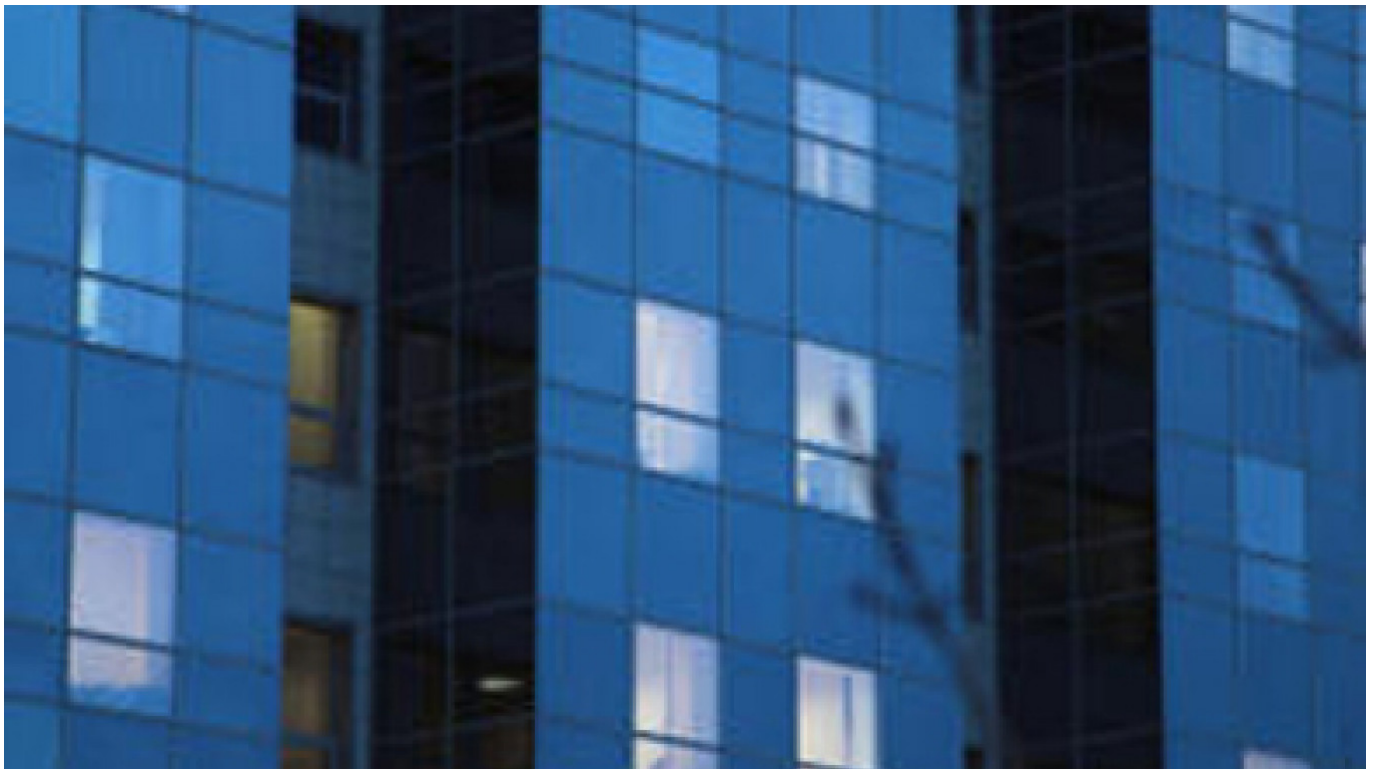


Investigation Into Yukos Report Expands

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 08, 2013



The front of the Investigative Committee's Moscow Headquarters.

An investigation into an expert report that says former Yukos owner Mikhail Khodorkovsky is innocent of his crimes has now expanded to the questioning of high-ranking officials and State Duma deputies engaged in penal law reform, in what analysts say could be an attempt to launch a third case against Khodorkovsky and Lebedev, both of whom are set to be released in May and August 2014.

One unnamed official told Vedomosti that investigators asked him whether Mikhail Paleyev, a legal aide during Dmitry Medvedev's presidency, could have been influenced by the report's authors when he headed a working group on the modernization of criminal law.

The report, which was compiled by human rights council members in December 2011, concluded that the charges against oil tycoon Khodorkovsky and his business partner Lebedev were unlawful and called for major reforms to the legal system.

Several council members have since been subjected to searches of their premises and repeated

interrogations. Sergei Guriev, the former director of the liberal New Economic School, fled Russia in May under pressure from investigators.

Investigators believe that Khodorkovsky and Lebedev paid to get a favorable verdict from the council and transferred money to them through an organization run by the director of a research center at the Higher School of Economics, Lenta.ru reported.

A previous employee of the research center, who was called in by the Investigative Committee, believes that they are using information on computers confiscated from the center to guide their investigation, Vedomosti reported.

Lawyers familiar with the investigation said it was unlikely to end quietly, noting that investigators in the two previous Yukos trials had managed to further their careers in the process.

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