

When Will Educational Reforms in Russia Come to The End?

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Abstract—The radical breakdown of Soviet life order, that occurred in 1991-1993, required a fundamental change of society's ideological supports and institutions. The system of education, as one of such basic institutions, became the object of reforms, which have not been completed so far. A logical question about the goal of such reforms arises naturally, but it is hardly possible to get a response to it from governmental officials. To proceed not from declarations, but from real contents of these reforms, it becomes clear that they gear at adapting the tasks of education to the needs of the country "returned to the fold of the world civilization". The last notion was understood as part of Russia's integration into the system of global labor division as a primary resource supplier for economically developed countries of the capitalist core.

The Soviet system of education, oriented to providing the USSR with an independent place in the world as a superpower, became redundant under the new conditions. It was aimed at developing students' ability of comprehensive operational thinking. For a country whose claims are limited to the level of a regional power, it is enough to have just a few competent specialists to support its economy and defense capability at a level sufficient for the comfortable existence of local oligarchic elite. However, as it is shown by historical experience, the global elite views Russia as a country that suffered a crushing defeat in the Cold War, therefore, it is demanded a full and unconditional surrender. The Russian Federation has no choice but to rely on its own strengths in such situation. That means that reforms of the national educational system that have been going on for almost three decades in a row are in flagrant contradiction with this new reality. Russia faces a historic challenge and is able give an appropriate answer to it only one way – by restoring the Soviet educational system, its fundamental principles at the least. Only then the reform of education in the country will be finally over.

Keywords—*a reform of education in Russia; global labor division; a partial individual; versatile-developed personality; self-sufficiency of economy; historical subjectivity of Russia.*

I. INTRODUCTION

If you try to type the following phrase: "Education Reforms in Russia" in any Russian Internet search engines, it is highly likely that you will get a following heading in return: "This year education reforms will be continued" among many other search results. This headline is relevant both for 2018 and for two decades that precede it. Years pass by, and reforms, once started, are not completed yet. Throughout the

whole post-Soviet period of the Russian history, the education system is being continuously reformed with no visible finale.

II. CHANGES WITH NO END

Changes in the country's education system also occurred during the Soviet times, for example Khrushchev's attempts to "connect the school with real life". But there was no febrility in reforms, no permanent jolting and shaking, which became commonplace during the last quarter of the century. Looking back, it is easy to notice an amazing fact. During this period of on-going reforming it is impossible to find two consecutive years, when the education system was operating by the same rules. There was no consistency, except one – a consistency of never ending changes. So, in comparison with the large-scale cataclysms which the national educational system has experienced in the last quarter of a century, Khrushchev's experiments seem like a child's play, a small episode, a slight ripple on an ocean's surface.

Since the reforms of the education system directly or indirectly affect the interests of dozens of millions of people in Russia, they could not help attracting the attention of researchers. The extensive amount of literature, covering a variety of aspects - legal [4,10], humanitarian [2,13,17], social [3, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 18], economic [6, 9, 17, 19] and pedagogical [11,12] was devoted to these reforms. With all the diversity of approaches and points of view on the ongoing process, insufficient attention is paid to the question of its general historical meaning. This question implies another one: when will the reforms come to an end? No reform can last indefinitely, and the teaching community has the right to expect responsible officials to tell *urbi et orbi*, when the fever of transformations will finally be over. However, we have not heard any distinct explanations in this respect from the federal minister of education Vladimir Filippov, nor from his successors Andrey Fursenko, Dmitry Livanov, and Olga Vasilieva. The following is a brief outline of the author's own point of view on this issue.

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION SYSTEM AND WHERE ITS CHANGES LEAD RUSSIA

The system of education is one of the most important social institutions that supports the existing order and acts as the main instrument of its preservation [3, 19]. Any transformations of this institution are directly related to deep

processes taking place in the society and determined by the general logic of social development. Therefore, an analysis of the content of education system reforms in Russia inevitably leads to the question of the main purpose and the meaning of those radical changes that have happened in the country in the last three decades. An official ideology, aimed at legitimizing in people's eyes the demolition of the Soviet life order, was formulated by reformers as "a return to the bosom of the world civilization" [14,16].

The liquidation of the Soviet political system, the criminal privatization of public property, the parade of sovereignties and the subsequent disintegration of the country into 15 fragments, all received its highest justification in the designated "return". This very "bosom" was portrayed by propaganda as the incarnated paradise on the earth, where the highest standards of living are ensured, political rights and freedoms flourish, legitimacy and justice prevail.

The most significant obstacle on the way to this bright future, according to reformers' views, was "Sovok" or "Homo Sovieticus", i.e. a person formed under the influence of the Soviet social environment, Soviet culture and the Soviet educational system. Therefore, there was nothing surprising in the fact that the Russian Federation leadership had set their goal to change it. It was necessary to adapt the educational system to the needs of new Russia. Since our country was supposed to become a part of the "world civilization", the educational system had to copy the institutions and norms accepted in this civilization, which implied Russia's entry into the "world educational system". As P.A. Nikolaychuk rightly notes, only the Western educational system was implied under this notion [15]. At the same time, that "entry" required such a radical change in norms and traditions developed during almost three hundred years, that it could not but lead to disorganization of the system.

