The Building Blocks of **Russia's Future Military Doctrine**

Eugene B. Rumer

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The Building Blocks of **Russia's Future Military Doctrine**

Eugene B. Rumer

RAND
ARROYO CENTER

Prepared for the United States Army

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PREFACE

This report examines the political, ideological, and geopolitical building blocks of Russia's future military doctrine. It provides an overview of internal and external security challenges to Russia's national security interests in Europe and Asia; explains the connection between Russia's internal crisis and the future direction of its national security policy and military doctrine; and outlines alternative solutions to its current crisis and national security challenges. The report concludes with summary implications for U.S. policy.

This report was prepared as part of the project titled "After the Warsaw Pact: The Transformation of Military Policy and Security Environment in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union," conducted in the Strategy and Doctrine Program of the Arroyo Center. It should be of interest to analysts and policymakers concerned with Russia's future military doctrine. The report was completed in February 1994.

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James T. Quinlivan is Vice President for the Army Research Division and the Director of the Arroyo Center. Those interested in further information about the Arroyo Center should contact his office directly:

James T. Quinlivan
RAND
1700 Main Street
P.O. Box 2138
Santa Monica CA 90407-2138

CONTENTS

Preface iii

Summary vii

Chapter One
INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter Two
THE PERESTROIKA LEGACY 5

Chapter Three
THE CRISIS OF RUSSIA'S STATEHOOD 11

Chapter Four
THE GEOPOLITICAL FACTOR 23
Challenge from the South 24
Challenge in the West 30

Chapter Five
CHALLENGE FROM WITHIN 41

Chapter Six
CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS 49

SUMMARY

The emergence of Russia from the Soviet era following the failed August coup of 1991 promised to ensure a radical shift in the evolution of Soviet and Russian security policy and military doctrine, which for the better part of the 20th century had been marked by expansionism and confrontation with the principal Western European powers and the United States.[1]

The preliminary outlines of Russian security policy, however, became evident even before the August coup: Boris Yeltsin's Russia would pursue a course of collaboration with the West—especially with the United States—and would support the policies that had resulted in the signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces and Conventional Forces in Europe treaties; had brought about major progress in the area of strategic arms control; had permitted peaceful unification of the two Germanys; and had led to the end of post-World War II division of Europe.

Dissolution of the Soviet empire became a key element in Boris Yeltsin's domestic and international political agenda under the name "Little Russia." This "Little Russia" concept pictured a future rejuvenated Russian state freed from its imperial burden and pursuing relations with its former colonies and satellites—as well as other interested partners—on the basis of equality and mutual interest.

The establishment of Russian military institutions—the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff—marked the first step in the formal

[1]This report was completed in February 1994.

institutional process of development and articulation of Russian military doctrine and national security policy. However, the start of this formal process coincided with the unraveling of Russia's domestic political consensus and the exacerbation of its acute economic crisis. These two developments combined have effectively destroyed the weak political foundations that could have served as the basis for Russian military doctrine.

The key question facing Russia's political establishment and national security apparatus is "What is Russia without the Soviet Union and without the Russian Empire?" No Russian military doctrine or national security strategy will endure until and unless this question is dealt with. As it stands, the Russian Federation is merely a truncated empire consisting of numerous ethno-political administrative units, populated by various ethnic groups, and vulnerable to the same virus of nationalism and regionalism and desire for self-determination that tore the Soviet Union apart.

In a potential crisis situation, use of force and reliance on coercive institutions in the name of preserving Russia's territorial integrity may appear the only option left to the central government, were it to try to halt the "parade of sovereignties" and restore its power and authority throughout the country. However, it would be fraught with unpredictable and dangerous consequences, given the uncertain state of the Russian military and its questionable cohesion and ability to act in internal contingencies. The unattractiveness and dubious prospects for success of any attempts to restore the centralized state in Russia suggest two alternative paths for the present transformation of center-periphery relations: voluntary delegation of power and authority by the center to the regional governments; or sporadic or "avalanche" autonomization of Russia's constituent units, which could contribute to further confusion in the country and possibly even result in its disintegration. In reality, Russia seems to be following the middle course between the two alternatives, thus alleviating but not putting to rest widespread fears of the worst—total chaos and disintegration of the Russian state.

The balance struck in center-periphery relations inside Russia will likely have serious implications for its relations with the former Soviet republics. For Russia to remain within its present boundaries, the logic of its future internal structure must answer the question

"What is Russia?" in a way that will reconcile both Kiev's status as the capital of a foreign country with Kyzyl's and Ulan Ude's positions as centers of Russian provinces. Complicating the situation is the fact that Russia has left some 25 million ethnic Russians "abroad" as subjects of now-foreign countries—i.e., the former Soviet republics. Protecting Russian nationals is among the key missions of the armed forces of the Russian state and an important contingency for Russian military planners.

The breakup of the Soviet Union has resulted in a fundamental geostrategic setback which no Russian military planner in modern history has had to contemplate and come to terms with. Russian military doctrine and national security policy must address the loss of territory; access routes; military infrastructure built up over the course of decades, in some instances centuries; troops and equipment left outside the territory of the Russian Federation; air defense facilities and with them warning space and time; key communications and transportation facilities vital to Russia's economic interests; and last but not least, significant portions of its nuclear arsenal.

Russia's southern frontier along the Caucasian mountains is engulfed in interethnic, religious, and civil conflicts which include Georgia, Abkhazia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh, the two Ossetias, and Chechnya. Russian troops in the region are caught between withdrawal, attempts at peacekeeping operations, and the need to protect themselves and their families.

Russia's position in Central Asia is hardly better. Russia remains the key to its stability, and in turn Central Asia will likely have a strong impact on Russia's post-Soviet security policy and military doctrine. The civil war in Tajikistan can keep going because of a virtually unrestricted flow of weapons from neighboring Afghanistan, whose Northern provinces are populated by an estimated 3 to 5 million ethnic Tajiks. The old Soviet-Afghan border is being maintained by a contingent of Russian troops, increasingly demoralized and inadequate to the task of stopping the flow of weapons and people across the difficult mountainous terrain.

The prospect that instability in Central Asia may spread beyond the civil war-torn Tajikistan cannot be ignored by Russia, no matter how much some people in its political elite would like to disassociate

themselves from it. Central Asia is Russia's strategic rear to which it is tied by forces of history, geography, and ethnicity.

Russia's unique interest in the region is bound to be reflected in the following peculiar personal circumstance: the current generation of Russian military leaders is in effect made up of veterans of the Afghan war. The only hands-on war known by the present generation of Russian military leaders is the Afghan war, which will likely prove of enduring significance for Russian military thinking, doctrine, and national security policy.

Russia's geopolitical retreat has been equally if not more visible in Eastern and Central Europe. In formulating a credible national security strategy in Europe, Russian national security thinkers will have to navigate a delicate course between a bizarre combination of paranoia, xenophobia, and neo-imperialism on one hand and constructive assertion of legitimate Russian security interests on the other.

Nowhere is this challenge greater along Russia's periphery than vis-à-vis independent Ukraine. At least for the greater part of this decade, the issue of Russian-Ukrainian security relations promises to be aggravated by the unsettled military inheritance of the former Soviet Union, particularly those nuclear weapons deployed on the territory of Ukraine, which it has shown considerable reluctance to part with.

The Ukrainian challenge to Russian security interests is two-fold. First, it is a challenge from a state whose internal political and economic situation is just as uncertain and unstable as that of Russia itself, if not more so. Second, it is a challenge from a state that (once it overcomes its internal problems) will likely define its position in the European security and political arena as the first line of defense against Russia's potential hegemonic ambitions, both as a guarantee of its own territorial integrity against a possible Russian challenge and a link to a broader European security system.

A number of prominent Russian political personalities and analysts have spoken about the need to reestablish Russia's sphere of influence on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Presumably, Russia would make such a sphere off limits for what would be perceived in Moscow as interference by other powers, and impose constraints on independence and sovereignty of states trapped inside that sphere.

In deliberations of Russian security analysts, the dividing line between the "near abroad" and countries further West can easily become blurred. Russian security requirements can be extended as far as the border of the nearest great power to the West—Germany. Everything in between will then serve merely as a buffer between the two European superpowers. The logic of neo-imperialism that drives declarations that the entire former Soviet Union is Russia's exclusive sphere of influence will also deny the smaller states of Eastern and Central Europe their strategic independence.

In fact, Russian security analysts of practically every political orientation have opposed the drive of former Warsaw Pact satellites for membership in NATO. To the more conservative analysts, NATO's continuing presence as the sole military and political alliance in Europe and its expansion will likely confirm their worst suspicions, harbored since the days of the Soviet retreat from Germany and the demise of the Warsaw Pact. And even the liberal wing of the Russian policy-making and analytical community—the Westernizers—who have since the Gorbachev days advocated a closer alliance with the West, see that NATO's expansion threatens Moscow with the erection of a barrier that would once again divide Europe and establish a *cordon sanitaire* around Russia.

The nature of Russia's interest in Eastern and Central Europe and its presence in the region will depend largely on the outcome of Russia's own internal transformation. To an aggressively chauvinist xenophobic Russia, independent Poland or Ukraine will always be a threat, as will a prosperous unified Germany. To a Russia that will overcome its internal challenges, independent Poland and Ukraine will offer a bridge to a more stable and secure Europe. In either of these outcomes, however, Russia will not be able to ignore the lands between its Western borders and Germany.

In any event, at present the ability to fulfill whatever neo-imperialist ambition Russia might have has all but disintegrated. Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Kokoshin has admitted that the bulk of the Russian military is not a credible fighting force that the state can rely on in case of an emergency.

This gloomy assessment of Russia's military and its combat potential was reflected in the new military doctrine published in November 1993. The doctrine's authors implicitly acknowledged the weakness of Russia's conventional military capabilities by explicitly emphasizing the enhanced role of nuclear weapons in deterring threats to Russian security. The military establishment has focused the new doctrine on the territory of Russia and the former Soviet sphere, more in line with limited capabilities and political imperatives.

The country's political crisis has profoundly affected the officer corps. The military's erratic behavior during the October crisis in Moscow evidently prompted the doctrine's authors to reaffirm the supreme authority of the president as the commander-in-chief and thus minimize opportunities for the military's loyalties to conflict. Nonetheless, the military institution does not appear as a cohesive actor in Russian domestic politics. It seems more likely to become divided or to become a pawn of other political forces.

What are the implications of Russia's internal transformation, in particular the center-periphery conflict in Russia, for U.S. interests? The most dire of the possible outcome scenarios—disintegration of the Russian state—is clearly not in the interest of the United States or its allies or Russia's neighbors. The other extreme scenario would entail restoration of a centralized state in Russia in the short run. Such an outcome appears unlikely.

The third—and most favorable—outcome would be a more orderly evolution of Russia into a decentralized state. It would be likely to ensure the greatest degree of stability throughout Russia itself and, hence, by implication, throughout the neighboring countries.

This option—decentralization—appears to be the one Russia is currently following. It would be in the interest of the United States to encourage Russia's orderly transformation into a decentralized state. These conclusions underscore the unprecedented importance of keeping abreast with and understanding regional trends in Russia.

U.S. aid can be used to help Russia's orderly transformation into a decentralized state. U.S. and international aid organizations can participate in and sponsor regional economic development plans as an alternative to dealing with the central government in Moscow.

While pursuing these policies, the United States has to continuously reaffirm its support for Russia's territorial integrity, and emphasize that U.S. economic aid policy is not intended to undermine the power and authority of the central government in Moscow.

Despite its preoccupation with its internal arrangements, Russia will not be able to isolate itself from the outside world. Whether Russia likes it or not, it will have to deal with the "near" and "far abroad." Russia will remain the pivotal player in regional political and security developments throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union. The question is what kind of a player it will be. To date, evidence available to predict Russia's future behavior as a regional superpower is mixed. General restraint of the policies of the Yeltsin presidency vis-à-vis the "near abroad" and cooperation with the United States and other key Western powers has stood in stark contrast with the shifting direction of the national security and foreign policy discourse among Russian specialists toward a more aggressive pursuit of a neo-imperialist policy and a less cooperative relationship with the West.

Notwithstanding all the uncertainty about the future face and course of Russia's foreign and security policy, U.S. policymakers have to recognize that there are no alternatives to Russia playing the role of guarantor of security and stability throughout the former Soviet Union (FSU). This recognition need not take the form of blanket affirmation of Russia's *droit de regard* over the FSU by the international community. Rather, Russia's mandate itself and its specifics can and should be made subject to United Nations or Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) approval in every case where external intervention would be required.

