorities. Lustration leads to a restriction of political supply on the electoral market. Will citizens be delighted by this? It is impossible to say now. I think that their final attitude to this issue will be formed at the last moment and will depend on how civilized the outgoing regime will behave. It is one thing if everything goes like in Poland, where the communists first sat down with the opposition at the negotiating table and then allowed it to take part in the elections, and quite another if, like Ceausescu, they give the security forces a command to open fire on the protesters.

In choosing a punishment strategy, it is best to conduct a serious social survey. People should be asked whether they want their right to elect who they consider worthy to be restricted by the new government, which pre-filters candidates, or whether they prefer to have full freedom of choice and the opportunity to vote for supporters of the former regime. If they want the latter, it is dangerous to restrict them in this desire. Overly intensive restrictions on the rights of the former nomenklatura may lead to delegitimization of the new power and its loss of sustainability.

Reformers will have to decide not only whether the country needs lustration, but also how centralized or decentralized it should be. In East Germany, for example, the lustration process was quite decentralized; there was no single body in charge of lustration, so each institution dealt with it on its own. This gave a chance to deal with each story individually═to understand how malicious the violation of norms was on the part of this or that citizen, how severe the consequences were, whether there were mitigating circumstances, and so on.

In general, it should be understood that in addition to ridding the system of dangerous - anti-democratic - elements, the most important purpose of lustration is to increase confidence in the political system. Since the previous regime

was declared criminal, the presence in the structure of the new government of people who served it faithfully and truthfully will reduce trust in it. Democracy is based on trust, and this trust must be achieved.

Prepare the Marshall Plan Now

When talking about how to maximize popular support for reforms, one cannot fail to mention at least in passing the international aspect.

After all the problems Russia has caused the international community in recent years, it is no exaggeration to say that determining the nature of the future post-Putin regime will be one of the most important strategic challenges the West will face. **Putin's departure will give Russia a chance, and it will need to seize it**. Sliding into the abyss of another authoritarianism is not in the interests of the Russians themselves or the rest of the world community. Only by preventing it will the world be able to feel at ease.

I think that what has been written by the Western elites has long been obvious, so they are unlikely to want to let the process go as it happened after the collapse of the USSR. Europe and America will try to supervise the construction of a new Russia as carefully as they did in the case of post-war Germany.

Let me remind you that the idea of the Marshall Plan was not the only one at that time and was not the first to emerge. It was preceded by the so-called Morgenthau Plan. It was supposed to deindustrialize Germany and turn it into the sum of poor agricultural territories. Fortunately for the Germans, and for the rest of the world, pragmatism prevailed over emotion in the ranks of the victorious Allies, and the negative Morgenthau project was replaced by the positive Marshall Plan. It was decided that the Germans could become a full-fledged democracy only if their standard of living rose in the process of democratization. And so it happened.

I realize that now—at a time when there is war and people are dying in Ukraine—it seems sacrilegious to talk about the need to provide multibillion-dollar aid to an aggressor country. It seems much more logical to demand compensation for the damage caused. The best I can suggest in this situation is to look again at German history. Taxed with reparations at the end of the First World War, the Germans plunged the world into a new massacre. After receiving aid, they transformed themselves into one of the most peace-loving nations on the planet and a reliable bulwark of a democratic world order.

In our case, however, we are not just talking about the distant future. Formulated as a proposal for a new democratic Russia, the draft of a new Marshall

Plan could serve as a powerful stimulus for the growth of protest moods in the country right now. For now, Russians see enemies around them and therefore remain loyal to Putin, who "protects" them from those enemies. **If Russians become convinced that the world is not an enemy, they will not need Putin**.

The leak of Morgenthau's plan to the press in the fall of 1944 hurt the Allies badly. It helped Goebbels in mobilizing the Germans to fight to the end. After seeing what the Americans had in store for them, the people of Germany became convinced that the Nazi propagandists were right: it was really not about the future of the regime, but about the fate of the entire nation. As Republican presidential candidate Thomas Dewey said, "Now they fight with the desperate determination of a mad man."[8]. President Roosevelt's son-in-law wrote: according to front-line soldiers, the publication of the plan had the effect of adding 30 divisions to the Germans.

Some Russian voters, who initially opposed aggression, changed their attitude to it after it began. Now they are driven by the feeling that there is no turning back: "Once we have started, we must continue, otherwise we will be destroyed. The realization that no one is going to destroy them can turn these people from loyalists into oppositionists.

