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**Science Not in Demand - a Challenge to Country's Security
Several Remarks to the Issue of National Priorities Choice**

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*State authorities hold it always necessary to underline their engaged attitude to the Russian Academy of Sciences. On the photo in the Presidium of RAS General Meeting: Andrei Fursenko, RF Minister of Education and Science; Yuri Osipov, RAS President; Alexander Nekipelov, RAS Vice-President
Photo by Sergei Prikhodko (NG-photo)*

– (35%)
(24%), (12%).
– 2%
1%
– 12, – 6,4, – 1,5

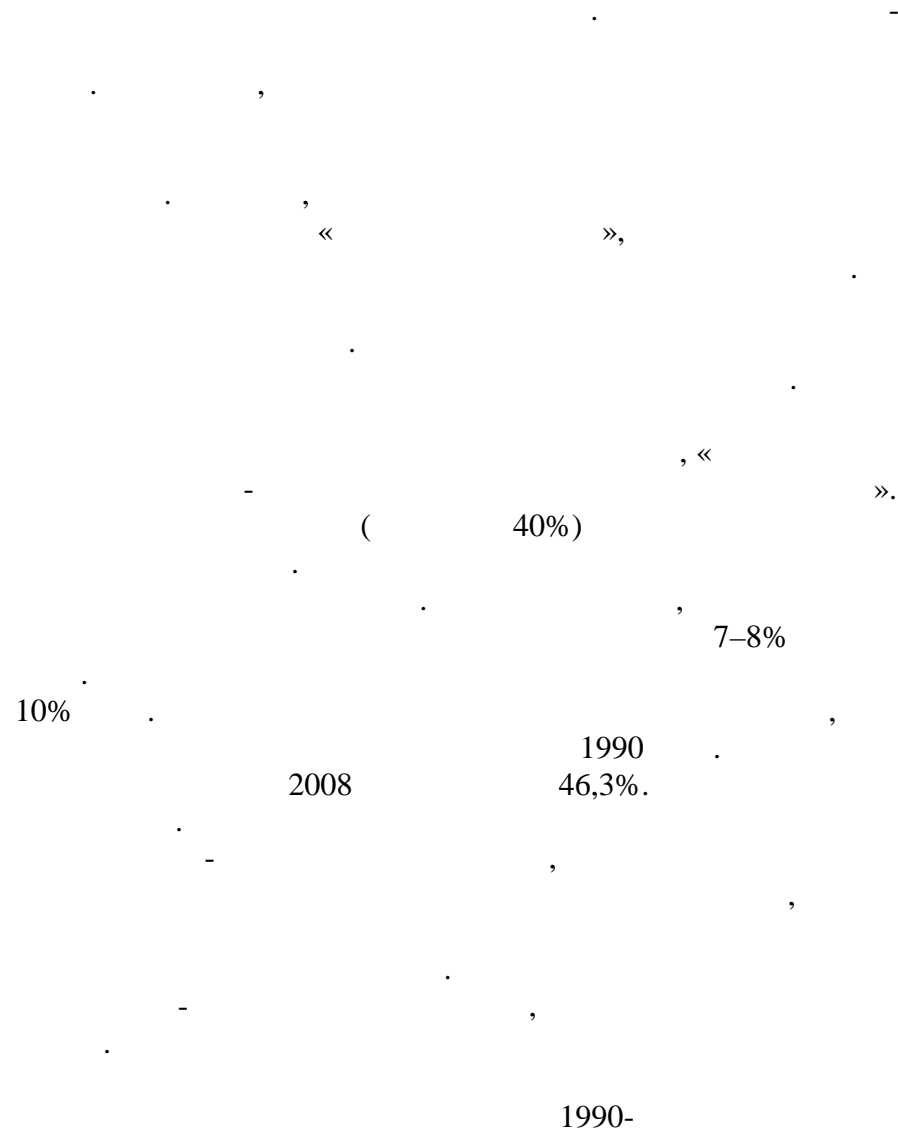
In the evolving multipolar world there are four main centers of scientific progress: the United States of America (35% of global R&D expenses at purchasing power parity), the European Union (24%), Japan and China (approximately 12% each). Unfortunately, the Russian Federation does not integrate the group of leaders – our share makes less than 2% of global R&D expenses at purchasing power parity, and 1% at the exchange rate. Hence, in R&D expenditures Russia is lagging 17 times behind the U.S., 12 times behind the European Union, 6.4 times behind China, 1.5 times behind India.

