

YAKOV GILINSKIY

CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN CORRUPTION

*All social reality is precarious.
All societies are constructions
in the face of chaos.*

P. Berger, T. Luckmann

*Do ut facias*¹.

1. INTRODUCTION

Corruption is an eternal, permanent problem in every country. It is a world problem. But there are different scales and places of corruption in different states. Everybody speaks about corruption. Everybody wants to combat corruption. But what is it? How widespread is corruption? Is it possible to fight corruption?

Some theoretic views and contemporary Russian situation will be presented below. What is corruption?

There are many *definitions* of corruption². Perhaps the shortest (and the most precise) of them is: “the abuse of public power for private profit”³. The UN offers an analogous definition (Resolution 34/169 of the General Assembly UNO, 12.17.1979).

There are many *forms* (manifestations) of corruption: bribery, favoritism, nepotism, protectionism, lobbying, illegal distribution and redistribution of public resources and funds, theft of treasury, illegal privatization, illegal financing of political

¹ I give so that you may do (Latin).

² C. Friedrich, *The Pathology of Politics: Violence, Betrayal, Corruption, Secrecy, and Propaganda*, Harper & Row, New York 1972; A.J. Heidenheimer, M. Johnston, V. Le Vine (eds.), *Political Corruption: A Handbook*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick 1989; Y. Meny, “Corruption ‘fin de siècle’: Changement, crise et transformation des valeurs”, *Revue internationale des sciences sociales* 1996, No 149; J. Nye, “Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis”, *American Political Science Review* 1967, No 61; L. Palmier, “Bureaucratic Corruption and Its Remedies”, in: M. Clarke (ed.) *Corruption: Causes, Consequences and Controls*, Frances Pinter, London 1985; S. Rose-Ackerman, “Democracy and ‘Ground’ Corruption”, *International Social Science Journal* 1996, No 14; G. Wewer, “Politische Korruption”, in: *Politik-Lexikon*, Oldenbourg Verlag, München–Wien 1994; R. Theobald, *Corruption, Development, and Underdevelopment*, Durham University, Durham 1990; G. Vodoleev, *Corruption: Chronicle of Regional Combat*, St. Petersburg 1995 (in Russian); B. Volg’enkin, *Corruption*, St. Petersburg’s juridical Institute of the General Prosecutor’s Office of Russian Federation, St. Petersburg 1997 (in Russian).

³ Joseph Senturia; see: G. Wewer, op. cit., p. 481.

structures, extortion, allowance of favorable credit (contracts), buying of votes, the famous Russian *blat*⁴, etc.

There are three main *sociological models* of corruption: “nomenclative” (infringement of official norms for the sake of private relations), “market” (business activities for maximisation of income) and “public interest” (corrupt practices as threat to public interest). Heidenheimer distinguishes “routine” (presents, bribery) and “aggravating” corruption (extortion and organized crime relation); “white” (when public opinion does not regard corrupt actions as reprehensible), “grey” (when there is no public consensus) and “black” (general disapproval of corrupt action) corruption⁵.

Corruption is a complicated *social phenomenon*. It is intertwined with the relations of economic exchange (brokers). It is a type (manifestation) of venality just as marriage swindlers and prostitution (the venality of spirit or body...), and it exists in societies of commodity and pecuniary circulation.

Corruption is a *social construction*⁶. Society determines (“constructs”): what, where, when, and under which condition is considered as “corruption”, “crime”, “prostitution”, “terrorism” and so forth. How is corruption constructed? This *process* includes: (1) numerous bribes of various state employees; (2) the consciousness of these facts as a social phenomenon, as a social problem (“problematisation” of corruption); (3) the criminalisation of some forms of corruption (for example, bribery, extortion, theft of treasury, etc.); (4) public and state reaction; (5) consequences of construction, problematisation and reaction (e.g. “moral panic”, repressive consciousness, adaptation and others).