It is clear that Western governments are not yet willing to directly call for Putin's overthrow. Nor do they have to. The offer can be formulated without that. Suffice it to say that assistance will be provided after the establishment of a democratic regime in Russia and a change of foreign policy course from an aggressive to a peace-loving one.

I think that negotiations on a Marshall Plan for a new democratic Russia with all interested (and even disinterested) Western players═from governments and the public to representatives of the media and expert communities═should be one of the most important tasks for the Russian opposition now abroad. **At the moment of the collapse of the current regime, oppositionists should not return to Russia empty-handed.**

And there is no need to be afraid of accusations of "selling out the homeland". Firstly, the current government has been making these accusations for many years, so it will not be able to say anything new in this sense, and secondly, the mobilization of foreign aid to alleviate the situation of the country's inhabitants, who were robbed by the previous government, is definitely not a "selling out of the homeland".

8 Beschloss, Michael R. The Conquerors: Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler's Germany, 1941—1945. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002. P. 160.

Conclusion

Let me return to the above-mentioned topic of the tactical skill of the people who will implement reforms. Success will depend on it as much as on the content of the reforms. I mentioned that the political agenda will have to be shaped in such a way that it does not contribute to the consolidation of supporters of the conservative camp. For those who want to understand what exactly the steps directly leading in the above direction look like, I would like to recommend the little-known book by the French historian Augustin Cochin "Small People and Revolution", in particular its chapter "The 1789 election campaign in Burgundy"[9] .

It describes very scrupulously, in detail, the actions of the representatives of the lawyers' community, who acted as the main organizer of the campaign of the third estate. Trying to prevent the opponents from consolidating, they acted very soberly and effectively - no worse than professional political technologists. At the initial stage, in order not to stir up the two main enemy camps - the clergy and the nobility—they consciously minimized their demands. Rather than immediately announcing plans to push for serious substantive reforms, the lawyers limited themselves to procedural demands for a doubling of the quota of the third estate and for an all-party, rather than lineal, vote in future General States. They had a clear hierarchy of goals and realized that it would not be possible to achieve everything at once. They had to solve the first-order problems first, and then move on to the rest. That's what they eventually did. Unable to mobilize in time, the representatives of the upper classes lost the battle in the General Staff to the future revolutionaries. Incidentally, at the initial stage, they were able to take advantage of the tension that had accumulated in the relations between the government and the nobility, making the former their ally against the latter at some point. And then, when the time came, they overthrew the government as well.

Or here's another. A word to the author: "One can see how tactically skillful the party was from its first steps: any unsophisticated person would have asked the mayor to gather representatives of all the city corporations and propose them a draft petition. But the mayor could have refused, the more numerous assembly being fraught with unforeseen turnovers and difficult to manage. The Bar Committee prefers to call the corporations one by one, without too much noise, beginning with those where they have the most friends, the doctors and

9 Koshen O. Small People and Revolution. Moscow: Iris Press, 2004. PP. 21—44.

judges; in this way important minorities can be caught unawares and eliminated until they become acquainted with each other and unite. Then, as the number of recruits increases, the credibility increases: corporations not so close to the judiciary are convened, and in larger numbers; they are presented with a ready-made motion═cut and dried, as the English agitators say═which has already been voted on by powerful bodies; some are in collusion with lawyers; the decision of others is pressed by the weight of the agreements reached, and they vote: this is the snowball tactic."

Cochen is certainly no Tocqueville. He is far from being so authoritative, and many of his approaches raise questions in the political science community. Nevertheless, he did the research part of the work═the study of primary sources═perfectly, so he describes the technological component of the process very well. This is what we are interested in.

A great many supporters of democracy are worried, believing that "the Russian people respect exclusively the 'strong hand'". In fact, this is only half true. And the other half of the truth is that political demand is not something unchangeable. In politics, people's demands change just as their everyday needs change: as some needs are satisfied, others are actualized.

Everyone knows that when a society gets tired of upheavals and scandals, it begins to dream of stability, but if it is overfed with this stability, it will call it stagnation and want change. The same applies to a "strong leader": if he rules people for too long, they gradually develop a desire to see someone "caring" and "understanding the needs of ordinary people" in power. A "strong" leader, who is "strong" because he "doesn't make a fuss" and doesn't "coddle" his subordinates, is unable to satisfy this demand.