U.S. policymakers face the task of weighing good relations with Russia against cooperative policies toward the former Soviet republics as well as former Soviet satellites in Eastern and Central Europe. It would be tempting to extend the West's security umbrella further East.

If the purpose of extending the Western security umbrella to Eastern Europe is to stabilize the region against regional/ethnic conflict, NATO or any other Western security organization has no more credibility in promising to stabilize Eastern Europe in case of regional

conflict than it has had in threatening to intervene in the former Yugoslavia. If the West's security umbrella is intended to alleviate regional fears of Russian irredentism, then these fears are unfounded for a long time to come. Furthermore, if Russia is so weak as to allow the West to step in as the guarantor of security and stability along its periphery, then fears of Russian irredentism must be clearly out of proportion to the reality of the potential Russian threat.

Far from abandoning East/Central Europe, the preferred policy course would be its economic integration into the Western community, first of all into the European Community. It would help the West escape the pitfalls of unrealistic security commitments. And it would lessen the prospects of Russian irredentism becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The rapid collapse of the Soviet Union following the failed August coup of 1991 left the Soviet military—the one institution of the former USSR that aspired to the status of a truly Soviet establishment—standing alone. As the newly independent states embarked on the path of true sovereignty, the Soviet military found itself dangling without a state's firm political leadership or allegiance, doctrine, or mission. The establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) command and independent military organizations in the former Soviet republics only confused the lines of command, structures, and allegiances, threatening to upset the fragile peace in many corners of the Commonwealth and to derail the process of state- and nation-building. Commonwealth states, in the short period since the breakup of the Soviet Union, have made little progress in articulating the vision of national interest and purpose they need before their national security establishments can begin to formulate national security policies and military doctrines.[1]

The devolution of the Soviet Union into newly independent states was accompanied by the beginning of the process of building new national militaries in the former Soviet republics. Within a few months after the Union's formal dissolution, most ex-Soviet republics had announced plans to build their own military institutions, as guarantors of their security and attributes of full sovereignty.

But the real process of military building in the newly independent states has not followed their initial plans. It has moved along largely

[1]This report was completed in February 1994.

as a function of immediate political, military, and economic factors, rather than fully developed concepts of national security and clearly articulated military doctrines.[2] The policy process descriptions in political science and public policy textbooks have not been considered.

Thus in several regions of the former Soviet Union—such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, North and South Ossetia, and Abkhazia—escalation of ethnic conflict into full-fledged wars has forced the newly independent states to call on existing military organizations in local ethnic militias and to recognize they need to maintain them. Such political and military circumstances have denied the states the luxury of peaceful contemplation of military doctrine, strategy, and geopolitical orientation so vital and basic to the task of formulating military doctrine. This situation, however, is likely to be a temporary albeit conceivably a quite lengthy detour, for when these states reemerge from ethnic conflict and embark on the path of true sovereignty, they will have to address these issues.

Elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, in areas where a degree of stability and peace have prevailed, initial plans for military building have collided with the problems of post-Soviet transition from independence to true sovereignty. These include economic decline, the threat of societal upheavals, the specter of ethnic and religious tensions, and territorial disputes. In addition, the general momentum of the Soviet and Russian imperial heritage complicates progress toward a clear articulation of national interest and an understanding of the challenges involved.

Economic difficulties and the burdens associated with establishing independent armed forces and assuming responsibility for their own security seem to have nullified, at least in the short- and medium-term,[3] the early plans of the five Central Asian states—Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrghyzstan, and Kazakhstan—to build

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[2]The term "doctrine" is used here and throughout this text in accordance with the traditional Soviet definition of military doctrine as a "system of views on the essence, goals, character of a possible future war; on the country's and the Armed Forces' preparation for it and methods of its conduct." (*Voyennyy Entsyklopedicheskiy Slovar'*, Moscow, Voyenizdat, 1986.)

[3]Short- and medium-term are defined here as six months to one year, and five years, respectively.

their own militaries as militarily significant institutions, not merely as symbolic attributes of their sovereignty. All of them face costs of acquiring independent significant military capabilities magnified by internal and regional security problems, which stem chiefly from interethnic tensions, territorial claims, religious revival, arbitrarily drawn boundaries within the region, and the porous borders of the former Soviet Union. The reality of post-Soviet transition has thrown these states in quest of a status quo, and back to the fold of Russia and the CIS as the only stabilizing military and political actor present in the region.

Ukraine stands out as one of the few exceptions to the military building patterns in most ex-Soviet republics, which are flocking to Russia's security umbrella. Ukraine is stuck between independence and Russia. It has merely begun its search for national identity and purpose and the process of defining its national security requirements.

The Ukrainian government has adopted a general plan for acquiring an independent military of some 450,000 and put forth a concept of military doctrine that falls far short of fully articulating Ukrainian security interest, potential challenges to it, and policies to meet them. Current Ukrainian military doctrine concepts will likely produce little more than an interim doctrine, which at best will be more an attribute of sovereignty than a credible blueprint for Ukrainian security policies.

This situation in Ukraine can be blamed on its own complicated domestic politics; the legacy of Russian and Soviet domination; religious, ethnic, regional, and cultural fault lines; the complexity of its relationship with Russia and how that affects Ukrainian domestic politics; and the nature of its first post-Soviet leadership. The uncertain domestic political and social climate in Ukraine, as well as its economic problems, will likely reduce its current defense policy plans and military doctrine concept to mere placeholders. The fundamental issues of Ukrainian security, national interest, and national identity—in all of which Ukraine's relationship with Russia and the CIS plays the pivotal role—have yet to be addressed in Kiev and the rest of the country. Ultimately, the burden of internal challenges to Ukraine's security may prove a greater threat than Russia to the country's security and territorial integrity amid uncertain constitu-

tional arrangements, rising center-periphery tensions, and declining economic conditions.

Despite the sour relations between the two countries, Russia, through its continuing adherence to the CIS agreement, is also a guarantor of Ukraine's security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. The Commonwealth agreement signed by both Russia and Ukraine remains the single most important legal guarantee against Moscow's territorial claims against Ukraine. Were Ukraine to leave the Commonwealth, it would be giving up that guarantee. Thus, paradoxically, Russia remains both the greatest perceived threat to Ukraine's security and its guardian, inextricably tying fate to its own domestic and foreign policy transformations.

Russia—the dominant power in the CIS—was last to embark on the path of building its own independent military in March of 1992. Leaving aside the political circumstances and dynamics preceding President Yeltsin's decree to establish Russia's own Defense Ministry and armed forces, the decision put in place the key element of Russia's sovereignty and formally marked the beginning of a search for a new Russian military doctrine.

The fragility of the independence and sovereignty of the non-Russian ex-Soviet republics and the inertia of the Soviet and Russian legacy ensure the continuation of their participation in the CIS. Notwithstanding Russia's own political and economic difficulties and the enormity of its task of building an independent and truly sovereign state, Russia remains preponderant in CIS politics and security trends as its largest and most powerful member. The future of CIS security is inextricably tied to the development of Russian military doctrine, which is bound to influence political and military trends throughout the Commonwealth.

This study examines the fundamental factors that will determine the direction of Russia's security policy and military doctrine. It establishes the connection between Russia's internal transformation and its alternative outcomes on the one hand, and Russia's future doctrine vis-à-vis its former colonies, as well as other powers in Europe and Asia, on the other hand. The study concludes with implications for U.S. policy.

Chapter Two

THE PERESTROIKA LEGACY

The emergence of Russia from the Soviet era following the failed August coup of 1991 promised a radical shift in the evolution of Soviet and Russian security policy and military doctrine, which for the better part of the 20th century had been marked by expansionism and confrontation with the principal Western European powers and the United States. The democratic coalition's victory in Moscow in the aftermath of the August coup promised to end ideological competition and open a new era of cooperation with the West.

Preliminary outlines of Russian security policy became evident even before the August coup. The emergence of the Russian democratic coalition under Boris Yeltsin's leadership in 1990 as the key player in Soviet domestic politics promised to solidify the accomplishments of the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze foreign policy team. The appointment of Shevardnadze's protégé Andrey Kozyrev as Russia's foreign minister sent an important signal to the outside world that Boris Yeltsin's Russia would pursue a course of collaboration with the West—especially with the United States—and would support the policies that had resulted in the signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) and Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaties; had brought about major progress in the area of strategic arms control; had permitted peaceful unification of the two Germanys; and had led to the end of the post-World War II division of Europe.

The commitment of Yeltsin's democratic coalition to the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze foreign policy line had a distinct practical political motive: to internationalize its political struggle in Moscow with Gorbachev and his reactionary allies in the winter of 1990–1991 when

they were trying to halt the political unraveling of the centralized Soviet state. At the time, pressure from the West to pursue the Gorbachev-instigated reform course was seen as a key factor to which the democratic coalition owed its survival in the face of the threat of a reactionary backlash.[1]

Furthermore, in the aftermath of the August coup and the victory of the democratic coalition, a degree of continuity between the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze and Yeltsin's foreign and security policies appeared virtually guaranteed because of the ideological underpinnings of Yeltsin's political campaign throughout 1990 and 1991. Dissolution of the Soviet empire became a key element in his domestic and international political agenda under the name "Little Russia." The "Little Russia" concept pictured a future rejuvenated Russian state freed from its imperial burden and pursuing relations with its former colonies and satellites, as well as other interested partners, on the basis of equality and mutual interest.

Throughout the political campaigns of 1990 and 1991, President Boris Yeltsin and his allies in the democratic coalition argued that Russia had been the chief victim of its own imperial pursuits and had suffered as much if not more damage as a result of the Soviet government's expansionist policies than any other part of the Soviet empire. Therefore, the solution to Russia's problems and the only chance for its economic, societal, and political rejuvenation lay in "coming home." This would require active geographic and political retrenchment from the empire, reduction of the crushing military burden, and restoration of a cooperative relationship with the West, whose economic assistance was deemed crucial to the success of Russian economic and political reforms.

In effect, this inward reorientation of Russia's economic, political, and spiritual energies in the months prior to the ill-fated August coup and immediately following it amounted to a combination of isolationism vis-à-vis the Soviet Union's internal and external empires and integration with the industrialized Western democracies. It seemed that Russia, in the zeal of self-righteousness, was embracing a vigorously pro-Western foreign and security line intended to undo

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[1]Interviews, Moscow, October 1990 and February 1991.

the remaining mistakes of the Cold War and move toward a new alliance with the West.

Few if any of these political proclivities had been developed and articulated in the areas of foreign and security policies by the new Yeltsin government prior to the August coup beyond the point of expressing commitment to further progress in nuclear and conventional arms control, compliance with international treaties, and cooperation with the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Having embraced the political slogans of democracy, free markets, human rights, and non-use of force in international relations, Russia had generally committed to good behavior in the international arena. The reigning consensus in Moscow's political and national security and foreign policy community prior to and in the aftermath of the August coup was decidedly pro-Western.

A shrill but at the time insignificant exception to the reigning consensus was taken by the fringe right political coalition of xenophobic Russian nationalists, former Communists, some senior military officers, and odd political personalities like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, chairman of the so-called Liberal Democratic party. Fundamentally mistrustful of the West and opposed to free-market reforms and the liberal-democratic philosophy espoused by the Yeltsin coalition, they argued that rapprochement with the West is not in Russia's interest because of the West's hidden agenda designed to permanently weaken Russia and relegate it to the position of subservience to Western economic and security interests.[2]

Despite outspoken criticism by the reactionary wing of Russia's political spectrum to the broad foreign and security policy philosophy embraced by Boris Yeltsin's government, the opposition was effectively marginalized in 1991 after its candidates were defeated in the

[2]Interviews, Moscow, fall of 1990, spring and fall of 1991. Curiously, some representatives of the reactionary coalition (many of whose members are united only by their opposition to the Yeltsin government) profess to have no hostile feelings toward the United States. The United States, they argue, could be Russia's partner if it would accept Russia as an equal partner, respect Russia's traditions and interests, abandon pursuit of democratic principles, and agree to an arrangement whereby the two superpowers would assume responsibility for their respective spheres of influence and in effect become joint policemen of the world.

Russian presidential election and the August coup. The "red-brown," or national-communist coalition, suffered a resounding political defeat, and its loudly articulated views were relegated to a position of irrelevance, at least from the standpoint of practical policy considerations.