Corruption is a *social institution*⁷. It is a part, an element of the system of management and government; it consists of some elements, ways, methods, means of the process of managing and governing. It is a pity, but it is a fact. Corruption is a social institution because:

- Corruption carries out certain social *functions*: simplifying of administrative relations; acceleration of administrative decisions; consolidation and restructuring of relations between social classes, strata; adding to economic development by decreasing government regulation; optimising of economy when there is a deficit of resources; etc.⁸
- The process of corruption involves actions of *certain persons*: bribe-takers, bribers, mediators. They are in a “patron – client” relationship with each other. They play certain *social roles*.
- There are certain *rules (norms)*, and participants know them.

⁴ Different services for relatives, friends, acquaintances; see: A. Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours: Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998.

⁵ A.J. Heidenheimer, M. Johnston, V. Le Vine, op. cit.

⁶ P. Berger, T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Doubleday, New York 1967.

⁷ Y. Gilinskiy, *Deviantology: Sociology of Crime, Narcotism, Prostitution, Suicide, and other “Deviations”*, 2nd edition, Juridical Center Press, St. Petersburg 2007 (in Russian); I. Kuznetsov, *Corruption in System of Government: Sociological Study*. Manuscript of dissertation (in Russian), St. Petersburg 2000; L. Timofeev, *Institutional Corruption: Essay of Theory*, RGGU, Moscow 2000 (in Russian); idem, *Modern Russian Shadow Economy Systems. Theory, Analysis, Models*, RGGU, Moscow 2008.

⁸ N. Leff, “Economic Development Through Bureaucratic Corruption”, in: *The American Behavioral Scientist* 1964, vol. VIII; J. Scott, *Comparative Political Corruption*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs 1972; and others.

- Certain *slang* and *symbols* exist.
- There are certain *fixed prices* (“tariff”). Some of these prices have been made public by the press in Russia. The newspaper “Signal” (1996, No 1) published tariffs for the illegal services of GAI – State Transport Inspection; the newspaper *Vash Tain’ y Sovetnik* (“Your Secret Counselor”) – tariffs for “free” education in different universities of St. Petersburg (including faculties of law and Police Academy). Perhaps the most interesting data were published in the book *Corruption and Combat Corruption*⁹: there are fixed prices for bribery when obstructing an investigation (bringing an action) in criminal cases – from \$1,000 to \$10,000; for substitution of arrest for obligation to give a written statement agreeing not to leave a place – \$20,000–25,000; for reducing punishment – \$5,000–15,000; for “ignorance” in customs infringement – \$10,000–20,000 or 20–25% of the customs duty. Moreover, there are data on tariffs for bribing high state officials: the head of Duma’s (Lower chamber of the Russian Parliament) committee – \$30,000, assistant of the deputy – \$4,000–5,000, presentation of a law project – \$250,000¹⁰. These prices are undoubtedly subject to inflation adjustment, and will, therefore, rise.

2. A BRIEF SUMMARY OF RUSSIAN CORRUPTION

It is a pity, but corruption is a Russian tradition¹¹. “Legal” corruption began in the 9-10th centuries. Then, the institution of *kormlenie* (“nourishment”, “feeding”) was formed. The Russian head of state (prince, tsar) sent his representative to a province without salary, but for *kormlenie*: the population of the province had to keep the tsar’s representative. The representative had huge power. Clearly, local people brought “presents” for favourable decision on various problems... *Kormlenie* was officially abolished in 1556, but the habit of bribing survived (and still does: contemporary monthly salary of \$200 for a police officer is *kormlenie* in reality).

Later, *kormlenie* was transformed to *lichoinstvo* (bribe with infringement of law) and *mzdoinstvo* (bribe without infringement of law). Later (around the 15th century) *lichoinstvo* and *mzdoinstvo* was transformed to *vzjatotchnitchestvo* (“taking of bribes”, “corruption”). The first law that provided for the punishment of judges for taking bribes was *Sudebnik* (Law for Court, *sud* = “court”) of 1497. *Vymogatel’stvo* (extortion) was a new form of corruption (around 16th century). In the 18th century, corruption turned into mass, total evil in Russia. Tsar (emperor) Peter I (Peter the Great, 1672–1725) was very anxious of mass corruption. He attempted to limit corruption by introducing a death penalty for that (Edicts of 23 August 1713, 24 December 1714, 5 February 1724), but in vain! (We should remember that Prince Men’shikov – the best friend of Peter the Great – was the most corrupt.) All the legislation that followed (1845, 1866, 1916) included responsibility for different forms of corruption. But “Corruption is immortal”... P. Berlin wrote about Russia: “Taking

⁹ *Corruption and Combat Corruption*, RCA, Moscow 2000 (in Russian), p. 62–63.