The Raw Model

Russia will be unable to gain the leading role in the international field without developing the country's scientific potential. The world financial and economic crisis has thrown Russia's economy five years back. It was manifest that huge incomes from energy resources export amassed at the beginning of the last decade had not been used to diversify and modernize Russian economy. The fact that the cutback in Russia's GDP turned out to be the biggest among G-20 countries proves its dangerous dependence on world market conditions. Meanwhile, the world leaders seek to overcome the crisis on a new technological base. At the same time, the trend to transform Russia into other countries' raw appendage will intensify even more.

President Dmitri Medvedev argues 'the habit to live on the account of export hinders, as before, innovative development.' Today almost half of Russia's GDP (nearly 40%) is created at the expense of raw export. Our competitive knowledge-intensive industry has almost disappeared. Machine-building, electronics and other high-tech sectors make 7 to 8% of GDP. Our net export of goods and services amounts to nearly 10% GDP. We shall need at least several years to achieve the 1990 GDP level of RSFSR. The depreciation level of fixed capital reached 46.3% in 2008. Hence, we are witnessing technogenic catastrophes. Although in the Cold War period the scientific complex displayed an evident military-industrial distortion and some research areas fell victims of ideological dogmata, fundamental science and many branches of applied science in the USSR were of world level. Over the last twenty years we have been living at the expense of the scientific and technical backlog created in the Soviet Union.

As a result of confused reforms of the 1990s, the major part of industrial sector science was privatized and disappeared altogether. Budgetary R&D funding was radically reduced. The number of researchers dropped almost three times. We have lost even scientific schools.



The situation results from implementing neoliberal economic conceptions in Russia, which imply any state intervention into the economy produces negative consequences. The credo of 'the invisible hand of the market' affected governmental policy in the scientific area as well. This predetermines a degradation of our country's scientific-technical potential if we do not succeed in turning the tendency emerged.

'Carthage must be destroyed'

In these conditions the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) is almost the only oasis of science in our country, its principle purpose being fundamental studies. But RAS also suffered big losses.

It is no secret that for many years RAS has, actually, been struggling for survival. In 2009 the budget of the Academy made only 46 bln rubles, or \$1.5 bln – a catastrophically small sum. Bureaucratic attempts to liquidate this unique research and scientific complex, convert the Academy into a sort of 'discussion club', introduce some 'external management' do not cease. It seems not science is the central point here but control over financial flows and property.

The campaign launched in the media and aimed at discrediting RAS by accusing it of a whole bag of tricks comes to the front. Here all sorts of falsifications and garblings are used.

For example, Argumenty i Fakty newspaper argues RAS budget accounts for 2% GDP. This lie was spread in other media as well. In reality, all R&D expenditures of the Russian Federation make only 1% GDP. And the expenditures of the Academy amount, in fact, to less than 0.1% GDP.

Of course, one shouldn't idealize the functioning of RAS, its drawbacks are well known. But they are primarily linked with miserable funding of the Academy. Nevertheless, RAS maintains the traditions of academic self-government and keeps a high reputation in the world scientific community. The Academy remains an embodiment of deep scientific culture and continues to investigate in sufficiently broad areas of science.