Few if any of the general principles adopted by the government of the new Russia translated into specific blueprints for the conduct of its military and security policy. The official line from the Yeltsin government—which for the first few months of Russia's independence had lacked one of the principal attributes of sovereignty, i.e., its own defense minister and military institution—emphasized the demise of the old Cold War-era threat from NATO and the United States and stressed the urgent need to reduce Russia's military burden as mandated by the gravity of the economic situation. At the same time, Russian civilian and military defense analysts continued to discuss various concepts for far-reaching military reform—an idea inherited from the Soviet era, several proposals for which had been circulated throughout the Soviet Ministry of Defense, the Supreme Soviet, and the academic community. Most proposals for military reform included provisions for major reductions in the size of the armed forces, transition to an all-volunteer force, and a fundamental restructuring of Russia's defense priorities consistent with the new political realities of the post-Cold War age. But none of these proposals contained a clear, comprehensive articulation of Russia's defense needs or the challenges to its security or strategic interests, let alone specifications for force size, structure, composition, and deployment, or realistic blueprints for transition to the desired end-state.[3]

The establishment of Russian military institutions—the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff—marked the first step in the formal institutional process of development and articulation of Russian military doctrine and national security policy. However, the start of this formal process coincided with the unraveling of Russia's domestic political consensus and the exacerbation of its acute economic

[3]This section is based on extensive interviews with Soviet and Russian government officials, military personnel, academic specialists, and representatives of major political groupings and parties conducted in the spring and fall of 1991 and spring of 1992 in Moscow.

crisis. These two developments combined effectively destroyed the weak political foundations that could have served as the basis for Russian military doctrine. The search for new foundations would have to start again.

Chapter Three

THE CRISIS OF RUSSIA'S STATEHOOD

In addition to the political and economic crises that engulfed Russia just a few short months into its independence, its search for a new military doctrine and national security policy was complicated by the weakness of the historical and political foundations on which this policy was to be built. In making the transition from the Soviet Union to Russia, the political and military elite who made up the country's national security and political establishment had inherited little ideological and policy capital from the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze era. The perestroika phase in Moscow's foreign and security policy was mostly concerned with undoing the misdeeds of the Cold War. Once that goal had been accomplished with the Soviet commitment to withdraw from Eastern Europe and East Germany, reduce conventional forces, eliminate intermediate-range missiles and reduce strategic nuclear arsenals, Soviet and then Russian foreign and national security policy was left without a sense of strategic direction, clearly articulated goals, or a vision of national interest.

This phenomenon was a direct result of the domestic political crisis and the demise of the official Soviet Communist ideology—the raison d'être of the Soviet state—which eventually led to the breakup of the Soviet Union and soon thereafter plunged the Russian Federation into a severe constitutional crisis, threatening it with internal chaos and the prospect of disintegration. The gravity of Russia's constitutional crisis in effect predetermined two major directions of Russia's national security policy which will preoccupy the country's political elite in the years to come: the preservation and strengthening of statehood for the Russian Federation and its territorial integrity, and definition of Russia's geopolitical position in

the former Soviet Union. The task of defining Russia's position and strategy vis-à-vis the rest of the world pales by comparison with the first two, which in turn will determine Russia's future place in the international system at large.

The difficult experience of the first stage of economic and societal reforms initiated by the Gaydar-Yeltsin team in the aftermath of the August coup and the breakup of the Soviet Union has undermined the domestic political position of the new Russian government spearheaded by the democratic and free-market coalition. Its decline in popularity amid an accelerating economic crisis has eroded support for its fledgling ideological platform, which included provisions for transforming Russia into a decentralized federal state, as well as new directions for Russia's foreign and security policies aimed at establishing a broad alliance with the West and fundamentally new relations with former colonies outside the Russian Federation.

The rapid dissolution of the Soviet Union and the rapid decline of the post-Soviet economy accelerated the political crisis and left little time for reflection and development of national security strategy, articulation of guiding principles of Russia's foreign and national security policy, and orderly formulation of tasks facing Russia's national security establishment. In the wake of the Soviet breakup, the two tasks—preservation (some would argue, establishment) of Russia's statehood and territorial integrity and definition of its geopolitical position within the former Soviet Union—are interrelated.

Russia's statehood crisis, which at times has put the country's territorial integrity in jeopardy, is a direct result of historical legacies of the Russian and Soviet empires, aggravated by the continuing political upheavals. The key question facing Russia's political establishment and national security apparatus is "What is Russia without the Soviet Union and without the Russian Empire?" No Russian military doctrine or national security strategy is possible until and unless this question is dealt with.

However, the answer to the question "What is Russia?" lies not only in articulating Russia's foreign and national security policy and in settling relations with other ex-Soviet republics. It may also be the

single most important issue on Russia's *domestic* political agenda, having to do with settling Russia's own constitutional arrangement. More than at any point in Russia's recent history its internal politics and national security have become closely intertwined. The outcome of the domestic transformation is more than likely to have far-reaching implications for the external dimension of Russia's foreign and security policy.

The peculiarity of Russia's position outside the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire stems from the fact that the Russian Federation in its current post-Soviet borders does not constitute a well-defined established nation-state with a clear historical identity and traditions. The Russian Federation is merely a truncated empire consisting of numerous ethno-political administrative units, populated by various ethnic groups, and vulnerable to the same virus of nationalism and regionalism and desire for self-determination that tore the Soviet Union apart as the latter's coercive apparatus and ideological foundations crumbled under the strain of glasnost and perestroika. In the words of one prominent Soviet political commentator written in the fall of 1991,

> The conquest of North Caucasus was the most overt expression of Russia's imperial policy. Therefore, it is difficult to explain within the limits of common sense to the Ossetians or the Chechens why they have fewer rights to an independent Mountain State than the Moldovans who joined Russia voluntarily seeking protection from the Turks.[1]

Although a reorganization of Russia into a multinational, truly federal state is possible, the political and economic realities of the post-Soviet era have combined into a powerful challenge to such a transformation. The idea of a federal state following the prototype of the Federal Republic of Germany is popular among some representatives[2] of Russia's democratic coalition, but it would be difficult to implement in the present political circumstances. The "parade of

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[1]Aleksandr Tsypko, "The Drama of Russia's Choice," *Izvestiya*, October 2, 1991.

[2]Interviews, Moscow, May–June, 1992; Santa Monica, CA, March, 1992.

sovereignties,"[3] which President Boris Yeltsin himself encouraged as a weapon in his political struggle with Gorbachev, is now rapidly taking over the Russian Federation. The central government in Moscow seems either unwilling or unable to realize this and to grant the provinces the rights and responsibilities that would bring equilibrium to Russia's center-periphery conflict.

As seen from Russia's periphery, there is no alternative to a large-scale transfer of power from the central government to the regions and a fundamental restructuring of relations between the center and the periphery:

> The uncompromising state centralism, the humiliating hierarchy of locales, the exploitation of the provinces are going—or must go—into the past.
>
> The [ability of the center to conduct reform] has been exhausted by futile attempts to form the basis of a new constitutional order and impose the same standard of economic and political transformations on all regions of Russia. The situation will not be saved by the practice of granting special privileges to some territories which essentially is a demonstration of the imperial-unitary thinking of the central authorities.[4]

In any event, the continuing political struggle within the central government—between its legislative and executive branches—poses a formidable obstacle to efforts to resolve the problem of center-periphery relations. The adoption of the new constitution in the December 12 referendum and the election of the new legislature are but an intermediate and inconclusive step in the process of resolution of the crisis of Russia's regionalism. The newly-adopted constitution falls short of the ideal—an enduring arrangement that would

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[3]The term refers to a series of declarations of sovereignty by the then-union republics under growing nationalist pressures. These declarations were an important step in the game of brinkmanship that local leaders played with Moscow, not seceding from the Soviet Union, but asserting their status as sovereign states, undermining Moscow's authority, and suggesting that the next step might indeed be secession. Boris Yeltsin, as the leader of Russia, had himself used that tactic to undermine Gorbachev's authority.

[4]Viktor Ignatenko, Mikhail Rozhanskiy, Sergey Shishkin, "Provintsiya i vozrozhdeniye Rossii," *Svobodnaya Mysl'*, No. 7, May 1993.

delineate clearly separation of powers between the country's central and regional authorities. The issue is likely to reemerge in the new legislature as well, where regional interests are represented in both chambers and where political fractionation promises to produce ample opportunities for leveraging even small numbers of votes into substantial political fortunes. The adoption of the new constitution at best marks the beginning of a protracted process of political legitimization of the new arrangement that could last for years, perhaps decades.[5]

The severity of the crisis in center-periphery relations in Russia is underscored by the fact that the "parade of sovereignties" is a phenomenon attributable not only to nationalism and desire for self-determination on the part of Russia's ethnic minorities. Russia's oblasts and other administrative divisions populated predominantly by ethnic Russians have also joined the struggle for greater political and economic rights. Suffice it to say that local legislatures in such regions of Russia as Vologda, Arkhangelsk, and the Urals have adopted laws and staked out demands for rights that would severely curtail Moscow's involvement in the running of their affairs. In the words of one prominent Moscow political analyst:

> The process of republicanization of oblasts cannot be stopped. . . . If we don't want to call subjects of the federation states, governorships, lands, they will all call themselves republics. What will follow? . . . If an acceptable formula is not found we can expect disruptions similar to those [which followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union in Belovezhskaya Pushcha]. Most analysts think that the oblasts-republics are bluffing in order to draw attention to the problem of equality of federation subjects. Nonetheless, the oblasts may take this game seriously and won't it be necessary then to move the capital of Russia to some place in the Urals?[6]

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[5]In making this argument the author would like to emphasize that given the complexity of Russia's domestic politics, its regional and ethnic diversity, and the novelty of the constitutional debate, it would be unrealistic to expect a speedy resolution of the country's constitutional crisis. Multiple issues of states' rights continuously come to the fore of the political debate in the United States—more than two centuries after its constitution was signed. Russia's new constitution should be seen as the beginning rather than the end of the country's real constitutional debate. At best the new constitution provides a framework for resolving future crises.

[6]Marina Shakina, "V Politike Leta Nikto Ne Zamechaet," *Novoye Vremya*, No. 28, 1993.

The process of decentralization in Russia is taking on a sporadic nature and often resembles decomposition of the existing federation with a growing paralysis and power vacuum at the center. It is accompanied by de facto autonomization of Russia's constituent provinces and in some instances assumption by them of sovereign status. At stake is the power and authority of Russia's central government and the country's constitutional arrangement, as well as its cohesion as a unified state. Restoration of state power throughout the country and suppression of the so-called "islands of independence" inside Russia are among the most urgent tasks on its national security agenda, as seen by prominent security analysts in Moscow.[7]

Russia's 31 autonomous provinces account for more than 53 percent of its territory, but only 18 percent of its population (9 million square kilometers and 26 million people).[8] In 18 of these provinces ethnic Russians account for more than half of the population, yet they risk being relegated to the status of nontitular nationality, which implies a minority status within these ethno-territorial districts.

The imposition of presidential rule in the aftermath of the October 1993 confrontation in Moscow and the adoption of the new constitution in December have produced a lull in relations between Moscow and Russia's constituent provinces. However, the results of the referendum suggest that the lull is likely to prove merely an interlude and that tensions will most likely resume as the shock of the October events wears off and memories of the electoral campaign fade. Of 21 republics within the Russian Federation nearly half—nine—failed to approve the new constitution. Another ten oblasts followed their example and rejected Russia's new "basic law." In the words of one prominent newspaper columnist,

> The specter of the breakup permanently floating above the federation has not been chased away by the adoption of the Constitution. . . . The ideas of federalism, the principle of unity and

[7]See, for example, the article by then-chairman of the parliamentary committee on defense and security, Sergey Stepashin, published in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, August 11, 1993.

[8]*Kommersant-Daily*, December 23, 1992.

> indivisibility of Russia declared by the Kremlin with often frightening for the provinces persistence, have been privatized and distorted by Zhirinovskiy. . . . [therefore], the results of December 12 make it imperative for Russia's republics to insist on their sovereignty with even greater resolve. Nearly half of them voted against the Constitution and now there are even more justifications for such an expression of popular will than before. . . . Having received a popular mandate to conduct a more independent policy, regional leaders will not give up the chance to use it. The post-October two month old loyalty to the center will be reduced to naught any day now.[9]

The prospect of formal outright secession by any one of these provinces is hardly acceptable to Russia, for it would likely precipitate a further crisis of statehood and set up dangerous secessionist precedents. The illogic of continuing with the status quo is evident; Russia in its present condition is little more than a truncated empire weakened by the regions' growing appetite for economic and even political self-determination.[10] Its chances for an orderly transformation into a real federation or otherwise decentralized state remain uncertain amid the continuing crises in its economy and in relations between the executive and legislative branches. In addition, increasingly assertive regional power centers are unwilling to wait for the process to work itself through.