¹⁰ A. Sungurov (ed.), *Civil Initiatives and Corruption Prevention*, Norma, St. Petersburg 2000 (in Russian), p. 41.

¹¹ See: P. Kabanov, *Corruption and Bribery in Russia*, Gusel, Nig’nekamsk 1995 (in Russian); A. Kirpichnikov, *Bribery and Corruption in Russia*, St. Petersburg 1997 (in Russian).

of bribes is indissolubly interlaced and grew together with the whole system and way of political life”¹².

The Soviet State fought corruption too (including death penalty since 1922), but to no avail. It is known that corruption existed during Stalin’s totalitarian regime, but it was “top secret”. The leaders of the Communist Party and Soviet State (so-called “nomenclature”) and soviet bureaucrats were totally corrupt.

3. HOW WIDESPREAD IS CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN CORRUPTION?

Corruption is present in every country. But the dimensions of corruption are diverse. Corruption in Russia has become commonplace in all the bodies of government and administration. Transparency International 2002 Corruption Perceptions Index for Russia is 2.7, which gives it the 74th place out of 102 countries (with the maximum corruption reported in Bangladesh – index: 1.2, and the minimum in Finland – index: 9.7). The index for Russia was 2.5 in 2006 (the same as Benin, Gambia, Guyana, Honduras, Nepal, Philippines, Rwanda and Swaziland) and 2.3 in 2007 (the same as Gambia, Indonesia and Togo¹³). In 2007, the minimum perceived corruption was reported in New Zealand, Denmark and Finland (index: 9.4); the maximum – in Somalia (index: 1.4). This means that Russia has become more and more corrupt.

The damage from corruption is about \$20–25 billion per year. The export of capital from Russia abroad amounts to \$15–25 billion per year and \$300–350 billion from 1988 to 1999¹⁴. INDEM Foundation informs that the corruption market was \$319 billion in 2005; the data of the General Prosecutor’s Office quote \$240 billion for 2006. It is more than 1.5 of the domestic budget of the Russian Federation...

Konstantinov’s *Corrupt Petersburg* contains the greatest number of corruption facts¹⁵. The US Congress’ report *Russia’s Road to Corruption* (September, 2000) contains some valuable data, too.

Everyday the Russian and foreign mass media produce facts of Russian corruption and corrupt activity. Everyday different Russian newspapers and journals are publishing who (name, position), when, how much money or “service” got as bribe, and no reaction from power... *Novaya Gazeta* published in July 2003 (No. 49) the prices for admission to St. Petersburg’s universities: from \$2,500 to \$4,000. In December 2002 (No. 93), *Novaya Gazeta* quoted the data from a booklet of Duma’s deputy, Professor G. Kostin. There were prices for the highest State positions in the booklet: Head of Department of the Supreme Court of Justice – \$400,000; Deputy Head of Moscow’s Arbitration Tribunal – \$1.3 million; Deputy Minister of Power Engineering – \$10 million. The newspaper expected some reaction of the officials (excuse, refutation, inquiry), but nothing happened! Most of the highest officials enjoy immunity *de iure* (deputies, judges and other) or *de facto*.

¹² P. Berlin, “Russian Corruption as Social-Historical Phenomenon”, *Contemporary World* 1910, No. 8 (in Russian).

¹³ See: *Corruption Perceptions Index 2007*, Transparency International 2007, http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2007.

¹⁴ *Corruption and Combat Corruption: Role of Civil Society*, Norma, St. Petersburg 2000 (in Russian), p. 18–21, 72–73.

¹⁵ A. Konstantinov, *Corrupted Petersburg*, Folio Press, St. Petersburg 1997 (in Russian).

