

A number of other chemists specializing in the system of the elements either attacked Mendeleev's periodic law or disputed his priority. He had no patience with disputes over priority, and although by taste an internationalist in science, he engaged in such disputes only when others denigrated Russian achievements.

In 1880 he added an investigation of the coal industry to his practical concerns. None of his efforts toward the development of domestic industry was successful, however; the czarist government chose to dismiss his remarkable ideas and projects as "professional dreams".

In 1880 he was defeated in an election for extraordinary membership of St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, by the reactionary majority of members of the physics and mathematics section, who had come to fear his democratic tendencies. In the course of the protests that followed this event, he published an article and some twenty other scientific institutions elected Mendeleev an honorary member. In 1890 disorders broke out among the students at the University of St. Peterburg and Mendeleev undertook to deliver a student petition to the ministry of education. He was given a rude and insulting answer, tantamount to a demand for his personal resignation; he thus left the university, where he had taught for more than 30 years. On 3rd April 1890 Mendeleev gave his last lecture to the students of the general chemistry course.