In a crisis, the use of force and reliance on coercive institutions in the name of preserving Russia's territorial integrity may appear the only option left to the central government if it tries to halt the "parade of sovereignties" and restore its power and authority throughout the country. Yet given the uncertain state of the Russian military and the military's questionable cohesion and ability to act in internal contingencies, this would also be the option most fraught with unpredictable and dangerous consequences.[11]

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[9]Valeriy Vyzhutovich, "Novaya Konstitutsiya Prinyata, Ugroza Separatizma Ostaetsya," *Izvestiya*, December 22, 1993.

[10]One of the best and earliest statements on Russia's constitutional problem after the Soviet breakup was written by a well-known political scientist, Aleksandr Tsypko: "The Russian Federation is the heart of the Russian Empire, the essence of its imperial conquests." *Izvestiya*, October 2, 1991.

[11]The issue of the military's internal condition is addressed below.

The unattractiveness and dubious prospects for success of attempts to restore the centralized state in Russia, combined with the strengthening of centrifugal political and economic forces in its provinces, suggest two alternative paths out of the present crisis in center-periphery relations: voluntary delegation of power and authority by the center to the regional governments; or sporadic or "avalanche" autonomization of Russia's constituent units, thus contributing to further confusion in the country and possibly even resulting in Russia's disintegration. In any event, a certain transfer of power and authority from the center to the periphery appears imminent, while the chances of preserving a centralized Russian state after the Soviet collapse grow dimmer under the pressure of centrifugal forces.

In reality Russia seems to be following the middle course between the two alternatives, thus alleviating but not putting to rest widespread fears of the worst: total chaos and disintegration of the Russian state. That middle course is the result of both unrelenting pressure from the periphery on the central government and the latter's own weakness.

Russia's internal weakness and the urgency of the task of settling the crisis in center-periphery relations pose an effective restraint on whatever latent neo-imperialist ambitions its leaders might have during the balance of this decade. But neo-imperialism as a domestic political mobilization issue and as an approach to dealing with Russia's real and pressing foreign and security policy agenda with respect to the neighboring ex-Soviet republics should not be dismissed out of hand as a closed chapter in the country's history.

The balance struck in center-periphery relations inside Russia is likely to have serious implications for its relations with the former Soviet republics. For Russia to remain within its present boundaries, the logic of its future internal arrangement must answer the question "What is Russia?" in a way that would reconcile both Kiev's status as the capital of a foreign country with Kyzyl's and Ulan Ude's positions as centers of Russian provinces. However unlikely preservation of a strong centralized Russian state may appear at the moment, this possibility cannot be dismissed outright. A government in Moscow that would not be willing to let go of its preponderant role in the life of Russia's constituent provinces and its position as the center of a

truncated empire would be less likely to reconcile itself in the long run with the loss of the external empire.

Still, regardless of the outcome of its internal transformation, Russia is bound to remain the key player politically and militarily throughout the former Soviet Union territory. What will likely be affected is the nature of Russia's participation in political and security trends in the Commonwealth, either as a force for stability in regional affairs, respectful of the independence and sovereignty of former colonies, or as an irredentist power.

By leaving the Soviet Union, Russia left some 25 million ethnic Russians abroad as subjects of now-foreign countries—former Soviet republics. The fate of these compatriots poses a political challenge that Russian military doctrine cannot ignore. Many of them—some ten million—are residents of the predominantly Muslim Central Asia, a region of the former Soviet Union that has already experienced considerable turmoil, where Russians are widely perceived as colonizers, and where the colonial experience has left a legacy of widespread poverty, societal inequalities, a severely damaged environment, and arbitrarily drawn borders. Protection of Russian nationals in the region is among the key missions of the armed forces of the Russian state and an important contingency for Russian military planners.

Twelve million ethnic Russians are citizens of now-independent Ukraine. Ukrainian-Russian interethnic relations have been traditionally free of animosity. However, Ukraine's own uncertain sovereignty and current political and economic difficulties have the potential for generating powerful centrifugal forces which could in turn trigger secessionist tendencies in areas with significant ethnic Russian population—Eastern Ukraine, Crimea, and the Black Sea coast. The prospect of such internal conflict in Ukraine, which the Kiev government would have to put down by force, could generate a powerful reaction in Moscow, potentially leading to Russian military intervention. Thus the very prospect of internal instability in Ukraine constitutes a significant challenge to Russia's national security, which cannot be ignored in formulating Russian military doctrine and national security policy.

Although the number of ethnic Russians residing in the territories of the Baltic states is significantly smaller than in Central Asia or Ukraine, in Estonia and Latvia Russian-speakers account for 30 percent or more of the population. In the aftermath of the Baltic countries' tragic experience under Soviet occupation, withholding full citizenship rights from ethnic Russians and the prospect of their relegation to the status of second-class citizens create a strong political threat to Moscow. Future deterioration of interethnic relations in these countries, which cannot be ruled out, could create powerful pressures on the political leadership in Moscow, thus making military intervention on behalf of Russian minorities in the Baltic states an important contingency for Russian military planners.

Furthermore, the remaining ex-Soviet and now Russian military forces in the Baltic states constitute an additional short-term security problem to the region and to Russia's own security interests. Although their numbers have been greatly reduced since the Soviet collapse, the risk of uncontrolled confrontation between the Russian and the Baltic militaries or civilian population remains. The precedent set by the renegade 14th Army in Moldova and its commander General Lebed is a dangerous one and could be repeated in one or more of the Baltic states. A confrontation, resulting from a possible rogue action by disgruntled or desperate Russian military commanders, holds out the potential for escalation involving Russian military intervention on behalf of the remaining Russian troops or civilian population.

The two issues likely to dominate Russia's political and national security agenda, thus steering the country's military doctrine, are preservation of its territorial integrity and relations with the former empire. In the course of resolution of both of these issues, definition of Russian national interest will likely be shaped by a peculiar Soviet and now Russian interpretation of nationality based on ethnic identification rather than citizenship.

The lack of a clearly defined concept of a multinational state in the Russian Federation and the challenge to its territorial integrity from within, as well as the promise of protection to Russian and Russophone millions throughout the former Soviet Union, threaten to bring to the fore a more aggressive nationalist agenda in Russia's foreign and security policy toward its former colonies. Furthermore,

ethnic identification remains the single most important tie to Russia for those Russians left in the "near abroad,"[12] making the cause of protecting compatriots particularly susceptible to nationalist influence. Thus the two issues facing Russia in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse—internal transformation as a multinational federal state and the fate of ethnic Russians abroad—combined hold the danger of pushing its national security policy and military doctrine in the direction of an aggressive nationalist agenda.

Realistically, the danger to Russia itself and the outside world is likely to be not so much in the concrete policies and actions that Moscow might take to implement this agenda. Russia's economic decline and the unraveling of post-Soviet military institutions are likely to pose an effective obstacle to a coordinated aggressive policy intent on accomplishing a neo-imperialist agenda. Rather, the danger lies in the political and ideological effect that challenges to Russia's security interests from the "near abroad" and the Russian Federation itself are likely to have on the long-term formulation of Russian national interest and Russian military doctrine.

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[12]This condescending term coined by Russian political analysts and writers denotes the former republics of the Soviet Union.

Chapter Four

THE GEOPOLITICAL FACTOR

In addition to challenges to Russia's national security stemming from unsettled ethnic issues and Russia's political and ideological position as a truncated empire, the breakup of the Soviet Union has resulted in a fundamental geostrategic setback, which no Russian military planner in modern history has had to contemplate and come to terms with. The end of the Cold War has meant for Russia not only the loss of its external empire in Eastern and Central Europe, but the loss of Ukraine and Belarus, Transcaucasia and Central Asia, as well as access to warm water ports in the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, with the resulting diminished access to the Mediterranean.[1] The loss of these territories has reversed Russia's progress over the course of more than three centuries in competition with Germany, Poland, the British Empire, and Turkey. In addition to the political, cultural, and ideological issues affecting Russia's national security discussed in the preceding chapters of this report, Russian military doctrine and national security policy have to address many losses: the loss of territory; access routes; military infrastructure built up over the course of decades, in some instances centuries; troops and equipment left outside the territory of the Russian Federation; air defense facilities and with them warning space and time; key communications and transportation facilities vital to Russia's economic interests; and last but not least, significant portions of its nuclear arsenal. In concrete terms the loss to Russia can be measured in millions of square kilo-

[1]For a statement on Russia's aspiration in the area of naval policy see the recent article by the Commander in Chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral F. N. Gromov, "Natsional'nyye interesy Rossii na more i Voyenno-Morskoy flot," *Voyennaya Mysl'*, No. 5, May 1993.

meters and trillions of dollars, although no reliable monetary estimate of the loss exists. Left abroad are also 25 million ethnic Russians. Lost are the strategic accomplishments of centuries of Russian conquests.

Less tangible but even more important is the geopolitical loss to Russia resulting from the collapse of its undisputed sphere of influence from the Russian-Ukrainian and -Belorussian border to the old inter-German border in the West; from North Caucasus to the Turkish border in the Southwest; and from the Russo-Kazakhstan border to the Afghan border in the South. The specter of internal fractionation of Russia raises the prospect of similar losses along the Mongolian border and in the Far East. The consequences of this all-azimuth collapse and retreat for Russia's sphere of influence must be addressed across all strategic directions of Russia's national security policy.

Moreover, Russia's rapid retrenchment from the concentric circles of the outer empire in Eastern and Central Europe and the inner empire in the Caucasus and Asia has resulted in *compounded* losses to its security interests, which any future Russian military doctrine must consider. These compounded losses are the direct consequence of the instability and turmoil that followed the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, as well as the prospects for greater instability throughout these diverse and dispersed regions of the former USSR.

CHALLENGE FROM THE SOUTH

Russia's southern frontier along the Caucasian mountains is engulfed in interethnic, religious, and civil conflicts which include Georgia, Abkhazia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh, the two Ossetias, and Chechnya. Russian troops in the region are caught between withdrawal, attempts at peacekeeping operations, and the need to protect themselves and their families. Ethnic strife has already spread to the territory of the Russian Federation; Moscow has in effect lost control over significant areas of the Russian state along the Caucasus.

The picture of Russian policies and interests in the Caucasus is mixed, and speculations regarding Moscow's involvement in the turbulent events of recent years in the region abound.[2] However, the most telling sign of limitations on Russia's presumed ambitions in the Caucasus lies in its failure to restore its power and authority in the Northern Caucasus, in other words, within the boundaries of the Russian Federation itself. Despite numerous missions dispatched to the region, Moscow has been unable to assert its control over the mutinous provinces.

Russia's inability to restore its power and authority along its Caucasian perimeter stands in an apparent contrast with widespread allegations about Russia's involvement in the war in Georgia and the overthrow of President Elchibey of Azerbaijan. On the one hand, Russia is reported to be meddling in the neighboring states of Georgia and Azerbaijan, allegedly pursuing a clever policy designed to enhance its influence in the region. On the other hand, Moscow pursues futile attempts to bring under control its own republics of Chechnya and Ingushetia, reportedly without hope of success in the foreseeable future.[3]

In reality, Moscow has likely neither given up on the region and abandoned its strategic interests and claims there, nor pursued an elaborate strategy there. Historically and strategically, Russia's withdrawal from the Caucasus in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse does not promise to be a durable arrangement. Russia has yet to formulate and articulate its interest in the region. But the region's proximity to the key powers of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, as well as its position as Russia's own "soft underbelly," make the Caucasus a key area for Russian security planners. Whether it continues to be a hotbed of instability and war or achieves a degree of tranquility, the Caucasus will draw their attention either as a problem on Russia's doorstep or as a strategically, economically, and geographically important region.

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[2]Interviews, Istanbul and Ankara, June 1993; Moscow, June 1993.

[3]For an eyewitness account of the situation in the Chechen republic, see Aleksey Chelnokov, "Cherez Chechnyu v Tovarnyake," *Izvestiya*, December 23, 1993.