Most recently, prices of “corrupt service” were published in some newspapers and journals. For example: exemption from universal military service – \$10,000 (*Novaya Gazeta*, 2006:3), admission (“free” education) to Moscow State University – from \$30,000 in 2003 to \$80,000 in 2007; passing a test – \$50–\$200; passing an examination – \$100–\$400; the total corrupt market in higher education was estimated to be \$449 million in 2001, \$583 million in 2005, and \$618 million in 2007¹⁶.

There are extensive *corruption networks* including ministries, police, FSB (former KGB)¹⁷. *Corruption in contemporary Russia is an element of the political system, a mechanism of the political regime*. There are two levels of corruption: the “lower” (“face to face”) and the “upper”, i.e. the great corruption networks. A study of the INDEM Foundation (headed by Dr. G. Satarov, former assistant to ex-President Boris Yeltsin) shows that there are extensive corruption networks in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Federal Service of Security (FSB) and the State Committee of Customs Service. Military authorities are also deeply corrupt. Each corruption network includes three structures: commercial or financial, state officials and “group of defence” – police, FSB, prosecutor’s office¹⁸.

At the “lower” level, average bribe (for policeman, doctor, teacher and so on) ranges are from \$20–120 to \$1,000–5,000 per occasion¹⁹. However, the amounts of bribes in corruption networks are greater. There is also a system for calculating the bribe, *otkat* (“recoil”, “delivery”, “return”): the official gets 3–10%²⁰ or 40–60% of the sum of an agreement²¹.

Corruption paralyses all positive, creative activities. It is virtually impossible to develop production, market economics, social reforms, if all that depends on corrupt officials. Corruption of police, the prosecutor’s office and judges is particularly dangerous. “Corruption of judges is one of the most powerful corruption markets in Russia... Corruption of judges penetrates different corruption networks at different levels of power”²². Arbitration courts are particularly corrupted.

The Center of Deviantology (Sociology of Deviance and Social Control) of the Sociological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (headed by Prof. Y. Gilinskiy) studies organized crime and corruption in Russia, especially in St. Petersburg. Our respondents (informants) commented as follows on the contemporary situation: “An average businessman is extremely involved in crime... One has to bribe for everything... one cannot deal with taxation inspection without a bribe... A bribe is inevitability in the sphere of business... Tax inspection is highly corrupt”. One has to bribe when registering business, when renting premises from state bodies, when acquiring licenses for their utilization from state bodies, for obtaining low-interest bank credit, when reporting to tax inspectors, and when completing customs formalities, etc. One also has to remember that the “tariff” of the fire inspection is more than the “tariff” of

¹⁶ *The New Times* 2008, No. 22 (in Russian), p. 15–17.

¹⁷ A. Sungurov, op. cit.; G. Satarov, *Diagnosis of Corruption in Russia: Sociological Analysis*, INDEM, Moscow 2001 (in Russian).

¹⁸ G. Satarov, op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁹ *Arguments and Facts*, 2002, No. 4.

²⁰ G. Satarov, op. cit., p. 8.

²¹ *Novaya Gazeta*, 31.08–3.09.2006, p. 3 (in Russian), p. 12.

²² G. Satarov, “Rusty Justice”, *Native Notes* 2003, No. 2 (in Russian).

sanitary-inspection, but less than he customs service... But it is a problem not only of businesspeople. *Everybody* has to be a “suborner” in education institutions, in medical institutions, in different administrations, in the police, and so on.

There are very various forms of bribe taking. One of our respondents (interviewed by Dr. Y. Kostjukovsky) quoted an original method: “I can invite to the casino a person that I am interested in and he will win. He can win as much as I want. The situation is pure and perfect – no bribes, no corruption. The person is lucky, no problems”.