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2009
46
1,5
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2%
1%
0,1%

SCOPUS 2009 , 2080 3-
 376 (15%).
 50% , 70
 1-
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 1990-
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According to SCOPUS for 2009, RAS occupies the 3rd place in the world among 2080 best research organizations as to the number of research publications. In RAS only 55,000 out of 376,000 Russian researchers (about 15%) are employed, whereas 45% of all research publications in our country and almost 50% of citations fall on RAS. According to CEMI and VINITI institutes, RAS researchers publish 50 scientific papers per \$1 mln costs - this is one of the best indicators in the world. RAS takes the 1st place among research organizations of the highest level as to most cited papers in physics, chemistry, and geoscience, the 2nd place in materials science and mathematics. But these facts do not halt the slandering campaign against RAS.

For example, Expert journal published a paper whose authors demanded 'professional RAS property management for the transitional period should be introduced.' This would allegedly 'provide for a solid financial lever necessary to implement a transformation program.' It is suggested a part of academic institutes should be closed and others converted into joint-stock companies. In this case fundamental science in Russia will, naturally, be headed for the ruin similar to that suffered by applied science in the 1990s.

Another critic of RAS declares preemptorily Russia 'has no scientific community, no science... Therefore the first thing to do in Russia is to bust the Academy of Sciences ... fire all directors and heads of laboratories.' All in all, Carthage must be destroyed ...

Boundless slandering reached a new peak in late 2009 when, as if by command, conjectures of alleged plagiarism by RAS Vice-President Alexander Nekipelov appeared. RAS Branch for Social Sciences had to convoke an ad hoc expert commission, which fully cast back the fabrication of plagiarism.

Gross pressure exerted on RAS has a definite undertone related to the neoliberal economic philosophy discredited both in the U.S. and Europe but entrenched in our country. That is why attacks against Russian researchers criticizing these views become more vicious. This is explained by the fact that many national economists are opponents of the monetarist course, which demands 'sterilization' of super-incomes coming from raw resources export. However, suggestions made by several RAS experts,

Alexander Nekipelov among them, about investing these funds into Russian economy and massive technological upgrading of the infrastructure created in the soviet period yet were rejected. Over the last year only, we increased our purchases of US treasuries from \$32 to 128 bln! Our neoliberals prefer to credit the US army, not national science.

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32 128 . !

World Leaders' Experience

– 2,7%,
3,5–4,5%

(1,7%)

2–3%

2012

2%

3%

, 21

« ».

5

The R&D expenditures of the leading Western countries make 2-3% GDP, among them in the U.S. they make 2.7% and in countries like Japan, Sweden, Israel 3.5-4.5% GDP. China augments its R&D expenditures very fast (1.7% GDP). In the next decade the PRC is expected to catch up with the U.S. in the volume of science funding. R&D expenditures in India grow very quickly, too. By 2012 they will reach 2% GDP. The European Union has set the goal of increasing R&D expenditures up to 3% GDP.

Besides, 21 OECD countries introduce measures of private R&D expenses tax motivation. Among the principal indirect methods of encouraging innovation are tax credits and preferential taxation of corporations practicing state-run or their own R&D programs. These measures are sometimes called 'tax expenditures'.

In the tax systems of the majority of OECD countries, the U.S. included, R&D expenditures are regarded as either capital costs and are subject to depreciation over the span of 5 years from the moment they were made, or business expenditures deductible from the taxation base over the current reporting period. The choice of the method to write off R&D expenditures remains with the businessman himself.

20%

74,4

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1:3

1:4.

– 2,5:1.

In the U.S. a R&D tax credit allows to regain a sum equal to up to 20% of increased R&D expenditures for the current year from the tax already paid. This privilege is applied not only to R&D carried out on U.S. territory. The tax credit has a very strong stimulating impact on companies undertaking efficient long-term investigations critical for the new economy. Tax credits exert a positive influence on firms at their early development stages, and are particularly efficient in small business.