However, such developments are in the future, and a coherent Russian policy toward the Caucasus has yet to be formulated. Paradoxically, to date Russia's reported meddling in Caucasian affairs appears to be a symptom of the same weakness that has prevented it from restoring order in the Russian Federation's own North Caucasian provinces. Widespread reports of Russia's military support for the Abkhazian separatists are likely to have resulted from a breakdown in the Russian Army's chain of command, disruption of supply lines, and the alleged greed of local commanders profiteering from sales of weapons stocks left under their jurisdiction. Some of these actions may indeed fit the pattern of a presumably clever Russian strategy to reconquer the Caucasus. The situation, however, eludes a common logical explanation, and the Russian military's performance elsewhere suggests that such a plan, even if it existed, would be beyond their present capabilities. The interests, strategy, and military means for implementing it have yet to be addressed by Russia's military doctrine.

Russia's position in Central Asia is not appreciably better. The five Central Asian states[4] were left out of the Soviet Union when the three Slavic leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus dissolved the old union without initially inviting their southern counterparts to join them in the new commonwealth. Under the old system, the Central Asian states had made up the cluster of pro-Union forces least eager to seek full independence from Russia, with which they had a relationship of true colonial dependency, importing Russia's manufactured goods in exchange for their agricultural output, most significantly cotton.

Widely perceived in Russia and elsewhere in the former Soviet Union as a net drain on everyone else's resources and treasuries, Central Asia had at first been dismissed by Russia as insignificant to its economic, political, and security interests.[5] This was clearly a short-

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[4]These states include Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Traditionally, Kazakhstan was not included in the definition of Central Asia used by Soviet geographers. However, because of Kazakhstan's proximity and religious, ethnic, and political ties to and role in the region, it is treated in this text as part of Central Asia.

[5]A number of prominent political personalities and analysts in Moscow expressed the following view in the Spring of 1992: "At last we got rid of Central Asia—our soft un-

sighted approach. The problem will continue to preoccupy Russia's national security and political establishment in a strategically important area to which Russia is tied by history and geography. At the end of 1991, Russia may have been prepared to let go of Central Asia, but Central Asia was not prepared to let go of Russia.

Russia remains the key to the stability of Central Asia, and in turn Central Asia will likely have a strong impact on Russia's post-Soviet security policy and military doctrine, whether or not the new Russian elites consider it a net gain to get rid of it. The region has long been the scene of Russian conquests. Indeed, at the end of the 19th century, Russian expansion into the heart of Asia ended only when Moscow's armies approached the remote outposts of the British Empire. Students of geopolitics would interpret the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 as a resumption of that imperial quest by an overconfident empire. Moscow's defeat in that war was the result of what some would describe as imperial overextension. The consequences of that war and defeat have yet to be assessed and felt throughout the region on either side of the former Soviet-Afghan border.

Postwar instability and fractional fighting that has not ended in Afghanistan since the day of Soviet withdrawal have threatened the fragile peace and stability of Central Asia. Nowhere is it more evident than in the post-Soviet republic of Tajikistan, where clan and regional strife has already resulted in tens of thousands of casualties and hundreds of thousands of refugees.[6] The civil war in Tajikistan can keep going because of a substantial flow of weapons from neighboring Afghanistan, whose Northern provinces are populated by an estimated 3 to 5 million ethnic Tajiks.

A beefed-up contingent of Russian troops, apparently inadequate to the task of stopping the flow of weapons and people across the difficult mountainous terrain, maintains the old Soviet-Afghan border. The 201st Russian division deployed in the country is, in the words of its commander, himself a veteran of the Afghan war, "the guarantor

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derbelly! We have spent enough on it! That's it!" Interviews, Moscow, April–May 1992.

[6]*Moskovskiye Novosti*, No. 1, 1993.

of stability in Tajikistan."[7] But this ghost of Russian imperial presence is becoming more and more of a burden on Russia, whose security and economic interests are being confronted from within.

Turmoil in Tajikistan poses a threat of destabilization for all of Central Asia. Arbitrarily drawn boundaries have left millions of Uzbeks and Tajiks in Afghanistan, hundreds of thousands of Uzbeks in Tajikistan, Tajiks in Uzbekistan and so on. The region is also home to some ten million ethnic Russians.

In addition to ethnic divisions, the specter of militant, politically active Islam poses yet another problem for local rulers and the stability of the region. Central Asian elites—largely ex-Communists—fear what they describe as the growing penetration of Iran and its influence in Central Asia.[8] Widespread poverty, illiteracy, and general disenfranchisement create a fertile environment for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia, although the region has no tradition of militant Islam.

The prospect that instability in Central Asia may spread beyond the civil war-torn Tajikistan cannot be ignored by Russia, no matter how much some people in its political elite would like to disassociate themselves from it. Central Asia is Russia's strategic rear to which it is tied by forces of history, geography, and ethnicity.

Russia's national security interests are affected not only by the plight of ethnic Russians in Tajikistan or by the fate of compatriots in Uzbekistan if it becomes destabilized. Russia shares a long border with Kazakhstan where the 6 million-strong Russian minority is roughly equal in terms of numbers to the titular nationality—the Kazakhs—but where ethnic Russians have for generations played the dominant role in industry, agriculture, and the natural resource sector. Northern Kazakhstan is predominantly Russian and potentially prone to secede from Alma Ata and join Russia.

In the short and medium term, Kazakhstan is also linked to Russia by the former Soviet nuclear weapons deployed on its territory. Given the strength of Russia's historical, geographic, and ethnic ties to that

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[7]Quoted in RFE/RL Daily Report, February 19, 1993.

[8]Interviews in Alma Ata and Tashkent, April–May 1992.

country and the region, the presence of nuclear weapons on Kazakhstan's territory appears as a somewhat artificial and less durable link, but nonetheless a link that cannot be ignored by military and civilian national security planners in Russia or elsewhere.

At the present time, Russia in effect remains the only stabilizing military force in the region—a fact that is being increasingly recognized by political elites in Moscow and the capitals of Central Asian states. The need for such a stabilizing influence is acutely felt throughout the region.[9]

One of the more balanced treatments of the Central Asian challenge to Russia's security interests was presented in a collective statement on Russian national security challenges and requirements by the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, a private organization with close ties to the powerful Civic Union and the defense-industrialist lobby. Noting the instability along Russia's southern borders and the "vacuum of security developing in former Soviet Central Asia," as well as "the spread [in the region] of Islamic fundamentalism," the Council's report acknowledged the need for Russia to be prepared for "flexible [uses of] force" there, which could back up diplomatic efforts through the conduct of "policing operations aimed at separating [the warring factions] and peacekeeping activities."[10]

In addition to the large number of ethnic Russians in Central Asia and the long-term historical legacy and geopolitical considerations, Russia's unique interest in the region is bound to be reflected in the following peculiar personal circumstance: the current generation of Russian military leaders is in effect made up of veterans of the Afghan war. Their ranks include Deputy Defense Minister General Gromov, who was the last commander of the 40th Army in Afghanistan, and Defense Minister Grachev, then an airborne troops officer. The importance of the Afghan experience was reflected vividly in this headline, which appeared in the Ministry of Defense daily *Red Star* when intensified fighting was reported in Tajikistan in the fall of 1992: "Will We Avoid Another Afghanistan?"

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[9]Interviews in Moscow, Tashkent, Alma Ata, and Santa Monica, CA, April, May, and November, 1992.

[10]"Strategiya dlya Rossii," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, August 19, 1992.

For the old generation of Soviet military leaders who had fought on the battlefields of World War II, that war had served as their defining experience. But the only hands-on war known by the present generation of Russian military leaders is the Afghan war, which will likely prove of enduring significance for Russian military thinking, doctrine, and national security policy. The terms and overall direction of that doctrine and policy, however, will be defined by larger political factors that will determine the outcome of Russia's struggle between aggressive neo-imperialism and constructive engagement in its former colonies in Central Asia.

CHALLENGE IN THE WEST

Russia's geopolitical retreat has been equally, if not more, visible in Eastern and Central Europe. Russian policy toward the region has been largely reactive, as the former satellites could not compare in terms of their political, economic, and military importance to the principal powers of the West with which early post-Soviet Russian policy had sought a strategic alliance. The lack of a clearly articulated Russian interest and policy in Eastern and Central Europe and the reactive nature of Moscow's official policy have been noted with a degree of alarm by some Russian security analysts, most notably those who have considered the issue from the perspective of geopolitics—a novel approach in contemporary Russian study of international relations.

Russian students of geopolitics have highlighted a number of strategic challenges to Russian national security which a future Russian military doctrine will have to meet. Foremost among them is the specter of a resurgent Germany and the perception of a geopolitical vacuum in Eastern and Central Europe. Moreover, this perception is heightened by the inclusion into this vacuum of a new state—Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and the Baltic countries.

Also, between Western Europe and now-united Germany on the one hand, and territorially reduced Russia on the other hand there has appeared once again a broad band of instability.

> "Mitteleuropa," once thought to have disappeared forever, has again appeared on the map of the world on a much greater scale

> than before. It now consists of a broad zone, which in addition to its old components includes new ones: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova. . . . [Instability] is aggravated by the weakening of Russia as a counterweight to Germany. **Russia, unlike the Soviet Union can no longer act as a guarantor of integrity of postwar boundaries of its former neighbors and allies in the West—Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania—against internal and external challenges. . . . [Soon] Germany will become the powerful center of gravity of Europe, outweighing . . . France and England.** (Boldface in the original—E.B.R.) This will lead to a realignment of forces in all of Europe. . . . A lot will depend here on future relations between Germany and Russia.[11]

This vision, shared by a significant and growing segment of the Russian political and military analytical community,[12] poses the danger of pushing Russian military doctrine toward the same neo-imperialist temptation in Eastern and Central Europe, as in other former Soviet territories and spheres of influence. In formulating a credible national security strategy, Russian national security thinkers will have to navigate a delicate course between a bizarre combination of paranoia, xenophobia, and neo-imperialism on one hand, and constructive assertion of legitimate Russian security interests on the other.

Nowhere is this challenge greater along Russia's periphery than vis-à-vis independent Ukraine. At least for the greater part of this decade, the issue of Russian-Ukrainian security relations promises to be aggravated by the unsettled military inheritance of the former Soviet Union, particularly those nuclear weapons deployed on the territory of Ukraine, which it has shown considerable reluctance to part with.

Beyond the vexing issue of nuclear weapons, normalization of the Russian-Ukrainian security and political relationship means that Russia must deal with the heavy baggage of history, culture, ethnic and religious ties, and geography which goes along with recognition of Ukrainian independence and sovereignty. That would mean, for

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[11]E. A. Pozdnyakov, "Sovremennyye Geopoliticheskiye Izmeneniya i Ikh Vliyaniye na Bezopasnost' i Stabil'nost' v Mire," *Voyennaya Mysl'*, January 1993.

[12]Interviews, Moscow, April–May 1992, June 1993.

example, that Russian nationalists would have to come to terms with the fact that the cradle of Russian statehood and Christianity in Russia, Kiev, is now the capital of a foreign country. It would mean that the sites of the greatest battles of Russia's military history, such as Sevastopol, will now become foreign ports. It will also mean that the historic springboard for Russian projection of power into Europe will for the first time in more than three centuries be off limits, and quite possibly the bulwark *against* Russian westward projection of power.

The Ukrainian challenge to Russian security interests is two-fold. First, it is a challenge from a state whose internal political and economic situation is just as uncertain and unstable as that of Russia itself, if not more so; whose sovereignty, national identity, and historical roots are uncertain; and whose current political leadership needs the specter of external threat from Russia for its own domestic political reasons. Second, it is a challenge from a state that (once it overcomes its internal problems) will likely define its position in the European security and political arena as the first line of defense against Russia's potential hegemonic ambitions, both as a guarantee of its own territorial integrity against a possible Russian challenge and as a link to a broader European security system.

The Ukrainian challenge to Russian security interests in Europe has not gone unnoticed by Russian national security analysts. They have lamented not just the loss of territory and strategic access in the West and the Southwest, but the instability in Ukraine and its vulnerability to exploitation by outside powers. In a reflection of xenophobic and paranoid tendencies, as well as somber historical legacies, some Russian security analysts have cast the issue of Ukrainian independence and ultimate strategic orientation in decidedly threatening terms. Their views on this issue also reflect the difficulty which some Russians have had coming to terms with Ukrainian independence, seeing it more as a pawn in the great game of European superpowers, rather than an independent player in its own right.[13]

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[13]N. Narochnitskaya, "Natsional'nyy Interes Rossii," *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'*, Nos. 3–4, 1992; Pozdnyakov, op. cit., Interviews, Moscow, September 1991, and April–May 1992.