Table 1. Bribery in Russia, 1986–2007

Year	Registered facts	Rate (per 100,000 population aged +16)
1986	6,562	5.9
1987	4,155	3.8
1988	2,462	2.2
1989	2,195	2.0
1990	2,691	2.4
1991	2,534	2.3
1992	3,331	2.9
1993	4,497	3.9
1994	4,921	4.3
1995	4,889	4.3
1996	5,453	4.8
1997	5,608	4.9
1998	5,804	5.0
1999	6,871	5.9
2000	7,047	6.0
2001	7,909	6.8
2002	7,311	6.2
2003	7,346	6.3
2004	8,928	7.5
2005	9,821	8.2
2006	11,063	9.3
2007	11,119	9.4

Source: *Crime and Delinquency in the USSR, 1990: Statistical Review*, Finances & Statistics, Moscow 1991 (in Russian), p. 83, 84; *Crime and Delinquency, 1994: Statistical Review*, MVD RF, MJ RF, Moscow 1995 (in Russian), p. 116, 121; *Crime and Delinquency, 2001: Statistical Review*, MVD RF, MJ RF, Moscow 2002 (in Russian), p. 117, 122; *Crime and Delinquency, 2002–2006: Statistical Review*, MVD RF, MJ RF, Moscow 2007 (in Russian), p. 120–123.

The *official* data on bribes and corruption are contained in Table 1. We see an increasing rate of bribery from 2.0 in 1989 to 9.4 in 2007. But one needs to remember that these figures are “a drop in the ocean”. Corruption, including taking of bribes, is a very latent phenomenon. The official, registered data show most probably police ac-

tions than reality. My Moscow colleague's opinion is that the actual number of bribes is ten as many as the official data²³. But I think it is a hundred as many... For example, the rate (per 100,000 population aged over 16) of "corruptible crimes" (bribes, embezzlement, appropriation) was in 1999: Moscow – 11.8, St. Petersburg – 11.2, Komi Republic – 78.7, Kurgansky region – 75.6, Kostromskaja region – 70.9²⁴. This is absolutely impossible: corruption in Moscow and St. Petersburg is far greater than in other Russian regions.

Secondly, the number of registered crimes (bribes) is twice as much as the number of revealed persons and the number of revealed persons is twice as much as the number of convicts (Table 2). Thirdly, these revealed persons and convicts are "small potatoes", including workers, students, unemployed (Table 3). It is clear they are suborners, not bribe takers.

Table 2. Correlation of some data on bribery in Russia, 1987–2006

Year	Registered facts	Revealed persons	Convicts
1987	4,155	2,836	2,008
1988	2,462	1,994	812
1989	2,195	1,306	451
1990	2,691	1,510	649
1991	2,534	1,266	612
1992	3,331	1,537	686
1993	4,497	2,279	843
1994	4,921	2,727	1,114
1995	4,889	2,342	1,071
1996	5,453	2,692	1,243
1997	5,608	2,320	1,381
1998	5,804	2,803	1,314
1999	6,823	2,921	1,515
2000	7,047	3,481	1,529
2001	7,909	3,696	2,084
2002	7,311	3,796	2,035
2003	7,346	3,939	2,232
2004	8,928	4,609	2,930
2005	9,821	5,109	3,609
2006	11,063	5,619	4,229

Source: *Crime and Delinquency, 1994: Statistical Review*, MVD RF, MJ RF, Moscow 1995 (in Russian), p. 117, 154; *Crime and Delinquency, 2001: Statistical Review*, MVD RF, MJ RF, Moscow 2002 (in Russian), p. 118, 171; *Crime and Delinquency, 2002–2006: Statistical Review*, MVD RF, MJ RF, Moscow 2007 (in Russian), p. 119–121, 158.

²³ P. Gigotcky (ed.), *Latency Criminality in Russian Federation in 2001–2002 (Statistical Review)*, Russian Academy of Law, Moscow 2004 (in Russian).

²⁴ V. Lunev, "Geography of Organized Crime and Corruption in Russia", *State and Law* 2000, No. 11, pp. 23–34 (in Russian).