It should be understood that every image corresponds to an anti-image, and after a certain period of time, it is the latter that begins to dominate. Yes, for many years, Russians, tired of the "weakness" of first Gorbachev and then Yeltsin, waited for a "strong leader. In the end, God heard their prayers and sent them Putin. Exactly in accordance with the mandate he received, he began to satisfy the need for security and a sense of belonging to a "great power" that was pressing on society. He did it well, but as people became satiated, other desires began to take root. They wanted sympathy, justice, respect, wanted to be realized in politics (which the Kremlin carefully guarded from interference by outsiders), and so on. At some point, in terms of his ability to meet the new public demands, Putin hit a ceiling: you can't be everything to everyone. Unmet needs gradually began to dominate, and people began to realize that "power" was not the only quality a politician should possess, and perhaps not even the

most important one. People realized that a politician should also be fair, honest, care about ordinary people, etc. The “strong” Putin lacked all this, and given the fact that at times he abused his “strength” too much, it began to be perceived as a negative quality—it was no longer so much “strength” as “insolence”, “insolence”, “rudeness”, and, more recently, “cruelty”.

Yes, of course, those who say that getting an indoctrinated public to change their point of view is difficult, almost impossible. But the fact is that there are not so many truly indoctrinated people - far less than half. That is why experienced political technologists usually do not even try to change their minds during their campaigns. They do not consider it necessary to waste their time and energy on them. Political technologists proceed from the fact that they should work, first, with their own supporters, activating them and preventing them from falling out of the political process, and second, with those who are wavering. Everything depends on the latter. If it is possible to convince a critical mass of these people, multiplied by their mobilized supporters, they will create a sense of dynamics that will demoralize the enemy. He will suddenly feel that his position is turning from mainstream to marginal. In philosophy, this is called a Zeitgeist. Those groups that oppose it—however indoctrinated they may be—begin to lose the will to resist anyway. Over time, they sink into apathy, and then they drop out of politics altogether - they don’t go to elections or rallies.

Then—after the opposition wins and comes to power—a significant part of the formerly indoctrinated begins to adapt to the new order and new norms. It should be understood that in general, this is a very conformist public, so if the authorities do not look too “weak,” they, this public, will soon adapt to the new approaches. But if the authorities “mumble”, the formerly indoctrinated can become a base for supporters of the restoration of the old orders, so one should not “mumble” too much.

The moment when the indoctrinated supporters of the old regime are demoralized is a very important time. It is during this period that all the necessary institutional reforms should be carried out—the political infrastructure of a democratic state **should be recreated, the** principle of separation of powers **should be** restored and consolidated, federalism and local self-government should be re-established, the foundations of a normal decentralized economic system **should be** laid, and so on. This must be done before the Russians’ craving for a “strong hand” once again turns the wheel of history and makes the restoration of authoritarianism possible.

If it succeeds, Russia will have a unique chance to finally get out of the rut into which it has so far regularly slipped.

To conclude the chapter, I will once again list the main ideas and themes:

On the whole, Russian public opinion is ready for democratic reforms and the degree of its “authoritarian aspirations” is greatly exaggerated;

The political configuration as it will be by the time the democratic transit begins (the composition of the players, the degree of their mobilization, discrediting, etc.) will be decisive, so it is not possible to predict the course and logic of the process in advance;

Compared to the 90s, the transition will be much easier, because the scale of the forthcoming transformations is not comparable to what was carried out then; in the 90s there was a transition not only from authoritarianism to democracy, but also from socialism to capitalism;

The main danger that will threaten transition is the issue of redistribution of powers between the center and the regions, multiplied by the problem of interethnic relations;

The solution to the above problem will require special efforts in terms of creating institutions that will “centralize” the political process (political parties, appropriate electoral system, etc.);

The most important task of the reformers is to prevent excessive decentralization not only in relations with the regions, but also within the federal center; checks and balances are very important, but the manageability of the system will also need to be preserved;

The rhetoric of reformers should contain a component of references to the national democratic tradition; it should not look as if democratizers completely abolish the national origin;

Lustrations will be necessary, but they must not be abused; the new government must appear not only to be restoring justice through punitive measures, but also to be committed to national reconciliation;

The most important task of reformers is to ensure the growth of living standards or at least to prevent their sharp decline; democracy should not be associated with mass impoverishment. The position of the international community will be a crucial factor here - the international community must be asked to accept the necessity of formulating a credible new Marshall Plan;

No matter how popular the reforms are, they will still breed some number of dissatisfied people; the most important task of reformers is therefore to organize the process so that opponents of one reform do not ally themselves with opponents of another; the consistency of reforms in this sense is a key factor that will determine the ultimate success of the cause.