The tendency to see smaller countries in Eastern and Central Europe as pawns in the superpowers' great game has become more pronounced among some members of the Russian political establishment and security specialists. It is reflected in references to the reemergence of "Mitteleuropa" and the strategic vacuum between reunited Germany and truncated Great Russia mentioned above. It is also evident in statements by leading Russian political personalities and analysts about the need to reestablish Russia's sphere of influence on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Presumably, Russia would make such a sphere off limits for what would be perceived in Moscow as interference by other powers, and impose constraints on the independence and sovereignty of states trapped inside that sphere.

The search for Russia's interest in post-Soviet Europe has given rise to a degree of nostalgia for the lost empire, both external and internal, as well as renewed assertiveness in defining new interests far beyond Russia's geographical boundaries. Thus, the then-Chairman of the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee Yevgeniy Ambartsumov stated bluntly in the spring of 1992 that

> Russia is something more than the Russian Federation in its current borders. Therefore, its geopolitical interests must be considered much more broadly than is currently defined on the maps. Based on that we intend to build our relations with the "near abroad."[14]

Ambartsumov's one-time political adviser and now member of the presidential council Andranik Migranyan has been equally assertive in his definition of Russian national interest, claiming the entire territory of the former Soviet Union as Russia's sphere of influence.[15]

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[14] *Megapolis-Express*, May 6, 1992.

[15] *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, August 1992; Migranyan has since expanded his arguments in a series of articles and speeches, most notably in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in January 1994. The series examined Russia's "geopolitical interests" throughout the former Soviet Union, concluding that all of its former republics and regions were vital to Russia and had to be declared its exclsive sphere of influence. The true test of partnership between Russia and the West, claimed Migranyan, would be represented by the extent to which the West would respect Russia's interests in these areas. "Rossiya i Blizhneye Zarubezh'ye," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 12 and 18, 1994.

Put forth by Ambartsumov and Migranyan merely a few months after the breakup of the Soviet Union and recognition of the independence and sovereignty of the former Soviet republics, the idea of reestablishing and consolidating Moscow's exclusive sphere of influence throughout the former Soviet Union has taken hold as a key element of Russian foreign and security policy. It has firmly supplanted the short-lived concept of withdrawal from the Soviet empire—both external and internal—that had dominated the foreign policy agenda at the outset of Russian independence.

First put forth in academic and parliamentary circles, but not among Foreign Ministry officials, the new strategic direction of Russian foreign and security policy aimed at restoring the old Soviet sphere of influence eventually found its way into presidential rhetoric as well. Addressing the influential political organization, the Civic Union, in early 1993, President Boris Yeltsin spoke of his government's intention to establish a Russian sphere of influence throughout the former Soviet Union.

Seen by some as a political move designed to deflect criticism of his administration for allegedly neglecting Russia's interests and being too accommodating to the West and the "near abroad,"[16] the speech must have given the presidential imprimatur to the very idea of Russia's special right and responsibility for the former Soviet Union. It also sent shock waves throughout the former Soviet empire, especially the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

The speech was quickly dubbed the "Yeltsin doctrine." Its explicit intent to spread Russia's security umbrella and assume the role of the peacekeeper throughout the former Soviet empire gave rise to the never-dying fears of Russian expansionism throughout many regions, prompting a question naturally in the minds of many Eastern and Central European politicians and security analysts about the difference between the "Yeltsin doctrine" and the "Brezhnev doctrine," which had provided the rationale for Soviet intervention in Eastern Europe, as well as the time and circumstances under

[16]Interviews, Moscow, June 1993.

which this difference may disappear.[17] Russia, once again, staked out its claim to a sphere of influence in Europe.[18]

As Russian analysts and policymakers consider the security situation along their country's western frontiers and contemplate the possibilities of geopolitical nightmare scenarios and various "domino theories," the dividing line between the "near abroad" and countries further west becomes blurred. If followed to their logical conclusion, these scenarios would make Russian security requirements extend as far as the border of the nearest great power to the West—Germany. Everything else seems to be destined to fall either into a Russian or German sphere of influence and serve merely as a buffer between the two European superpowers. The logic of neo-imperialism that drives declarations that the entire former Soviet Union is Russia's exclusive sphere of influence will also deny the smaller states of Eastern and Central Europe their strategic independence:

> Will Germany resist the temptation to play out Russian-Ukrainian confrontation and, like Kaiser's Germany, to play out the card of Ukrainian separatism?

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[17]Interviews, L'vov, Warsaw, and Budapest, March 1993.

[18]Along with Russian policymakers' and analysts' renewed interest in acquiring a sphere of influence in Europe, their writings have contained certain regrets for the loss of the Soviet Union's European empire. On occasion their writings have even reflected a sense of betrayal and unkept promises by the West, as well as the domestic political harm caused by the retreat inside the Soviet Union. Andranik Migranyan wrote in the influential *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*:

> Attempts to revise the old foreign policy undertaken by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze . . . ended up as unilateral concessions and disorderly retreat of the USSR from all the critically important for it regions of the world where it had had great influence, without adequate compensation from the West. . . .
>
> Unilateral concessions of Soviet foreign policy were designed to obtain economic and political support for Gorbachev's reforms, but these expectations ended up in complete failure. Proposals to neutralize the GDR, "finlandize" Eastern Europe that I put forth in 1989 were not heard by the architects of the policy of *perestroyka*, and as a result, unification of Germany and withdrawal from Eastern Europe were paid for with symbolic sums of money, empty chatter, applause and friendly backslapping of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze by the leaders of the United States and other Western countries. "Rossiya i Blizhneye Zarubezh'ye," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 12, 1994.

> Will Poland be able to prove that in the 21st century, unlike in all past centuries, it will be able to remain fully independent and yet not hostile to Russia?[19]

How far can and will that sphere of influence extend before it begins to infringe upon the sovereignty and independence of the post-Communist states in Eastern and Central Europe? How long before Russia's attempts to assert its security interests in the region begin to impinge on those of its immediate neighbors and former vassals? Where is the line between Russia's legitimate security interests and great power arrogance?

These questions came to the fore in the European security agenda, as well as in Russian foreign and security policy, toward the end of 1993, as Moscow's former Warsaw Pact allies intensified their efforts to get under NATO's security umbrella.

The region, largely ignored by the Russian foreign and security policy establishments in the wake of the Soviet collapse (presumably as insignificant on Russia's path toward partnership with great powers of the West), once again dominated the attention of Russian foreign and security policy specialists. The prospect of a new barrier between Russia and the West, as well as the extension of the once (and potentially future) rival military and political alliance closer to Russia's border, appeared against the domestic political background where hopes for speedy integration into the Western community had already faded.

Official and unofficial reactions to the prospect of inclusion of some former Warsaw Pact states into NATO have ranged from President Yeltsin's surprising apparent endorsement of the idea during his visit to Poland in August 1993, to vehement opposition by a broad spec-

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[19]N. Narochnitskaya, "Natsional'nyy Interes Rossii," *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'*, Nos. 3–4, 1992. This author, identified as a senior researcher at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, also holds the post of deputy chairman of the Constitutional-Democratic Party and foreign policy expert of the opposition bloc "Russian Unity." Her articles have appeared in both mainstream policy and academic journals such as *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'*, and right-wing publications such as *Nash Sovermennik.*

trum of Russian security analysts and officials, including Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

Despite Yeltsin's initial consent to Poland's intention to obtain NATO membership, the official and unofficial lines quickly solidified and the Russian government firmly opposed the idea of NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe. The initial inconsistency and reversal of Yeltsin's original statement show how far Eastern and Central Europe had been from the minds of the Russian foreign and security policy community until the region began its drive for NATO membership.

The prospect of former Warsaw Pact satellites' membership in NATO poses a serious challenge to security analysts of practically every political orientation in Russia. To more conservative analysts, ever-suspicious of the West's intentions and NATO's continuing presence as the sole remaining military and political alliance in Europe, NATO's expansion will likely confirm their worst suspicions, harbored since the days of the Soviet retreat from Germany and the demise of the Warsaw Pact.

But even to the liberal wing of the Russian policy-making and analytical community—the Westernizers—who have since the Gorbachev days advocated a closer alliance, even a strategic partnership, between Russia and the West, NATO's expansion threatens Moscow with the erection of an unnecessary barrier that would once again divide Europe and establish a *cordon sanitaire* around Russia. In the words of one Russian analyst known for his pro-Western views,

> Eastern Europe should do everything to be ready to get into NATO should reforms fail here at home. It should do everything to get in the day after things go wrong here. But it should not hurry into NATO now and unless and until the reactionaries come to power here in Moscow.[20]

Despite occasional and vague pronouncements about the possibility of Russia's joining NATO eventually at some future date, the chances

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[20]Interviews, Moscow, June 1993.

of that happening are considered nil by many respected security and political analysts in Moscow. Russia's inclusion into NATO would, in their view, radically alter the nature of the alliance and render it meaningless. Transformed in effect into a collective security system similar to CSCE, NATO would slide into irrelevance. Even from the perspective of Moscow's Western-oriented security analysts, NATO is in no position to be a bridge between Russia and the West. But if Eastern Europe were included into the alliance *without* Russia, a new partition would be erected in Europe, isolating Russia and creating a serious obstacle in Russia's quest for a strategic partnership with the West.[21]

This opposition to the expansion of NATO, coming from Russian foreign policy analysts who argue for a more pro-Western orientation of Moscow's policy and a strategic partnership with great powers of the West, is combined with apprehension among more conservative and xenophobic Russian security specialists about the "real" motivation behind policies of the United States, NATO, Germany, and other countries. Conservatives have long lamented the demise of Moscow's sphere of influence and argued that Russian foreign and security policy horizons are gloomy indeed, for the country is finding itself increasingly the victim of its hostile environment.

Thus, paradoxically, a degree of consensus has begun to emerge in Russian thinking about security policy and requirements along Russia's Western borders, bringing together security specialists of diverse political views. This consensus emerges largely as a reaction to the NATO initiatives, without a powerful internal military or political impetus from within Russia itself. The key feature of that consensus is the recognition of Eastern and Central Europe's importance for Russia as either a bridge or a barrier between it and the rest of the continent, and the need to at the least avoid the presence of external influence in the region, or at the most project Russia's own influence

[21]Aleksey Pushkov, "Building a New NATO at Russia's Expense," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 1994; Sergey Karaganov, "Rasshireniye NATO Vedet k Izolyatsii Rossii," *Moskovskiye Novosti*, September 19, 1993; Dmitriy Vol'sky, "Lugar vs. Lugar, NATO vs. NATO," *New Times*, No. 35, 1993; Vyacheslav Yelagin, "Chego Ne Ponyaly v Varshave?" *Segodnya*, September 14, 1993; Interviews, Moscow, June and November 1993.

over it. The NATO episode made it clear that the region would figure prominently in Moscow's future military doctrine.

The nature of Russia's interest in Eastern and Central Europe and its presence in the region depend largely on the outcome of Russia's own internal political and economic transformation. To an aggressively chauvinist, xenophobic Russia, independent Poland or Ukraine will always be a threat, as will a prosperous unified Germany. To a Russia that will overcome its internal challenges, that is intent on building a partnership with the West, independent Poland and Ukraine will offer a bridge to a more stable and secure Europe. In either outcome, however, Russia will not be able to ignore the lands between its Western borders and the next European great power. Russia's security begins at its own doorstep.

Chapter Five

CHALLENGE FROM WITHIN

While the question of Russian military doctrine is in many ways as premature as the question of deliberate Russian military threat to its neighbors in Europe and Asia, the political and ideological building blocks of that military doctrine are being laid down now. They are often contradictory and potentially troubling, not because of Russia's ability to deliver on the threats voiced by some of its political leaders and analysts but because of the direction that they may set for Russian military doctrine in the future.

At present the ability to deliver on that vision has all but disintegrated with the demise of the Soviet Union, and its military institution and economic collapse. The problems facing the Russian military are legion. It has lost entire theaters of military operations in Europe and Asia and has suffered incalculable losses in terms of infrastructure. Major surface and sea access routes, communication facilities, and air defense installations have been lost in the former republics. Russia's military is facing a most time- and resource-consuming task of reconstituting these losses on the territory of the Russian Federation. This challenge is compounded by the weakness and continuing decline of Russia's domestic infrastructure, including its transportation network, communications, collapse of the industrial sector, and troubles in the energy sector. A good deal of equipment, much of it frontline and recently redeployed from Eastern Europe, was left in the former republics, especially in Ukraine.