Table 3. Bribery: Data on revealed persons in Russia, %, 1987–2006

	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total number	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Gender: – male	58.7	59.7	66.3	75.2	77.5	77.4	73.7	75.4	70.1	74.2	73.4	74.0	74.7	77.2	77.8	78.4
– female	41.3	40.3	33.7	24.8	22.5	22.6	26.3	24.6	29.9	25.8	26.6	26.0	25.3	22.8	22.2	21.6
Age: – 16–17	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
– 18–29	17.8	20.5	19.6	27.4	29.8	28.8	27.1	26.4	8.9	26.9	26.2	26.6	26.0	26.4	26.3	26.6
– 30 and older	81.9	79.4	80.2	72.3	70.2	71.2	72.9	73.4	91.0	73.1	72.9	72.9	73.9	73.3	73.3	73.3
Social status: – workers	33.2	37.7	34.0	16.4	19.3	21.3	13.7	15.0	13.2	14.1	16.8	19.3	20.9	20.3	20.9	21.5
– employees (office worker)	58.3	51.2	53.9	43.9	50.9	48.8	46.3	48.6	50.7	46.8	43.2	41.5	39.8	39.4	36.9	35.9
– peasants	1.7	1.8	0.6	1.5	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.4
– students	0.7	0.6	0.7	2.2	0.5	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.3	2.7	4.0	4.5	2.2	3.8	2.8	3.6
– businessmen	*	*	*	6.1	4.6	6.8	7.9	7.7	6.6	7.1	5.8	8.3	8.0	6.3	3.4	3.6
– without work and studies (unem- ployed)	1.7	3.1	3.9	6.8	12.6	13.1	14.2	12.9	9.8	13.9	15.1	15.3	17.1	20.9	23.9	24.8

* No data

Source: *Crime and Delinquency...*, 1992, p. 97; *ibidem*, 1995, p. 117; *ibidem*, 2002, p. 118; *ibidem*, 2007, p. 119.

Corruption is a “normal” way to solve different problems in contemporary Russia, which is confirmed in various surveys. For example, 56% of our respondents considered corruption as a negative phenomenon, but 45% of them were ready to take or give bribes²⁵. 37% of respondents (Russian representative interrogation, 1999) were witnesses (participants) of corrupt activity (65% of businesspeople); 50% of respondents gave “presents” to medical institutions (62% of businesspeople)²⁶. In a survey of the regional elites of Russia’s Northwest, 94.4% of respondents confirmed: “Corruption and taking of bribes are widespread in Russia”²⁷.

It is known that there is “white”, “grey” and “black” corruption²⁸. Russian corruption is becoming more and more “light”, because tolerance to corruption is growing. Pity, but young Russian people know from childhood, from school and university (including the Faculty of Law...) that *all* may be bought and is for sale in Russia.

Old Russian tradition (and *ethics!*) of corruption is reflected in national proverbs and sayings: “It is useful for judges, that put in pocket”, “Let’s put a candle in front the God, let’s put a sack (with present – Y.G.) in front the judge”, “Hands are for taking”, “You’re doing for me, I’m doing for you”, and so on. The Russian ethics tolerates taking bribes. Moreover, it is a custom, a habit – to “thank” for “a service”.

What are the causes of contemporary total corruption in Russia? There are many factors. I think the main factors (“causes”) are the following:

- old Russian traditions;
- the former Soviet corrupted “nomenclature” kept its position, its power and brought its corrupt habits to the “new” system of power;
- nomenclatures privatization got an economic basis of corruption;
- the powerful Russian organized crime use bribery as the main means of defence;
- the highest strata of power are corrupt; it is clear that lower and ordinary officials will take bribes, too (the Russian proverb is: “the fish starts to rot from the head”).

I think corruption is the most serious problem in Russia, because all other problems remain unsolved when anything can be bought and sold.

4. IS IT POSSIBLE TO FIGHT CORRUPTION IN RUSSIA?

I think it is impossible (as it is impossible in any country). Corruption is an eternal social problem. It is impossible to “win over corruption” in Russia and in the world.

It is a very complicated problem of *legal* reaction to corruption in contemporary Russia. On the one hand, there are stern punishments in the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (CC RF): for taking of bribe (up to 12 years of imprisonment – Art. 290, CC RF), for suborner (up to 8 years of imprisonment – Art. 291, CC RF), for the abuse of power (up to 8 years of imprisonment – Art. 285, CC RF) and other. On the

²⁵ V. Afanasjev, Y. Gilinskiy, *Deviance Behavior and Social Control in the Russian Crisis-Ridden Society*, Institute of Sociology RAN, St. Petersburg 1995 (in Russian), p. 94.

²⁶ I. Kljamkin, L. Timofeev, *Shady Mode of Life: Sociological Portrait of Postsoviet Society*, RGGU, Moscow 2000 (in Russian), p. 11, 14.

