

Muranivsky in 1992: Use The Lessons of Roosevelt!

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A way out of the difficulties in which our economy has landed, should be sought in the use of economic and legal administrative measures to regulate economic life. Here, despite the well-known allergy to administrative measures, which we associate with bureaucratic command methods, it will be impossible to find an exit from the crisis, without sensible government regulation of the economy. The chaos of destruction cannot be overcome through the spontaneity of the market.

Instructive in this regard is the experience of the New Deal, conducted by the Federal government under F. Roosevelt and the U.S. Congress during the 1930s. The American President did not go to the lawmakers for extraordinary authority. Within ten days after taking office, he merely proposed to convene a special session of Congress. Within 100 days, it had adopted around 70 laws, encompassing industry, agriculture, commerce, the credit and banking system, and government social policy. . . .

The experience of the U.S.A. is important for us, not only as a way to deal with unemployment, but also as an approach to developing infrastructure under crisis conditions. Creating diverse and extensive infrastructure in our country would mean the prevention of losses in agriculture, the development of cities and centers of culture along the main routes,

and the creation of a new economic basis for cooperation among sovereign republics.

In this connection, our participation in the international infrastructure development project called the Productive Triangle, developed by the Schiller Institute, appears very promising. Joint public-private financing of its implementation would fundamentally change the character of our relations with the majority of the countries in Europe, from one-sided dependency, towards mutual benefit. . . .

Even before the development of the New Deal, Roosevelt, as a new President, confronting the unprecedented economic crisis that had struck the U.S.A., gave this evaluation of the situation: “The country needs and, unless I mistake its temper, the country demands bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it; if it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something. The millions who are in want will not stand by silently forever while the things to satisfy their needs are within easy reach.” (If only we would learn to call things by their names, instead of inventing slogans to cover up flip-flopping!)

In response to the President’s frankness, the country threw itself into the implementation of his bold plans. Roosevelt had broad support from the population, who gained broader democratic rights during his presidency. The popularity he had earned earlier also helped. . . . At the same time, Roosevelt won the trust of those layers of big capital, which recognized the need to make concessions to labor, in order to achieve class peace.

It was in those years that the basis was laid in the U.S.A., for what today is called, including in our country, common human values. And they are of lasting significance.