A significant portion of the existing weapons systems and equipment is likely to deteriorate as a result of shortages of spare parts, skilled maintenance personnel, disrupted links in the defense industry, and

turmoil in the industrial sector in general. The consequence of this crisis in the military institution and the economy at large is that the task of maintaining the existing infrastructure and filling the gaps in it assumes increasingly daunting proportions.

In addition to losses in hardware and infrastructure, the Russian military suffers from the weakness of its demographic base. Major pools of manpower have been lost in Central Asia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Draft evasion has become so widespread that it is now the norm rather than the exception. Internal discipline in the military has collapsed. According to one senior Russian military officer, drunkenness, theft of weapons and military equipment by all ranks, and general demoralization among the recruits and the professional officer corps have reached catastrophic proportions, making the military dangerous to itself and society.

Widespread health problems among the Russian population at large have taken a severe toll on the quality of Russian conscripts. Exemptions for reasons of health have compounded the problem of draft evasion. The precise numbers of incoming conscripts are not available; Russian military sources often cite conflicting numbers themselves. In the opinion of many experts, the shortfall in the supply of conscripts amounts to over 50 percent of the planned number, with even lower numbers reporting for military duty in large urban areas. The consensus among students of Russian military manpower is that the demographic base for sustaining the armed forces of 1.5 million, as proposed by the Ministry of Defense, simply does not exist.

It is difficult even to begin to contemplate the implications of these problems for force structure, operational doctrine, training, and readiness. Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Kokoshin admitted that the bulk of the Russian military is not a credible fighting force which the state can rely on in case of an emergency. His succinct words speak for themselves:

> The Ground Forces are going through difficult times. Many units are in a state of complete distress as a result of rapid redeployment of personnel from the [former republics and Eastern Europe], as well as due to catastrophic shortage of manpower. The more combat capable airborne units have already been committed to numerous peacekeeping operations. In the Air Force there are shortages

> of fuel and therefore few training flights, which hurts the quality of pilots. Besides, many modern aircraft and transport aviation have been left in Ukraine. A large number of naval ships are in port because of lack of fuel and naval personnel.
>
> The SRF (Strategic Rocket Forces) are in effect the only effective guarantee of strategic independence of the Russian Federation.[1]

Furthermore, Deputy Defense Minister Kokoshin also suggested that the situation in the Armed Forces was so critical and that the country's combat-capable conventional forces were so thinly stretched that in some possible contingencies the country's political-military leadership may have no choice but to contemplate the use of nuclear weapons to repel and deter potential or real aggressors and defend Russian interests.[2]

While the situation in the SRF may be better than in other services, there are troubling signals about the state of that service as well. Reports in respected open Russian media indicate that many of the morale, economic, and institutional problems have not bypassed the service. Manpower shortages are reflected in the fact that some SRF units have begun recruiting women, reportedly for nonessential duties. Career officers have been leaving the service, unable to support their families on their salaries. The quality of and discipline among the recruits have also been reported on the decline.[3]

Deputy Defense Minister Kokoshin's gloomy assessment of the Armed Forces' low state of readiness and combat potential evidently found its way into the new Russian military doctrine adopted by the Security Council of the Russian Federation in November 1993.[4] The

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[1]Pavel Fel'gengauer, "Rossii Pridetsya Stroit' Svoyu Oboronu na Yadernykh Strategicheskikh Vooruzheniyakh Eto Naibolee Boyesposobnaya Chast' Rossiyskoy Armii," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 19, 1992.

[2]Ibid.

[3]*Moskovskiye Novosti*, January 1992.

[4]Pavel Fel'gengauer, "Rossiya Perekhodit k Doktrine Yadernogo Sderzhivaniya i Ostavlyaet za Soboy Pravo Pervogo Udara, *Segodnya*, November 4, 1993; Transcript of press conference by Valeriy Manilov, Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, MFA Press Center, November 3, 1993; *Rossiyskiye Vesti*, November 18, 1993.

text of the new doctrine, along with an explicit reference to the possibility of first use of nuclear weapons, contained an implicit recognition on the part of the Ministry of Defense that Russia's conventional military capabilities were not and for a few more years to come would not be adequate to the task of assuring the country's security and vital interests.[5]

It is doubtful that previous military doctrines—whether Soviet or Russian, published or classified—had ever really excluded the use of nuclear weapons. The new doctrine will not likely prove a radical departure from the traditions and approaches to nuclear weapons and their employment established in the Soviet and Russian Armed Forces. Rather, the new doctrine's specific reference to first use of nuclear weapons, even against non-nuclear states, is likely to be a sign of the Russian military leadership's pessimistic assessment of the country's conventional capabilities and the enhanced role assumed by its nuclear arsenal in the overall task of deterrence and defense of its vital interests. Evidently, in the view of Russia's military leaders, the point of conventional deterrence beyond which conventional weapons may not be enough will now come sooner.

The document offered no insight into the operational implications or changes in the state of readiness of Russia's nuclear forces as a result of the presumably greater role currently assigned to them.

The new doctrine devotes considerable attention to the task of improving the armed forces' ability to cope with regional and local crises and meet contingencies at home and along Russia's ex-Soviet periphery. Beyond the explicit emphasis on peacekeeping and peacemaking operations, the document makes it clear that Russia's military establishment faces the task of all-azimuth domestic military reconstruction as a result of the historic changes throughout Russia and the former Soviet Union. Much like the majority of Russian foreign and security policy analysts whose attention has shifted steadily in recent years to address challenges to national security at home and in the "near abroad," the military establishment has focused the

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[5]Pavel Fel'gengauer, "Rossiya Perekhodit k Doktrine Yadernogo Sderzhivaniya i Ostavlyaet za Soboy Pravo Pervogo Udara," *Segodnya*, November 4, 1993; *Rossiyskiye Vesti*, November 18, 1993.

new doctrine on the territory of Russia and the former Soviet sphere, more in line with limited capabilities and political imperatives.

The doctrine was adopted merely a month after the traumatic events of October 3–4, 1993, when select Army units violently suppressed a rebellion led by former vice president Rutskoy and parliamentary speaker Khasbulatov. The Armed Forces played the crucial role, coming to the rescue of President Yeltsin. But their apparent reluctance to intervene in the crisis in support of the Commander-in-Chief, and the circumstances surrounding their eventual intervention[6] raised doubts about the military's cohesion and ability to act in domestic contingencies; the events also raised concerns about the influence of various political movements and personalities on the institution.[7]

In an apparent effort to assert presidential control over the military institution and minimize the potential of the armed forces' conflicting loyalties, the doctrine made it clear that

> The use of the Armed Forces and other military forces of the Russian Federation in the interests of separate groups, individuals, parties, public associations is inadmissible.[8]

However, despite this stern warning and unambiguous references to the president's supreme authority over the armed forces, doubts remain in the minds of many observers of Russian politics and the military about the institution's cohesion and actions in possible future crises.

One of the more disturbing speculations about the Russian Armed Forces' political leanings has to do with the outcome of the De-

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[6]Defense Minister Grachev reportedly was reluctant to intervene in the crisis and issue orders to the troops to use force against Rutskoy's and Khasbulatov's supporters. He evidently did so only after repeated requests from President Yeltsin and after the latter personally went to Grachev's headquarters and presented him with a written presidential decree. Grachev's reluctance to intervene until that point had been explained publicly by his desire to keep the military out of domestic politics. See V. Kononenko, "Perspektiva Prezidentskogo Pravleniya," *Izvestiya*, October 5, 1993.

[7]Dmitriy Trenin, "V Bratoubiystvennoy Voyne Nagrad ne Dayut," *Novoye Vremya*, No. 43, 1993.

[8]*Rossiyskiye Vesti*, November 18, 1993.

cember 12, 1993, parliamentary election and widespread allegations (vigorously denied by the Ministry of Defense, but persisting) that the bulk of the military had voted for Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's so-called Liberal-Democratic party.[9]

The country's political crisis has undoubtedly profoundly affected the officer corps. There have been reports in the Russian media of sporadic attempts at political mobilization among the officer corps. However, no organized nationwide political movement of military professionals has yet emerged. In the aftermath of the October 1993 events and the military's reluctant intervention in the political crisis, the institution does not appear as a cohesive and reliable political actor in Russia's domestic politics. It may well become a pawn of other political forces.

Moreover, no one knows how the continuing transformation of center-periphery relations in Russia will affect the unity and cohesion of the military organization. The pull of centrifugal forces that have swept Russia must have had an adverse effect on the military institution as well, as it suffered from many of the same ills that have affected the Russian society and economy at large. Disrupted economic links and supply arrangements must have undoubtedly meant for local district and lower-level commanders that day-to-day survival of their troops became a function of good working relations with local authorities, rather than reliance on the central allocative mechanisms for the delivery of critical materials and even foodstuffs. Such circumstances are ripe for the emergence of regional political-military alliances, especially in the more remote and poorly accessible areas of the Russian Federation, between local military commanders and political leaders. These may not necessarily take the form of alliances, but rather of occasional deals, such as rumored to be the case in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict where Russian Air Force aircraft have been reported to fly sorties on behalf of the Abkhazian side for cash payments.[10] While such a regionalization of the military institution is likely to preclude its participation in domestic politics on the national level as an organized political force, erosion of the

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[9]Vadim Solov'yev, "Glavnoye Sobytiye Goda—Voyennaya Doktrina," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, December 30, 1993.

[10]Interviews, Moscow, June 1993.

military's cohesion would be a dangerous phenomenon contributing to instability in Russia and around its periphery.

Notwithstanding the numerous external challenges to Russia's security, both real and imagined, the future of Russian military doctrine and national security policy will be decided from within. This argument derives not merely from the old axiom that any country's military and foreign policy begins at home, but from the peculiar position that Russia has found itself in after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia remains a truncated empire which has yet to find its post-imperial identity and define the missions for its military institution accordingly.

The new Russian military doctrine makes it clear that Russia's defense concerns are focused primarily on the internal challenges to the military itself; the security problems stemming from the internal political crises and transformations; and the immediate periphery of Russia—the "near abroad." Thus the new military doctrine follows lines laid out in debates about national security policy and interests among the country's civilian analytical establishment.

But having in a sense "come home," Russia's military doctrine has yet to formulate its approach to the "near abroad." The civilian analytical community has put forth different visions of Russian interests in the "near abroad." The debate has progressed in a markedly neo-imperialist direction, but its outcome is still far from certain, and will depend ultimately on the outcome of the country's political transformation. Russia will certainly remain the key player in military and political developments in most, if not all, corners of its former empire. But the nature of its involvement is still uncertain. The country's future military doctrine will address many of the specifics of that involvement, but not until the larger questions of Russia's domestic transformation have been answered.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Such uncertainties facing Russia internally, plus their external implications, make it plain that U.S. policymakers have few if any options that would enable U.S. policy to have a significant impact on the outcome of Russia's internal transformation. At best the United States and its allies can have only a marginal impact.

What are the implications of Russia's internal change, in particular the center-periphery transformation in Russia, for U.S. interests? This question leads the policy debate merely two years after the same question was being asked about the Soviet Union. The easy answer at this point would be that it is too early to tell. The continuing erosion of the centralized Russian state is fraught with both positive and negative consequences for the stability and security of Central Eurasia. The most dire of the possible outcome scenarios—disintegration of the Russian state—is clearly not in the interest of the United States or its allies or Russia's neighbors. Such an outcome would be associated with protracted instability in Russia and around its periphery, leading to proliferation of regional and ethnic conflict, creating uncertainty about the military inheritance of the Soviet Union, especially its nuclear weapons, and possibly resulting in the reemergence of Russia under a militant, radical nationalist, xenophobic ideology.

Another extreme outcome would entail restoration of a centralized state in Russia in the short run. Given the uncertain strength of the central government and the shifting balance of power in favor of the regional centers within Russia, such an outcome appears unlikely.

The third—and most favorable—outcome would be a more orderly evolution of Russia into a decentralized state, possibly a federation of lands or republics which would be the benefactors of the transfer of power and authority from the center, especially in matters of local economic development. Such an outcome appears the most desirable of the three and the one that would be most promising in terms of avoiding uncontrolled disintegration of the Russian state. Also, it would be likely to ensure the greatest degree of stability throughout Russia itself and, hence, by implication, throughout the neighboring countries. The danger in this option, of course, is that decentralization of Russia may turn into its decomposition.