²⁷ A. Duka (ed.), *Regional Elites of Russia’s Northwest: Political and Economical Orientations*, Aletheia, St. Petersburg 2001 (in Russian), p. 162.

²⁸ A.J. Heidenheimer, M. Johnston, V. Le Vine, op. cit.

other hand, the “Law of Corruption” is absent (the project has existed for many years, but was not adopted), and real practice of conviction of high officials is absent, too.

There are no *real organizational mechanisms* to counteract corruption. But there are too many institutions for “combating corruption”: the prosecutor’s office, FSB (former KGB), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), different commissions and committees. President D. Medvedev has recently established a new Committee...

In fact, decreasing the dimensions of corruption is possible step by step. It is a long and difficult process by social, political, economic, juridical means (but not only juridical – this is very important to note!). I think the main means are:

- maximum reduction of plenary powers of bureaucrats;
- maximum reduction of rights of bureaucrats to “regulate” economics, education, science, medicine and so on;
- reduction of the number of bureaucrats (the number of bureaucrats in Russia were in 1990s – 15 million people; only State machinery was 715,900 officials in 1991 and 926,600 officials in 1993; the personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs – MVD – was about 1.5 million people in 1996, or more than 1,200 per 100,000 population, it is the first place in the world²⁹);
- increase of independence of businesses and persons;
- increase of independence and prestige of courts (judges);
- forming of civil society;
- increase of salaries of officials;
- return to freedom of the press, to freedom of speech;
- forming of corresponding social consciousness (by mass media, by real practice of fighting corruption, etc);
- forming of political will-power to decrease the size of corruption; etc.

Unfortunately, I think it is impossible in contemporary Russia. The police and prosecutor’s office are very corrupted³⁰. On the one hand, Russian police combat organized crime, criminal organizations, and on the other... force out criminal organizations to occupy their place of racket. Below, is part of my interviews with police officers (2005):

- I. (interviewer): What can you say about the news on the contemporary organized crime?
- R. (respondent, officer from UBOP³¹): there is no organized crime. There are *menty*³². Who “*kryshuet*” (make “roof”³³) various stalls, shops, markets? *Menty*. Who “*kryshuet*” of “*tochki*” (“points”³⁴)? *Menty*. Let’s see: that is stall. A policeman will come sometimes and get money from the owner of stall. “*Tochka*” is on the fourth floor of the house across the street. It is controlled by department *X* of the police... All shops, stalls, small and middle business are today under “*mentovskaja krysha*” (roof of police).

²⁹ See: *Corruption and Combat Corruption...*, op. cit., p. 29; G. Newman (ed.), *Global Report on Crime and Justice*, Oxford University Press, New York 1999, p. 124.

³⁰ *Corruption and Combat Corruption...*, op. cit., p. 86–112.

³¹ UBOP – police unit of fight with organized crime.

³² *Ment* – a colloquial name for a police officer (as “cop” in USA or “bobby” in England).

³³ *Krysha* (roof) – protection of business from criminal organizations.

³⁴ *Tochka* (point) – a place for illegal drug selling.

- I.: Who is the “patron” of prostitution?
- R.: *Menty*, of course.
- I.: Who is the “patron” of gambling?
- R.: It is FSB. It is too hard for the police... The gambling business is very profitable. FSB *kryshuet* of these.

Another interview:

- I.: It is said, that “roofs” of police replace criminal “roofs”. Is that true?
- R. (police officer from the Board of Own Security): Yes, of course. It is a practice not only of single policemen, but various police units. For example, a new café appears close to a local police office (department). The head of the police department sends an officer to the owner of the café for a “conversation”. And the café owner pays “tribute” every month for the police office after such a “visit”.

All strata of power are very corrupted too. “We can speak about a new model of government, where corruption of the government staff is a way of keeping back of power. Corruption... is a part of commanding policy”³⁵. Who will fight corruption? “That is a question!”

³⁵ V. Brovkin, “Corruption in Russia: History and Current Situation”, *Organized Crime and Corruption: Studies, Surveys, Information. Social and Legal Almanac* 2000, No. 1 (in Russian), p. 70.