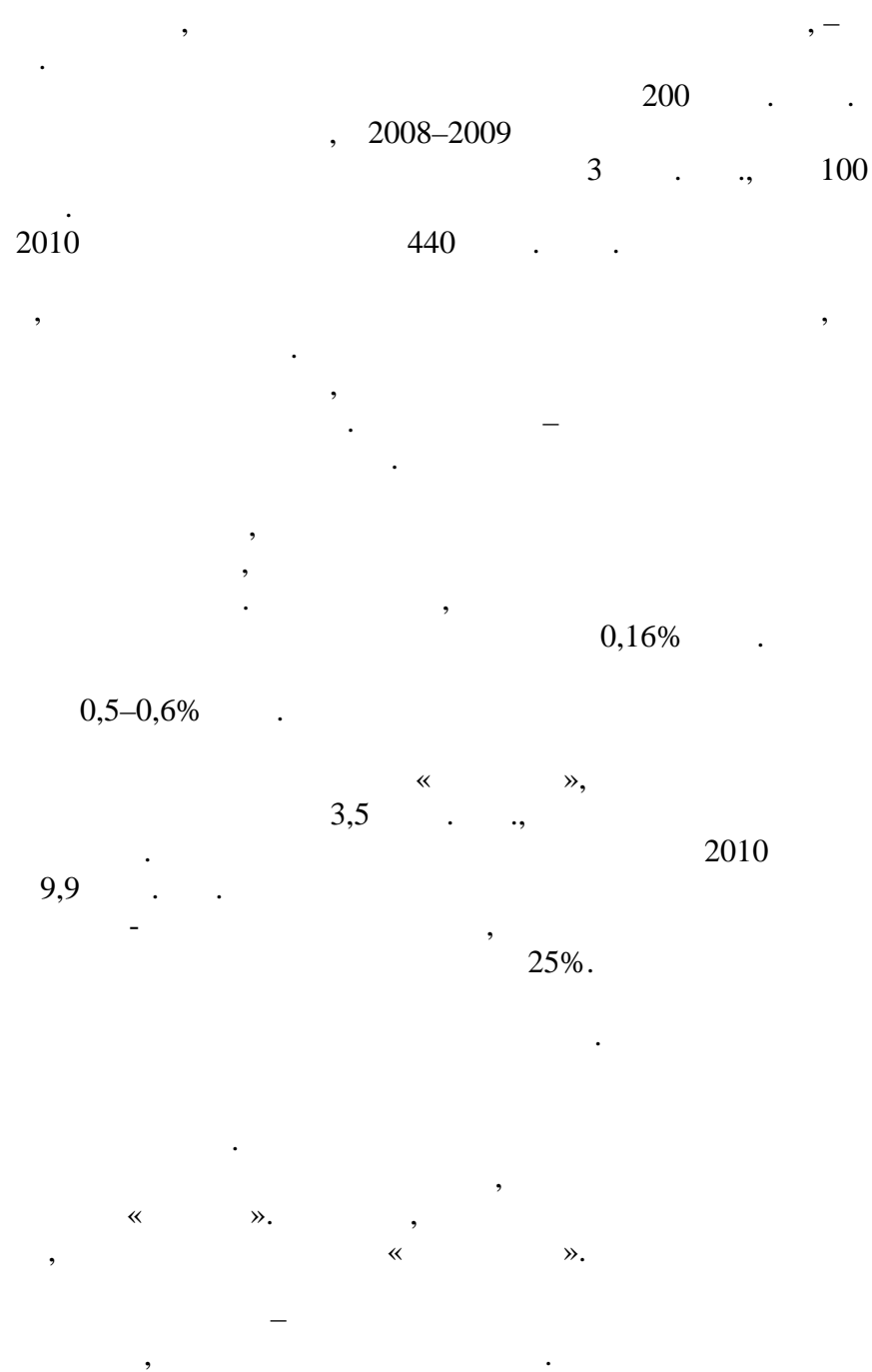
To encourage business and create confidence in governmental policy Obama suggested to transform the R&D tax credit into permanent tax preference. The value of 'tax expenditures' will amount to \$74.4 bln.

