

SUMMARY OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION “TRANSIT POTENTIAL OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION: SITUATIONAL DEBATES” ON OCTOBER 19, 2012

Keywords: international transit, Trans-Siberian Railway, spatial economics, North Sea Route.

A number of articles criticizing the abilities of the Russian transportation system are published in the scientific and popular press recently. There emerges an imperative challenge to analyze the current condition and potential of Russia as the participant of the world transportation and logistical network and to distinguish the real problems from the pseudoscientific demagogy. To obtain the specified objective, on October 19, 2012 the scholars and specialists of Admiral Nevelskoy Maritime State University organized the dedicated roundtable discussion and invited the leading experts of Primorsky Region in the fields of transport, logistics and international relations. The most essential ideas stated by the participants of the event are the following.

Sergey Smirnov, PhD, Director of the Center of International Research, Maritime State University.

Some plans and the demands been expressed by the federal authorities of the Russian Federation obviously do not correspond to the real potential of the current situation in the Russian industry, in the transportation, and the informational infrastructure. The plans are not supported by the corresponding financial, material, and human resources and, what is more important, they do not consider the real emerging situation in the world market of the transit cargo transportation. From the point of view of the economic theory the extensive territories of the Russian Far East haven't competitive advantages, resources, and the other aspects allowing us to hope for the development of the agglomerating nodes. However, the East neighbors of the Russia, mainly Peoples Republic of China, Japan, and Republic Korea, may essentially affect the balance change.

The railway transportation in Russia practically obtained the limits of the technological potential. Moreover, the ground transit through the territory of the Russian Federation is highly dependent on the non-economic factors like the considerable number of supervising structures and the complicated procedures of documentation. Maritime transportation system looks more preferable for the purposes of the international cargo transit.

Michail Tersky, *Sc.Dr., Director of Primorsky Laboratory of Economic Research, Institute of Economic Research, Russian Academy of Sciences, FE Branch.*

Basically the analysis of the tendencies in the development of the world transportations lies upon the following criteria: transportation holding capacity of the global production output, transportation mobility of the population, the parity between the cargo and passenger transportations, the parity between the types of transport during the



The participants of the roundtable discussion

transportation of varied cargoes and passengers. After the 1970th there were essential changes in the structure of transportation by the types of transport. There are some obvious trends like deepening specialization on cargoes and directions, intraregional transportation growing 2.8% faster than interregional one, national demand in the developing economics growing 1.9% faster than the same in the foreign trade, reducing share of transportation of the raw materials and the low processed production.

The Asian and Western European countries utilize more than 70% of the world sea container traffic during the 2010-2015 yrs. period. The contribution of the other regions excluding USA and Canada to the world sea container turnover shall not exceed 10%. The share of the Russian ports in the world sea container turnover is insignificant: from the 610.4 million TEU turnover the Russian seaports have processed 3.6 million TEU, or less than 1%, in 2010.

Vladimir Pazovsky, *Director of the Laboratory of Marketing Research in Sea Transportation.*

The transit transportation from the East to the West and vice versa through the Northern seas is much shorter than through the Suez Channel. Carriers save the time, the fuel expenses, the channel fees, and the sea robbers insurance. But the savings will be spent mostly on the icebreaker convoy. Interest to the transportation in the Northern sea is strongly stimulated by global warming. Russia has started the restoration of the powerful icebreaker fleet including the nuclear icebreakers with the capacity and capabilities considerably exceeding the available ones. Masses of the pack ice considerably reduce. Possibly, after the fleet be supplied with the new icebreakers and ice class vessels the navigation period in the Northern sea will be considerably expanded. However, the North Sea Route will hardly involve the linear carriers because of their rigid schedule that difficult to guarantee when ice cruising. Additionally, today the utilization of the North Sea Route as the transit transportation pass is heavily burdened by the political issues.

Conclusions.

The general conclusions been agreed for the all participants are the follows:

1. The transportation complex of Russia is capable to share in the international system of cargo transportation.
2. Railway and automobile transport systems of Russia are burdened by the difficult circumstances not allowing them to participate in the competition.
3. The potentials of both maritime and airborne transportation systems are considerable but demand the state attention and the formation of the designated business environment for the advance of the fundamental change.