IV. THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL ...

Enthusiasts of "perestroika" and reforms that followed it proceeded from the premise that the "civilized world" is eagerly awaiting Russia after "having thrown off the yoke of totalitarianism" to become its organic part, and they will acquire VIP status of the world-class together with mansions in London and villas in Miami Beach. Recklessly and gratuitously handing over the Soviet inheritance to their geostrategic competitor, the post-Soviet elite sincerely hoped for a decent place under the sun in this beautiful new world. It makes sense to stress the following circumstance. They did not view their actions as the result of the defeat in the Cold War, but as the consequence of their voluntary consent to the reconstruction of the world on the principles of "new thinking".

This position does not coincide with the opinion of the global elite. Thus, one of the most vivid spokesmen of their views, Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote immediately after the end of the Cold War: "The Cold War ended in the victory of one side and the defeat of the other. This reality can not be denied ... "[1].

History dispelled sentimental idealistic illusions. Russia was allowed to sit on the side-chair in the G8 for a while, but

then was deprived of even this trifle. Neither the US, nor the EU, nor both of them together do not need Russia as a strong prosperous power, independently paving its way to the future. They will never view Russian elite as equal to the elite of "civilized" countries. And it does not matter whether our country is presented in the guise of the communist Soviet Union or in the form of post-Soviet Russia, declaring its adherence to the values of liberal democracy. Carthaginem delendam esse. Russia must disappear from the political map of the world. But this is the ultimate goal, of course. The immediate task is to achieve its irreversible transformation into a primary resource supplier of developed countries that has neither serious influence in the world nor the prospects for technological progress. And it is necessary to say openly that liberal reformers occupying key positions in modern Russia have succeeded a lot in making this task a reality. At the same time, it is not so important, whether they acted on their own initiative or carried out someone's order. The idea of returning to the "bosom of the world civilization" is based on the notion that Russia is a wrong country, which fell out of that "bosom" because of the "Bolshevik experiment". And it can become the "right" country only if it accepts the place in the global labor division system prepared for it by "civilized countries". The unbiased result of reformers' actions is a large-scale de-industrialization, a significant reduction in the level of technological development, a gap between the advanced countries and modern Russia in strategic areas of scientific and technological progress. Exporting low-value products has become the basis of the country's economy. In fact, it has made a transition (fortunately, not completely) to a servicing type economy for which the Soviet educational system, oriented to providing the country with an independent place in the world as a superpower, is clearly redundant.

The situation with the Russian aviation industry is very indicative in this respect. In Soviet times, Russia created its own aircraft building industry, which fully provided for public needs in air transportation, extremely important for the country, stretching through 11 time zones. Today the need for air transportation has not disappeared, but it is by 95 percent satisfied with foreign aircraft machines. For the country whose claims are limited by the level of a regional power, this state of affairs is perfectly acceptable. It is enough to have a number of competent specialists capable of supporting the economy and defensive capacity at the level sufficient for the comfortable existence of the local elite. But Russia is too large and rich in natural resources to confine itself to such a modest role in the modern world.

The choice is as follows: either to develop as an independent center of progress, or to disappear from the political map of the world. Recent events leave no doubt what kind of development would suit the global elite. It considers Russia to be the country that suffered a crushing defeat in the Cold War. Full and unconditional surrender is the only thing that the global elite expects from our country.

To meet these wishes for the Russian elite means to commit an act of suicide. The historical experience of last decades clearly shows that the collective West will not help us, and Russia can rely only on its own strength. This is not about autarchy, because it is impossible in the modern world.

Even North Korea, whose economy is as close to the ideal of total autarchy as possible, still carries out trade exchange with other countries [20]. In Russia, we need to create a self-sufficient economy that can withstand any fluctuations in the world market. The country's resource supply makes such a goal quite achievable. The solution of this task is impossible without a planning system on the national scale, which entails the necessity to restore the Soviet system of organizing the economy in its essential features. (Naturally, considering other countries' experience). And it has to be done in the shortest possible time, otherwise "we will be crushed".

Russia will soon have to make a civilizational breakthrough, otherwise it has no future. This means that the reforms of Russian education, that have been carried out for a quarter of a century, came into a flagrant contradiction with the objective interests of the country and its ruling elite. All of them are aimed at ensuring the functioning of Russia in the world labor division system as a resource supplier. The Soviet educational system was oriented toward formation of an intellectually independent personality, possessing broad outlook and operational thinking ability. This allowed a Soviet person to master new types of activities in the shortest time and be ready to solve non-trivial tasks. The educational system that is being created in the result of reforms is geared at forming a partial individual, best adapted to functioning as a standardized process agent. Such an individual is an ideal object of manipulative political technologies but is not fit to rely on in giving an adequate answer to the challenge facing modern Russia.

In our opinion, the only way out of this situation is to restore (in its essential features, of course) the Soviet educational system. That is when the reforms dooming Russia to the loss of its historical subjectivity will come to the end.

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