Countries striving to catch up with the leaders of scientific-technical progress (China, India, Brazil, South Korea and others) apply more preferential formulas for tax credit computation based on current investment volumes into R&D by companies, which helps these countries pay back much bigger amounts of funds invested into R&D. 'Tax credits' for R&D in several countries (Canada, Australia, Ireland, Holland, Belgium, etc.) outstrip budgetary spending. According to OECD, in Russia, on the contrary, the taxation system does not motivate but rather limits R&D expenditures.

Two Sides of the Medal

Thus, in developed countries – leading in world science - the policy in science has two sides. On the one hand, the state directly funds researches and on the other it stimulates R&D expenditures of the private sector with the help of tax measures. In developed OECD countries related proportions of R&D investments of the governmental and private sectors make 1:3 and 1:4. In Russia an inverted proportion of 2.5:1 has emerged.

The problem is that in Russia R&D funding by the private sector is extremely low. In the country demand for innovation does not exist. The share of expenditures for technology innovation in our industry is 1.2%,



The statement that our country has no money for science is an invention. When the financial crisis was raging Russian authorities spent over \$200 bln to regulate the ruble exchange rate. According to preliminary estimates, in 2008-2009 about 3 trillion rubles, or \$100 bln, were allocated hastily for anti-crisis measures. In addition, foreign exchange reserves of the Russian Federation amount to about \$440 as of January 2010.

Of course, expenditures for scientific researches carried out in institutes of higher learning, wretched for long, increased over the last years. A solid research center is being set up on the basis of Kurchatov Institute, which was granted impressive funding. But these measures are not a justification for squeezing the Russian Academy of Sciences.

It is stupid to make RAS, whose main sphere is fundamental science, responsible for slow introduction of innovation in the economy. Unfortunately, the share of all expenditures for fundamental researches account for only 0.16% GDP in Russia. In developed countries it makes 0.5-0.6 % GDP. On this background the officials' concern about 'economizing' in form of cutting RAS budget by 3.5 bln rubles seems sheer mockery. The expenditures of the federal budget in 2010 will be of 9.9 trillion rubles. RAS procurement expenditures are selected to be cut down, programs of fundamental researches are pruned by 25%. Demolition of RAS will ensure further degradation of human capital and social infrastructure in Russia.

At the same time all kinds of swindlers get access to the state budget. And the Academy is forced to make an expertise of pseudo-researchers' crazy fabrications whose hair-brained projects are taken seriously by the 'high level'. And when RAS intervenes against pseudo-science it is openly accused of 'obscurantism'.

However, the biggest problem is even not the low level of funding but lack of demand for science.

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The present-day situation endangers Russia's national security. Taking into account the most important role science and innovation play in shaping the post-industrial development model ('knowledge-based society') in the 21st century, the role of centers of power in the globalizing world may be played only by powers with an enormous scientific and technical potential.

Practically all leading countries have a thought-through strategy of scientific and technical development implemented in practice and ensured by significant financial means to fund these goals. Considering the world experience and the specificity of Russia's present economic situation this strategy should apparently include two complementary elements.

First, budgetary funding of priority directions in fundamental studies as well as applied R&D studies (in the defense sector) have to be retained and even broadened. Otherwise, the base of Russian science will dissipate and the military potential of our country seriously undermined.

Secondly, a comprehensive tax policy aimed at stimulating private sector's R&D expenses ('tax expenses') is needed. R&D investment should be made maximally profitable for private business. Maximally favorable conditions for investment of business into applied science and development works should be set up with the help of tax policy.

Talks about 'energy superpower' are a self-deception. It is high time to realize: we shall already never compete in quantitative indicators (population, GDP volume) with the U.S., China, the European Union and India. Russia can ensure its place in the group of world leaders only thanks to its qualitative characteristics. To modernize Russian economy a well thought-through state-run policy in science is of need, not new neoliberal experiments. The goal is to elevate R&D expenses up to 2% GDP as a minimum in the next years (1% governmental funding and 1% private expenses).

2% (1% 1%).