This third option—decentralization—appears to be the one Russia is currently following, although not always with the degree of orderliness that one would like to see. It would be in the interest of the United States to encourage Russia's orderly transformation into a decentralized state. In making this argument the author would like to emphasize that decentralization of Russia should not be confused with the weakening of the Russian state, which would not be in the interest of either Russia or the United States. Decentralization appears currently as the only option available for preserving Russia's territorial integrity and sustaining the momentum of political and economic reforms in the country.

What, then, are the implications for U.S. policy toward Russia? The conclusions outlined in the preceding paragraphs underscore the unprecedented importance of knowing and understanding current regional trends in Russia. The Moscow-centric approach to political and economic trends in Russia that has long dominated the policy and analytical communities in the United States is no longer adequate to serve the needs of the policymakers.

In the first place, U.S. aid can be used to help Russia's orderly transformation into a decentralized state. Given the central government's questionable ability—even demonstrated inability—to conduct economic policy, regional governments may prove to be the more appropriate recipients of foreign aid and more effective vehicles of economic change. U.S. and international aid organizations can participate in and sponsor regional economic development plans as an alternative to dealing with the central government in Moscow. These initiatives should fall in the area of local socioeconomic

development, regional and municipal infrastructure, and delivery of basic services to the population so as to defuse some of the political and economic tensions underlying the center-periphery conflict. Several regional initiatives have already been announced and should be pursued. While pursuing these policies, the United States has to continuously reaffirm its support for Russia's territorial integrity, emphasizing that U.S. economic aid policy is not intended to undermine the power and authority of the central government in Moscow and that the United States is interested in cooperating with the Russian government across a broad spectrum of political, economic, and security issues.

Even with the best efforts of the U.S. and international community, Russia's transformation will be difficult and protracted, while its outcome will remain uncertain for a considerable period of time—years, if not decades. Russia's attention will be turned mostly inward and focused on settling its domestic political and economic crises.

But despite this preoccupation with its internal arrangements, Russia will not be able to isolate itself from the outside world, especially the world immediately around its periphery. Whether Russia likes it or not, it will have to deal with the "near" and "far abroad."

Beyond the challenge of formulating an effective and realistic—in terms of means and expectations—policy of assistance to Russia, the United States faces the task of defining its interest vis-à-vis Russia in Europe and Asia. The key issue to be addressed in this context is that of understanding what constitutes Russia's legitimate security interests. Realistically, such an understanding is not likely to emerge in a short period of time and become set in concrete as guidelines for U.S. policy. Rather, the process will become intertwined with the political and policy process in the United States and Russia. However, the issue must be an integral part of the foundation on which U.S. policy decisions will be made.

A set of specific and comprehensive principles for calibrating U.S.-Russian relations cannot be developed. When dealing with the question of Russian policy toward the newly independent states, each case would have to be looked at individually, taking into account factors affecting general U.S. interest in democratic reforms and market transition on both sides of a potential conflict and often

relying on subjective and not easily quantifiable judgments and determinations.

A consideration of Russia's legitimate interests must start from the premise that Russia will remain the pivotal player in regional political and security developments throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union. It simply cannot sever the centuries-old ties of history, geography, ethnicity, and culture that bind it to the former Soviet republics and provinces of the Russian Empire. To assume that Russia will not retain a key role in political and security trends throughout the former Soviet empire would be less than realistic.

The question is not whether Russia will remain the key player in regional affairs throughout the periphery of the former Soviet Union. The question is what kind of a player it will be, whether it will act as a force for stability and security, respectful of the newly independent states' sovereignty and independence, or as an irredentist power.

To date, evidence available to predict Russia's future behavior as a regional superpower is mixed. The general restraint shown in the policies of the Yeltsin presidency vis-à-vis the "near abroad" and cooperation with the United States and other key Western powers starkly contrasts with the direction of national security and foreign policy discourse among Russian specialists, which leans toward a more aggressive pursuit of a neo-imperialist policy toward the newly independent states and a less cooperative relationship with the West.

Which line will prevail? The vector of Russia's security policy will likely be determined to a large extent by the domestic political balance. The upsurge of neo-imperialist and anti-Western rhetoric within a significant segment of the political spectrum suggests that current restraint is due to a significant degree to the personality and influence of President Yeltsin himself. A foreign and security policy line based on the political survival of one political leader in a country undergoing a dramatic internal transformation offers less than a reliable basis for long-term predictions about its strategic choices and behavior.

Yet, even Yeltsin's position on the key issue of relations with the "near abroad" is less than certain. Which Yeltsin will prevail? The one who endorsed Ukraine's independence in 1991 and has repeatedly dismissed challenges to Ukrainian territorial integrity by his re-

actionary opponents in the legislature? Or the one who has in effect asked for Russia's exclusive rights in the "near abroad"?

Clearly, from the U.S. and its allies' perspective, Russia would be a more palatable guarantor of stability and peace throughout the former Soviet Union under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin and his supporters from the democratic coalition than under the leadership of the pseudo-centrist Civic Union or outright reactionary Liberal-Democrats. Notwithstanding all the uncertainty about the future face and course of Russia's foreign and security policy, Russia will remain a key player in security trends around its periphery, and U.S. policymakers have to recognize that there are no alternatives to Russia playing the key role in guaranteeing security and stability throughout the former Soviet Union. This recognition need not take the form of blanket affirmation of Russia's *droit de regard* over the former Soviet Union by the international community. Rather, Russia's mandate itself and its specifics can and should be made subject to U.N. or CSCE approval in every case where external intervention would be required. Intervention can be carried out under the U.N. flag and charter, thus denying legitimacy to any potential irredentist claims by Russia. Such a step would help cement Russia's participation in the international community and help direct its interventionist urges into a constructive channel.

At the same time, one has to keep in mind that through its recognition of independence and sovereignty of the former Soviet republics, the United States has made a commitment to uphold their territorial integrity and independence. This does not need to be understood as a promise of physical protection against challenges to their independence and security, but it implies a certain commitment to try to uphold basic principles of international law. This commitment could put the United States and Russia on a collision course were the latter to pursue its neo-imperialist ambitions beyond the point of rhetoric.

One of the most vivid examples of such potential collision areas is Ukraine. In a hypothetical but not unrealistic scenario of internal instability in Ukraine, Russia would be practically compelled to intervene to restore stability and peace, especially in areas adjacent to the Russian-Ukrainian border and especially if the current Ukrainian government or its successor could not do so. From Ukraine's perspective, Russia's attempt to restore order in

destabilized regions of Ukraine would most likely be considered as interference in the affairs of an independent and sovereign state and as an expression of Russia's neo-imperialist designs. Kiev would probably appeal to the international community for protection and sanctions against Moscow.

A rush to judgment would be ill advised under these circumstances. Any Western or U.S. reaction would have to be made on the basis of the following qualitative, perhaps even subjective, general determinations: the nature of the Russian government (e.g., Is it democratic and market-reform oriented? Does it comply with U.N. resolutions and norms of international law?); the nature of the Ukrainian government (based on the same general criteria) and its ability to maintain its authority throughout the country; alternatives to Russian intervention; the feasibility and practicality of international mediation; the international implications of the intervention in the surrounding region and beyond.

Any Western or U.S. reaction would have to be based on the assumption that Russia has a vital interest in Ukraine's security and stability, to say nothing of the well-being of some 12 million compatriots residing in Ukraine and the security of the ex-Soviet nuclear stockpile on its territory. This hardly entitles Russia to a *droit de regard* over Ukraine, but underscores the fact that Russia is and will remain the pivotal player in the region's security and political trends. Given the fragility of Ukraine's economy and the grim prospects for improvement in the light of deadlocked domestic politics, such a hypothetical but not improbable Russian intervention may prove to be the least of all likely evils.

If, however, at a future date, Russia were to act on the neo-imperialist rhetoric of some of its contemporary security analysts and political activists, the United States and its Western allies would have few concrete and realistic options for countering its actions. U.S. and/or its NATO partners' unilateral involvement in such a crisis would be unrealistic beyond the point of mediation both within and outside the context of the United Nations or CSCE. Given the United States' expressed commitment to the independence and territorial integrity of the newly independent states, such as Ukraine, a turn toward neo-imperialism in Russian policy would likely lead to a new souring of U.S.-Russian relations.

It is important to distinguish between contingencies such as the hypothetical Russian-Ukrainian conflict and lesser regional conflicts, such as the one in Moldova or Abkhazia. Whereas a hypothetical Russian-Ukrainian conflict would clearly be a case of interstate friction fraught with far-reaching implications for European security and stability, the wars in Abkhazia or Moldova are regional or civil wars or ethnic conflicts occurring at the sub-state level. They are fraught with fewer implications outside their immediate regions and do not necessarily warrant U.S. intervention or mediation. While one would like U.S. policy to make every effort to prevent hostilities and loss of life, regional conflict based on ethnic divisions or regional separatism is a problem that is likely to tax the resources of U.S. foreign policy beyond the available means.

Moreover, unilateral U.S. intervention and mediation efforts in this area could be seen from Moscow—not without some justification—as meddling in Russia's backyard. An overly aggressive policy not attentive to the sensitivities of the Russian government could indeed make apprehensions about Russian neo-imperialism and xenophobia a self-fulfilling prophecy. These apprehensions are not reason enough to deny Russia—even if it were possible to do so—its legitimate role in maintaining stability and security along its periphery.

Caution in our policy toward the newly independent states need not go so far as to make the United States abandon them to Russia's exclusive sphere of influence. Indeed, the United States has open to it wide avenues for economic relations and broad political contacts aimed at helping these states' transition to market-oriented economies and more open societies. Such relations, carried out primarily through the vehicle of foreign aid, should be aimed at social, economic, and political stabilization of the newly independent states and alleviating the pain of economic transition and societal dislocation which, in the view of many experts, is the root of ethnic and regional conflict. Avoiding the impression of Russo-centricity in the conduct of the U.S. aid policy toward the newly independent states is an important condition for balance in the overall U.S. policy toward the former Soviet Union.

A key area where U.S. involvement could play such a preventive role is Central Asia, where Russia is already the guarantor of security and

stability. U.S. economic assistance could help avoid further regional conflict in Central Asia. Stability there is threatened by the conflict in Tajikistan, where economic deprivation is widespread and where Russia is not likely to stem the spread of conflict by military means because of its own limited resources.

U.S. policymakers face the task of weighing good relations with Russia against cooperative policies toward the former Soviet republics as well as former Soviet satellites in Eastern and Central Europe. Given the region's apparent desire for a stabilizing external presence and fears of Russian irredentism, it would be tempting to extend the West's security umbrella further East.

But a number of considerations have to be taken into account before such a serious step is contemplated. If the purpose of extending the Western security umbrella to Eastern Europe is to stabilize the region "against itself"—or, in other words, against regional/ethnic conflict—NATO or any other Western security organization has no more credibility in promising to stabilize Eastern Europe in case of regional conflict than it has had in threatening to intervene in the former Yugoslavia. If the West's security umbrella is intended to alleviate regional fears of Russian irredentism, then these fears are unfounded for a long time to come, given Russia's own internal weakness and prospects for more domestic upheavals. Erecting what would be perceived in Russia—not without justification—as a *cordon sanitaire* around Russia is hardly warranted either by Russia's likely threat potential or by its attempts at internal and external transformation, however many reservations one might have about their outcome in the long run.

Furthermore, were it not for Russia's current weakness, the idea of extending NATO's umbrella further East would not have been entertained seriously in the Western security community. One might wonder then: if Russia is so weak as to allow the West to step in as the guarantor of security and stability along its periphery, then fears of Russian irredentism must be clearly out of proportion to the reality of the potential Russian threat.

Far from abandoning East/Central Europe to the perils of local conflict and Russian irredentism, the preferred policy course would be its economic integration into the Western community, first of all

into the European Community. Such a course is likely to be associated with higher economic and domestic political costs for the West in the short run because it would entail subsidies to the region and removal of trade barriers. But it would have a number of obvious short- and long-term benefits: It would help the West escape the pitfalls of unrealistic security commitments. It would, through the promise of economic development, alleviate some of the underlying causes of ethnic/regional conflict. And it would lessen the prospects of Russian irredentism becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The recently proposed Partnership for Peace initiative of cooperation between NATO and former Warsaw Pact states appears to be an appropriate step in the evolution of relations between Europe's formerly separated halves. The initiative provides opportunities for customized programs of cooperation with individual states, thus avoiding both unrealistic and untimely obligations on the part of NATO. The initiative allows NATO to provide security assistance to Central and Eastern European states; avoid a new division of Europe; alleviate Russian concerns about NATO expansion; and plan against the possibility of Russian irredentism. It thus meets both long- and short-term interests of the alliance.